Asylum Seekers in Howard's Australia:

The Social and Economic Costs of Temporary Protection Visas

An Australian Research Council Research Project

undertaken by

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Acknowledgments

*This monograph is dedicated to the memory of **Amal Basry** who opened her heart and shared her experiences, fears and hopes for a more secure future. Amal's bravery, humanity and sense of community meant that her fight for the rights of TPV holders went on, even as she was suffering the symptoms of her terminal illness. Amal passed away on 19 March 2006, almost five years after her journey on the ill-fated SIEV X took place.*

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Preface

This Research Report is based on a longitudinal study funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) that looked at the long term social and economic impact of the Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) policy across three states: Victoria, NSW and Queensland. As the empirical phase of the study was completed in late 2004, some of the statistical reports provided with regard to TPV holders have in some cases changed quite significantly. This is especially the case for the number of successful applications for permanent status.

In fact, by 4 November 2005, 3490[1] applicants for further protection had been granted Permanent Protection Visas (PPVs) - the majority of whom were Iraqi applicants[2]. During this period, 61 further TPVs were granted, and 207 Return Pending Visas (RPVs) were issued[3]. Many of these visa holders were still pursuing merits reviews of the decisions to refuse protection visa applications. Their RPVs only become 'effective' if the review tribunal upholds the refusal of their protection visa applications. As at 4 November 2005, 766 applications for further protection were yet to receive a primary decision. Some 1560 persons remained on a TPV with another 535 on a Temporary Humanitarian Visas.

Over the five year period from 2000 to 2005, the great majority (7803) of processed applicants for further protection had ultimately received a PPV, with 105 receiving a further TPV. Of these, 92 were granted as a result of character reason, and 13 as a result of the application of the 'seven-day' rule. As noted above, 360 had received RPVs, though only 75 of these were in effect at this date. A further 320 former TPV holders had departed Australia by November 2005. Those whose reassessment applications had been rejected before the 18 June announcement continued to be successful at the RRT. The 'set aside' rate for RRT decisions on Afghan TPV holders' applications for further protection was 95% for all cases between July 2005 and February 2006, and 97% for all Iraqi cases[4].

What these statistics show is that the settlement difficulties created by the TPV policy were in most cases unwarranted as the great majority of asylum seekers were found to be Convention refugees whose cases for permanent protection were ultimately validated by Australia's own determination mechanisms. What should be highlighted, though, is the social, psychological

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[1] The figures are based on a forthcoming paper 'The Evolution of the Temporary Protection Visa Regime in Australia' by F. Mansouri & M. Leach, to appear in *Refuge*, Canada.

[2] DIMIA, *Annual Report 2004-05* (Canberra: DIMIA, 2005), online: <http://www.immi.gov.au/annual_report/annrep05/html/output1.2_refugee_humanit arian.htm>; Senator Andrew Bartlett, "Answers to Questions asked by Senator Bartlett and taken on Notice," *Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing*, 1 November 2005, online: <www.andrewbartlett.com/pdf-misc/answers-to-estimates-questions-nov05.pdf>

[3] Bartlett, 2005.

[4] Refugee Review Tribunal, *RRT Cases Finalised by Country in 2005/06*, (28 February 2006), online: <www.rrt.gov.au/stats/finalised%20by%20country%20this%20year.pdf>

and economic cost of such policies and their impacts on individual refugees and their families. This is what this report aimed to document and discuss.

Executive Summary

The findings reported in this monograph are based on empirical research into the TPV policy undertaken over a three-year period 2002-05 across three states: Victoria, NSW and Queensland. The empirical part of the research project included questionnaires, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with TPV holders themselves as well as key service providers.

1. The Impacts of Policy on TPV Refugees - Economic and Social Conditions and Coping Capacity

One hundred and twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted over a three-year period with 120 TPV holders across Australia to monitor the social and economic impacts of the TPV policy, and the coping capacity of TPV holders. The research approach was both longitudinal and cross-sectional: the longitudinal study comprised three sets of semi-structured interviews with TPV holders in Melbourne over a three-year period to investigate the effect of living on a TPV over time, while the cross-sectional analysis studied the different experiences of life on a TPV across a range of metropolitan and regional centres in Australia. These included Melbourne, Shepparton, Sydney and Brisbane.

1.1 Economic and Material Conditions

o At the initial post-detention data collection phase[5] participants reported a relatively low rate of access to settlement services including housing (52 percent), English language tuition (50 percent), education (34 percent), and income security (31 percent). This low rate can be understood as a reflection of the under-funded and fragmented nature of services available to TPV holders. While not fitting within the 'service' category as such, employment is also an important functional indicator of settlement which was measured in this first phase. (The latter 2 phases measure TPV holders' access to employment services rather than employment). Only 15 percent of TPV holders in this phase indicated that they had secured paid work. Considering the importance of these factors to successful settlement, it is not surprising that previous research (Mann, 2001: 20, 30) indicates that failure to meet refugees' early settlement needs may lead to the development of longer term and more dire support needs or "problems".

o Across all three phases of the research, the quality of services being provided to TPV holders, including health, Medicare, employment, housing, material aid and income support were generally considered inadequate by survey respondents (see graphs 9 to 15 for details). Employment services were consistently rated most poorly. Sixty-six percent of participants considered employment services to be 'poor' in

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[5] The first phase or post-detention phase covers the period ranging from release from detention up to one year spent in the community.

the first survey, and by the third survey[6] 59 percent still considered them to be 'poor'. Of all the services, Medicare received the most positive ratings. In the third survey, for example, all respondents rated Medicare in the category of 'satisfactory' or higher. The perception of services improved over time (37 percent of respondents considered housing services to be 'poor' in the first survey, while only 12 percent considered this service to be 'poor' in the third survey), although several types of services – most notably employment and material aid – were still rated poorly two years later. Despite improvements in the ratings of many services over time, most did not manage to rate a higher response than 'satisfactory'. Considering the vital nature of such services to the lives of TPV holders, the longitudinal improvements could be regarded as not significant enough to indicate that the services generally satisfied the TPV holders' settlement needs.

o Housing conditions improved for participants over the three-year research period. Although there did not appear to be a clear trend of moving toward greater permanency from the first to second phase[7] of the research, by the third survey none of the interviewees was living in emergency or temporary accommodation, and several were living in their own home. Eighty-eight percent of interviewees by the third phase were living in accommodation with tenure of one year or greater. As such, the findings indicate that TPV holders were managing to create a sense of stability despite the uncertainty of their future in Australia on a TPV.

1.2 Social Conditions

o Contact within the participants' own ethnic community and with the wider Australian community increased significantly with the length of time spent in the community.

o In the immediate post-detention wave of interviews, a significant number of participants reported low levels of trust and social connectedness, did not feel valued by Australian society and did not feel Australians could be trusted – thus most gave negative responses to questions relating to social capital. Fifty-five percent indicated that they had no contact with their ethnic community; 61 percent felt they were not valued by Australian society, and 57 percent felt that Australians could not be trusted. These figures indicate that the initial settlement context was one where the TPV holders primarily felt unwelcome, uncertain and isolated.

o After having spent one year in the community, significant changes were observable with between 72 and 85 percent of TPV holders giving a positive response to questions relating to social capital. Eighty-seven percent indicated that they had made contacts or friendships within their ethnic community; 85 percent had made friends outside their ethnic community and the same number indicated that they had

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[6] The third survey or phase covers the period of two years plus spent on a TPV in the community.

[7] The second phase covers the period of having spent more than one year living in the community on a TPV but less than two years.

'good' experiences in the Australian community. Eighty-three percent felt that they could generally trust Australians and the same number felt they were treated well by Australian society.

o By the second year of living in the community, the level of social capital enjoyed by TPV holders appeared to be considerably high. Participants reported significantly higher levels of connectedness within their own ethnic communities and the wider Australian society.   Ninety-four percent felt they had made some contacts or friends within their ethnic community; 83 percent felt they had made friends outside their ethnic community; 65 percent felt they could generally trust Australians, and 82 percent felt they were treated well by Australian society. Despite their uncertain futures, TPV holders demonstrated a spirit of resilience by developing a strong sense of social connectedness and social capital.

1.3 Coping Capacity

o A significant source of stress for TPV holders was the prospect of repatriation. This was not surprising considering the high degree of instability in Iraq and the slim chance of improvement in the near future. Participants did not believe Iraq to be a safe place, did not think it safe for return, and felt anxious about their families left behind. These feelings did not diminish over time. In the second survey, for example, 87 percent of respondents refuted the statement that Iraq was safe place, yet by the third survey 100 percent of respondents refuted the statement that Iraq was a safe place. Furthermore, the term 'voluntary repatriation' was felt to be misleading since the fears held by participants reflected a belief that the temporary nature of their visas meant that they would have no real choice if they were offered a repatriation package.

o Most initial three-year visas had expired by the third wave of interviews, and the great majority of participants had reapplied for protection. While some TPV holders expressed optimism about the possibility of staying in Australia, the process of refugee status re-determination was a great source of stress and anxiety, as was the possibility of having their claims rejected. In the third survey, 53 percent of participants described the reapplication process in terms of being either 'uncertain' or 'stressful' and 35 percent described it as 'traumatic'. Participants in this survey were also concerned about offers of voluntary repatriation, with 83 percent describing it as 'traumatic'. TPV holders' sense of security appeared to decrease over time, with those in the third survey reporting they felt less secure than they had the year before.

o In terms of emotional/psychological wellbeing, participants' demonstrated disturbing levels of stress, anxiety and hopelessness about the future . Many felt that their families were safe and socially included within Australian society, yet they experienced loneliness and had significant concerns about the uncertainty of their future, particularly regarding the threat of repatriation. They generally reported that their children's health, education and feelings of safety and happiness were good, although these positive responses decreased over time – most likely a result of the impending threat of repatriation. Between the second and third surveys, the number of people who

agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their children felt safe in Australia dropped from 94 to 75 percent. While this decrease is notable, the level of respondents indicating that they children felt safe was still relatively high.

o In most practical aspects of life, TPV holders appear to be having more difficulties coping as time progresses – with the exception of health services and housing. The second wave of TPV holders indicated that they were coping relatively well with certain practical aspects of their settlement. They reported that they could communicate effectively and had sufficient access to housing and many services. In terms of having enough work to support their families, the response from participants was mixed (with approximately half agreeing and disagreeing). By the third survey however, almost half the people reported having heath problems, over 40 percent did not have enough work to support their family, over 40 percent could not freely communicate with everyone they meet, and nearly 60 percent had trouble accessing services.

2. Efficacy of TPV Service Provision / Advocacy and its Impacts on NGOs and Volunteers

The second section is based on three separate sets of data, and examines the experiences of service providers working with TPV refugees – both paid and unpaid workers in non-government organisations (NGOs).

2.1 The Experiences of Service Providers in Queensland and Victoria – A Broad Overview

This section provides a broad snapshot of TPV service providers through questionnaires which gauged the attitudes of 29 representatives from relevant organisations in the States of Queensland and Victoria. Respondents were asked about the types of services provided to TPV holders; the manner and ease with which TPV holders' needs are met (including whether they are met through TPV-specific or mainstream programs and whether these are adequately funded); and the overall effect on the organisation of providing services to TPV holders (whether this has affected workload and generally produced positive or negative outcomes for the organisation).

Key Findings

o The most pressing issues for TPV holders identified by service providers in Queensland and Victoria were employment, visa status concerns, physical and mental health, housing, family issues, visa processes, language, income/finance, and education. The majority of workers interviewed felt that these needs were not being adequately met.

o Approximately two-thirds of the service providers interviewed had difficulties meeting TPV holders' needs. These difficulties related mostly to resources, workload and actual service delivery, although in Victoria, a much higher percentage felt they were limited by resource constraints.

o There was a marked difference between the two States in their responses to government-funded services – in Victoria, service providers felt that government services were the hardest to access of all the services available to TPV holders, while in Queensland they were considered the least difficult to access. This response in Queensland is perhaps not surprising given the State Government's position of giving Queensland Government agencies the authority to provide the same level of services to TPV holders as to holders of permanent visas (Mann, 2001: 11).

o Most service providers received their funding from State or Local Government – very few received funding from the Federal Government (12 percent). Local Government was more likely to provide funding for service providers working with TPV holders in Victoria; while State Government was more likely to provide funding for service providers working with TPV holders in Queensland.

o The majority of service providers had experienced an increase in demand for their services which was not compensated for by increased funding. Those that did experience an increase in funding overwhelmingly found it was insufficient to meet increased demand. More than half of the organisations in Victoria and three-quarters of those in Queensland relied on volunteers to help provide key services.

o Service providers felt that the TPV policy had a negative effect on their organisations.

2.2 Three Service Provider/Advocacy Organisations in Victoria – A More Intimate Perspective

This section provides a more in-depth view of the challenges of meeting TPV holders' needs from the perspective of a broad range of representatives from three NGOs engaged in service provision and advocacy. Thirty-six semi-structured interviews or questionnaires were conducted with paid and unpaid workers from all levels of the organisational hierarchy. Workers gave their views on the relationship between advocacy and service provision, as well as the practical challenges of their roles, and overall effect on the organisation of dealing with TPV clients.

Key Findings

o Organisations providing services to TPV holders see service provision as a holistic enterprise. Although funded to provide particular services, most saw their work as providing more than just the specific services contracted. They understood their work to involve TPV community-building and 'bridge-building' with the wider community. Many workers considered the informal aspects of service provision, such as social support, living skills, and friendship to be equally important as the funded services they were providing.

o Funding for organisations providing services to TPV holders is received from a variety of sources, including Local, State and Federal Governments, philanthropic trusts and fundraising activities. The Federal Government is the least common source of funding – only one organisation received federal funding, and this was tied to a specific program. Funding is normally tied to specific programs, projects or services with corresponding contractual conditions. This can create tension as contractual obligations restrict the services they are able to provide, and the types of extra-program work many workers consider integral to service provision.

o Much of the funding received is reactive. Organisations generally begin by providing a service in response to demand, and then try to find the money to fund it. Organisations have experienced some increase in funding since the introduction of the TPV policy, but this has not been commensurate with the increase in workload.

o Funding is insecure. Most of the funding received is short term and project-based with no guarantee of renewal. This places great stress on organisations and paid workers to raise funds and ensure continuity of service provision. The constant quest for finance is a drain on organisational resources, particularly for organisations already struggling

with low funding and staff levels, making long-term program planning a difficult task. The accompanying accountability and compliance requirements also place an onerous administrative burden on organisations with little capacity to meet them.

o 'Permanency'was identified by workers as the most pressing concern for their clients. This has ramifications for service provision, as the temporary status of TPV holders makes it more difficult for clients to access a range of 'mainstream' services. In looking for employment and housing for example, employers and rental agents may discriminate against TPV holders on the basis of their temporary status. Furthermore, the often complex psychological needs resulting from the conditions attached to the TPV and its impermanent status led workers to feel ill-equipped to deal with clients concerns.

o Both paid and unpaid workers struggled with their workload and a lack of available resources.

2.2.1 The Perspectives of Paid Workers

o While acknowledging that the policy had a negative impact on the clients themselves, workers reported mixed reactions to the impact of the TPV policy on service providers. On the one hand, the policy had brought an increase in demand unmatched by an increase in funding, stretching organisational resources and increasing the risk of occupational health and safety issues for workers. Workers face a high level of 'burnout', leading to stress and in some instances, even serious illness. On the other hand, and more positively, the community response to the needs of TPV holders had succeeded in raising the profile of their organisations, and many workers commented on the personal benefits they gained from interaction with TPV holders, including gaining a better sense of perspective on their own lives. They noted a strong community mobilisation around the TPV policy which has resulted in wider community participation. This took the form of increased donations, personal participation and volunteer involvement, and stronger networks.

o Workers predict long-term problems as a result of the TPV policy. They report witnessing emotional trauma in children which they fear will require more intensive intervention the longer it is left unaddressed. Many workers believed the effects of family separation will cause problems for functional reunification if and when their families arrive. The longer the families remain separated, the greater the danger of family conflict.

o None of the organisations surveyed is directly prevented from engaging in advocacy by contractual limitations, but all report being limited by practicalities, and the potential negative implications of advocacy work for securing government funding. Most workers, due to the time and resource constraints already mentioned, are struggling to meet the demand for all the 'hands on' work that needs to be done and find it difficult to engage in wider systemic advocacy, despite many acknowledging its value. Only one organisation identified itself as having a significant advocacy role. This may be influenced by negative

perceptions that many participants attached to the word 'advocacy', defining it as an overtly political act.

o All organisations utilised a large number of volunteers. In all cases, volunteers outnumbered paid staff. The contribution of volunteers is critical to the functioning of the organisations and allows them to provide more projects and services than would otherwise be possible.

2.2.2 *Volunteers*

o Volunteers often undertake a number of roles, including providing friendship or personal support. The motivations for volunteering included personal satisfaction gained from the work, using existing skills and contributing to society. Volunteers working with refugees displayed a strong emotional investment in the work they were doing, and many commented on being motivated by a sense of dissatisfaction with Australian refugee policy. For many people, working personally with refugees was a way to help mitigate feelings of disenfranchisement and dissatisfaction with their government or with political processes.

o Volunteers expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the work they were doing, which was for many a process of affirmation. Their work generally felt to be meaningful and related to personal feelings of civic responsibility.

o The emotional strain of working with refugees on a temporary protection visa was a source of dissatisfaction on certain levels. Some felt that the work should not be necessary in the first place, others noted a 'depressing' attitude of Australians towards refugees, and others cited a level of vicarious trauma of working closely with people who are experiencing great hardship and stress. Many felt a sense of frustration that they were unable to provide the one thing that their clients most need, i.e. permanency.

o Except for the question of permanency, most volunteers felt they were able to respond to their clients' needs. The problems they did encounter were related to a lack of resources, and linguistic and cultural differences.

o Volunteers felt the work they were performing benefited the people who used the services, themselves as workers, the wider community, and the organisation itself. More than half of those surveyed believed the government also benefited.

2.3 A Case Study of One Organisation – Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS)

The third part of this research project narrowed the focus further still, by exploring the effect of the TPV policy on one community organisation – Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS). VASS is a non-political, non-religious and non-sectarian state-wide community agency providing social services and advocacy for Arabic-speaking background (ASB) communities. It began as a worker network, and evolved organically into a service provision organisation in response to increasing needs.

This study examined the factors contributing to, or limiting, effective service provision to establish the respective roles of government and non-

government organisations (NGOs) in providing services to TPV holders. In light of VASS's unique position in the Arabic-speaking community, VASS provides a counterpoint to other organisations for comparing the different social capital outcomes between ethno-specific and mainstream organisations. In-depth interviews were conducted with all levels of management and workers at VASS including the chairperson, the manager, the TPV support worker and a long standing volunteer working on the TPV program.

Key Findings

o   Funding was initially obtained through the Commonwealth Settlement Support Scheme and has been maintained through small research grants, grants from philanthropic trusts, and funding from Local Government. In general, it has been difficult to secure funding to work with TPV holders, though VASS has been more successful in obtaining funding from Local Government than from the State or Federal Governments.

o   VASS's involvement with TPV holders came about as a logical and inevitable extension of its work, given the high proportion of Arabic-speaking refugees being released into the community on a TPV.

o   Initial responses were almost entirely volunteer-based as the organisation does not have the capacity to employ paid staff workers.

o   Workers see service provision as 'gap filling'; providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services not provided by government or mainstream organisations.

o   The type of work VASS undertakes with TPV holders is changing. Initial responses centred on crisis management, providing housing, and settlement services for TPV holders ineligible for government-funded services. The services being provided now reflect more ongoing, long-term issues faced by TPV holders, including a greater focus on family issues and more case management as the refugee status re-determination phase draws closer.

o   Mental health needs are becoming more apparent. Workers witnessed a marked psychological deterioration in TPV holders as a result of the prolonged periods of uncertainty over visa status. The psychological needs of TPV holders consequently require more intensive assistance.

o   VASS experiences a tension between the demands of service provision and advocacy. This partially reflects the origins of VASS as an advocacy organisation, but also reflects workers' views that policy change through advocacy is the 'real solution' for the problems arising directly from TPV policy.

o   The key elements of VASS's successful service provision include:

Personnel: workers demonstrate a high level of commitment and professionalism. They have developed strong personal and professional networks, and possess language skills and cultural understanding that enhances the work they do with their clients.

Activities: VASS provides a range of programs to ensure its work is relevant to its client base, and appropriately targets the people most in

need. This includes working from a strong community base, providing a range of services and complementing its work through needs-based research and advocacy.

Organisational practice: A broad base of diverse funding sources provides a degree of insurance against funding cuts. VASS also works creatively to maximise available resources, including networking and maintaining relationships with external stakeholders.

o The main limitations and challenges faced by VASS in continuing to provide effective services include:

Organisational factors:

- The diversity of the community is both a strength and a challenge: the cultural, racial and religious mix encompassed by the ASB banner requires careful management to provide appropriate services.

- The changing needs of TPV holders has meant that their needs can no longer be serviced as effectively by volunteers, and the time and workload of paid workers is stretched beyond reasonable capacity. Current work practices increase the risk of worker burnout and illness, which may threaten service provision. There is little formal organisational support and insufficient infrastructure support for workers.

External factors:

- The demand for services is greater than VASS's capacity to provide, mainly through lack of funding. The areas workers identify as requiring more services included: men's groups; recreational activities for women; extension of the employment program; and addressing the health needs of its clients,

- There are practical limits to support that can be offered to TPV holders, given that their greatest need is permanence. The restriction on family reunion is also a great cause of stress, and a difficult issue for VASS workers to address. The prevailing atmosphere of hostility towards people of Middle Eastern origin in Victoria is also a concern as the great majority of TPV holders originate from this region.

- The possibility of losing funding is a constant threat.

VASS-based volunteers:

- Volunteers at VASS come from within the ASB community itself and were less likely to be motivated by a conscious reaction to government policy than volunteers at non-ASB organisations. Many of the volunteers at VASS have themselves been migrants or refugees, and appeared to feel a sense of obligation to help the community. Their role was in creating bonding, rather than bridging capital.

Recommendations

A: Recommendations Relating to Social and Economic Impact of the TPV Policy on Individual Asylum Seekers

1(a) Increased settlement support should be provided to TPV holders, particularly in the critical areas of health, housing and employment assistance services. The level of support provided to TPV holders should be commensurate with the level of assistance and settlement support offered to other refugee and humanitarian entrants. Support should also be provided to former TPV holders who have secured a PPV on the understanding that their time in detention and on a temporary visa may have led to them having different needs to other refugee and humanitarian entrants.

1(b) A more intensive and coordinated approach needs to be adopted in linking TPV holders with available services. This is particularly important given the lack of formal services available to TPV holders, and the absence of an adequately resourced federal approach.

1(c) Service provision should be flexible and culturally appropriate.

1(d) 'Voluntary repatriation' schemes should be abolished, with guarantees provided that no-one will be forcibly returned to unsafe situations.

1(e) TPVs should automatically be converted to PPVs on expiry if there has been no significant change in the situation in the country of origin. TPV holders have been accepted as Convention refugees and should not be required to re-prove their legitimate claims for asylum.

1(f) A coordinated, adequately resourced national strategy needs to be developed to link service provision.

1(g) Temporary protection status should be abolished and replaced with permanent visas for all asylum seekers found to be genuine Convention refugees. If temporary visas are maintained, they should be limited to a defined time period to remove the stress of extended periods of uncertainty and to allow people to begin to rebuild their lives.

1(h) Family reunion should be facilitated to mitigate the effects of long-term separation.

B: Recommendations Relating to the Efficacy of TPV Service Provision / Advocacy and its Impacts on NGOs and Volunteers

2(a) A coordinated referral point or casework service should be established, funded by government, and run by service providers that have built up experience and community trust in working with TPV holders and other refugees.

2(b) Local, State and Federal Government should provide more funding and resources for service provision organisations, particularly guaranteed long-term funding. The Federal Government should remove restrictions

on funding services to TPV holders and permit access to services available to other humanitarian entrants.

2(c)   Funding should be commensurate with the increase in workload resulting from their work with TPV holders.

2(d)   Funding should not be strictly limited to particular projects or services in acknowledgement of wider modes of service provision required in work with TPVs and the administrative burdens of auditing and reporting.

2(e)   Organisations should explore more effective ways of working in collaboration with other organisations, sharing resources, providing appropriate support for staff, and ensuring OHS provisions are included in the budget to allow for debriefing and training.

2(f)   Organisations working with volunteers need to provide appropriate skills matching, training, support and debriefing for volunteers.

2(g)   Organisations such as VASS which act as peak agencies can facilitate greater involvement of other agencies.

2(h)   Organisations working with TPV holders should explore a diversity of funding sources to minimise the possibility of funding cuts and corresponding reduction of services.

2(i)   Organisations working with TPV holders should explore alternative means of information provision to target their clients more effectively. This can include providing more written information, or utilising alternative media such as radio.

2(j)   Volunteers are a valuable resource for organisations, particularly those struggling to meet demand for services with limited funding and resources. The use of volunteers needs to be carefully planned and managed to provide the best outcomes for the organisation, the volunteers themselves, and the clients of the service.

1.Introduction: Research Aims, Scope, and Approach

This report is divided into two sections. Section One, through a comprehensive series of survey analysis, examines the social, emotional and economic impacts of Australian refugee policy on over 90 holders of Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs). This section is the result of a three-year study which details the experiences of TPV holders in three Australian States (Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales) and in urban and regional areas (Melbourne and Shepparton) in the State of Victoria. It documents the immediate post-detention period as well as the longer term life experiences of a TPV holder.

Section Two looks at the efficacy of service provision and/or advocacy available to TPV holders in Queensland and Victoria, and the overall impact of TPV refugees' needs on NGOs by canvassing the views of workers in such organisations. To gain an overall, as well as a detailed, understanding of the efficacy of, and impact on, TPV servicing organisations, the findings are based on three separate research projects, each of which represent a different slice of organisational reality. The first utilises quantitative surveys with 29 service providers to gain a more generalised view of the quality of TPV service provision, while the second utilises qualitative interviews with a smaller number of organisations (three), but with a greater number of representatives from each organisation, including paid and unpaid workers. The last project is a detailed case-study of one organisation – Victorian Arabic Social Services. While each research project raises some different questions for NGO workers,[8] the general questions posed relate to the capacity of the organisations and volunteers to assist TPV holders and the impact of TPV policy on the organisations and workers.

1.1 Research Outline for Section One: The Impacts of Policy on TPV Refugees – Economic and Social Conditions and Coping Capacity

To understand the economic and social and impacts of TPV policy and the coping capacity of TPV refugees, a total of 120 surveys (with between 90 and 95 respondents[9]) were conducted over a three-year period with TPV refugees in Australia. Focus groups were also undertaken in order to provide a greater depth of understanding of the experiences of TPV holders. The aim of this research was to gain a cross-section of experiences in time and distance. The first component, cross-sections in time, comprises three phases: the immediate post-detention period; the period of having spent one year on a TPV; and the period of having spent two years on a TPV. The first phase gives an understanding of the issues facing TPV holders immediately after release from immigration detention, while the later phases provide insight into the experience of living 'in limbo' in the longer-term. The longitudinal findings are

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[8] The term worker is used throughout this report to refer to paid workers as well as unpaid volunteers.

[9] 25 participants were interviewed two or more times over the 3 year period. 5 participants did not respond when asked if they had previously participated in the survey. The number of individuals to participate is therefore between 90 and 95.

based on research into TPV holders in Victoria. Across the three-year timeframe, a total of 66 TPV holders were surveyed in Melbourne: with 25 of the 38 participants in the second and third surveys responding two or more times over the three-year period (six participants did not respond when asked if they had previously participated in the survey).

In order to understand the impact of policy and service differences between States, as well as different economic and social conditions facing TPV holders, the sample includes TPV refugees residing in different States: New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland; and then in metropolitan and regional areas within the same State: the city of Melbourne and Shepparton in regional Victoria. The choice of locations nationwide was aimed at obtaining a broadly representative sample. The three States covered by the research – Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales – are the States in which most newly released refugees have chosen to settle. The inclusion of respondents from Shepparton and Melbourne in the Victorian sample ensures that differences between regional and metropolitan areas are acknowledged in addition to differences between States.

Three waves of surveys were conducted over the three-year period. The first wave in 2002 canvassed a total of 56 people across two States: with 28 participants in Melbourne, 11 in Shepparton, and 17 in Brisbane. In 2003, a total of 47 people were surveyed across two States: with 21 participants in Melbourne and 26 in Sydney. In 2004, 17 people were consulted in a third series of surveys in Melbourne.
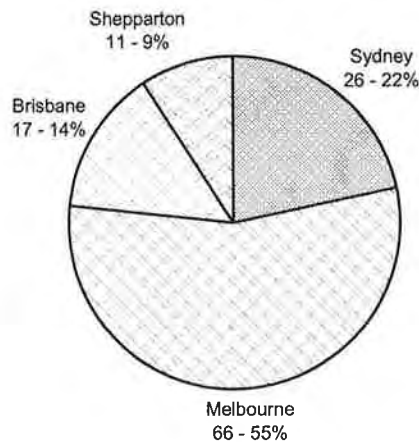
n=120

Figure 1: TPV Refugees Surveyed [Total Cohort]

Over the three waves of interviews, questions of a particular theme were repeated in each phase, while other questions were relevant only to specific time periods. Questions regarding levels of support and access to social and community services, community interactions within participants' ethnic communities, and with the wider Australian society, were relevant to each

phase of the research. In terms of specific questions, the first wave of interviews looked at the support received immediately after release from detention. The second and third waves (one year and two years later, respectively) explored the experiences of respondents facing the expiration of their visas and the prospect of reapplication and potential repatriation. For that reason, new questions were included to gauge the response such experiences might elicit.

1.2 Research Outline for Section Two: Efficacy of TPV Service Provision/Advocacy and the Role of NGOs and Volunteers

Many NGOs are already struggling to meet the welfare needs of low income Australian citizens. Often these same organisations, by choice or default, have assumed significant responsibility for providing services to refugees holding a TPV. These problems have been documented in previous studies (Mann, 2001; Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002; Barnes, 2003; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003) which indicate that the introduction of the TPV policy has produced additional strain on the resource bases of these organisations. The restrictions placed on access to publicly funded social assistance are a key cause of concern.

The Three Components of this Research

The second section of this report is based on the findings of three research projects which explore the role of NGOs in TPV holder service provision/advocacy from different perspectives. Beginning with a more generalised picture, the first research project utilises a quantitative survey to record the experiences of representatives from 29 organisations that provide services to TPV holders and other clients. The second is based on a smaller but more in-depth examination of organisational life through qualitative interviews with a range of paid and unpaid workers in three organisations dealing with TPV service provision and/or advocacy. The last, most detailed piece of research, explores the perspective of service provision and advocacy through interviews with representatives from one organisation - Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS).

The common themes throughout each of these projects are the capacity of the organisations to effectively meet the needs of TPV refugees and the impact of servicing TPV holder clients on the overall function of the organisations.

i) Service Providers in Queensland and Victoria – A Broad Overview

Twenty-nine service providers across Queensland (16 organisations represented) and Victoria (13 organisations represented) were surveyed in order to gauge the extent to which they were able to effectively meet the needs of TPV holders in addition to fulfilling other key organisational goals. The surveys measure the quality rather than the quantity of services available to TPV holders. The number of organisations sampled therefore does not reflect the total number of service providers within each State, however, it does reflect a diverse range of service provision including: health, education, language tuition, employment, housing, material aid and legal assistance. Of the 29 organisations surveyed, only four (all from Queensland) indicated that 100 percent of their client base is made up of TPV holders; otherwise the

percentage of TPV holders in the service providers' client base was consistently low in both States.

This research explores: the types of services provided to TPV and non-TPV clients; the manner and ease with which TPV holders' needs are met (including whether they are met through TPV specific or mainstream programs and whether these are adequately funded); and, the overall effect on the organisation of providing services to TPV holders (whether this has impacted on workload and generally produced positive or negative outcomes for the organisation).

ii) Three Service Provider/Advocacy Organisations in Victoria – A More Intimate Perspective

In order to gain a more intimate picture of organisational life, the second research project is based on a selection of interviews with workers in three organisations assisting TPV holders in Victoria: the Red Cross (Refugee and Asylum Seeker Services); the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Thornbury Branch); and the Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN). In contrast with the previous service provider survey, this research looks at the experience of TPV service provision/advocacy from the perspective of a number of workers from each organisation. Through detailed semi-structured interviews, the first component of this research explores the perspective of two paid workers - a senior manager or director and coordinator of the service. The interviews were analysed to gain a broader contextual understanding of the effect of the TPV policy on organisational capacity and how different variables such as funding structure, resource allocation and use of paid and unpaid workers may impact on service provision. The second component of the research uses questionnaires to explore the perspectives of volunteers performing a variety of roles within these three organisations.

iii) A Detailed Case Study of Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS)

The third research project is a case study of one organisation, Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS). It looks in detail at the factors that contribute to and limit effective service provision to TPV holders and the respective roles of government and NGOs. VASS, as the only Arabic-speaking organisation in this research, provides an interesting counterpoint to the other organisations for comparing the different production and use of social capital between ethno-specific and mainstream organisations. In light of VASS's unique position in the Arabic-speaking community, it is ideally placed to provide important and strategic information to all levels of government and community agencies. For this reason, VASS was selected as a case study to assess its organisational capacity to effectively respond to the needs and issues of TPV holders.

In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with all levels of management and workers at VASS, including the chairperson, the manager, the TPV support worker and a long-standing volunteer working on the TPV program.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction – Exclusionary Policies (Australia and Beyond)

The Australian Labor Party (ALP) firmly established the basis for Australia's punitive and exclusionary refugee policy framework with its *Migration Reform Act 1992* (commencing in 1994); making immigration detention mandatory for all 'unlawful non-citizens.' With the Federal Coalition Government's rise to power in 1996, this punitive and deterrent framework was significantly extended with the introduction of Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) for Convention refugees, the excision of Australian territories from the 'Migration Zone' (Gibney, 2004: 187), the capacity to intercept and interdict asylum seeker boats, the tightening of the grounds on which refugee status can be attained, and the introduction of a 'privative clause' that removes the possibility of 'judicial review in most immigration cases' (Matthew, 2002: 662). This legal framework sets the context within which the government has expressed its disdain for undocumented asylum seekers (and in some cases the legislation has been established retrospectively to legitimise unprecedented activities). The government has received constant criticism over its practice and handling of mandatory detention,[10] its distinction between onshore and offshore refugees (Mann, 2001; Barnes, 2003; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003; Marston, 2003; Leach and Mansouri, 2004; Manne, 2004), and for its handling of events such as the 'Tampa incident' (Matthew, 2002: 661-662), the 'Children Overboard' affair (Pugh, 2004: 56); and the 'SIEV X (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel X) disaster' where 353 asylum seekers drowned en route to Christmas Island (Kevin, 2002). In order to inflict harsh policies and practices on vulnerable asylum seekers, the government has undertaken a campaign of 'symbolic violence' (Tazreiter, 2004: 26) that inverts the risks or causes of problems and deflects attention away from the refugee source and resettlement countries to asylum seekers themselves. Thus the risky journeys undertaken by 'boat people' are seen only as a risk to the host society (Pugh, 2004: 55) and responses to harsh policies and practices in host societies (such as mandatory detention) which manifest as hunger strikes, lip sewing or suicide attempts are viewed as evidence of the deviant cultures of refugees and a risk to Australian values (Leach, 2003: 30).

Australia became a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (described hereafter as the 'Refugee Convention' or simply the 'Convention') in 1954 and to its 1967 Protocol in 1973 (Edwards, 2003: 194), making it one of the 141 states that have acceded to the Convention or the Convention and the Protocol (UNHCR, 2001). The Convention and Protocol are the principal documents that set the 'basic framework for refugee protection' although their 'interpretation and application are necessarily

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[10] Australia's Detention policies or practices have been criticized in a range of reports such as: Amnesty International Australia (1998) 'A Continuing Shame: The Mandatory Detention of Asylum Seekers'; Amnesty International Australia (2005) 'The Impact of Indefinite Detention: The Case to Change Australia's Mandatory Detention Regime; HREOC (1998) 'Those who've Come Across the Seas: Detention of Unauthorised Arrivals'; HREOC (2001) 'A Report of Visits to Immigration Detention Facilities by the Human Rights Commissioner'; HREOC (2004) 'A Last Resort: A Summary Guide to the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention. This is by no means a comprehensive list.

informed by principles and standards articulated in other international instruments' (Edwards, 2003: 194). The Convention, conceived as a response to the internal displacement of post-Second World War Europe, establishes some important criteria for the treatment of refugees, including the criteria against which a claim of refugee status is to be determined, the principle of non-refoulement (not returning people to situations of danger), and the enumeration of a 'broad array of civil, political, social and economic rights' (Kelley and Durieux, 2004: 7). The Protocol removes the time limitations that were written into the Convention (that is, to deal with displacement occurring before 1951), but not the geographical limitation that those assisted would be within the boundaries of Europe (although most states have removed this limitation within their national legal frameworks) (Kelley and Durieux, 2004: 7). While many states reaffirmed their commitment to the international refugee protection framework in December 2001, the 50th anniversary of the Convention, the actual provision of protection and the principles of the Convention are seen to have been undermined by policies of exclusion/deterrence[11] (Kumin, 2004: 4; Humphrey, 2003: 40).

The manner in which states deal with asylum seekers entering their territory without authorisation is seen as the key test of their commitment to the Refugee Convention and to human rights principles more generally (Tazreiter, 2004: 1). In line with many other Western countries, Australia's policies for dealing with 'irregular' or 'unauthorised' asylum seekers are characterised by an exclusionary logic of deterrence and punishment. From the early 1980s, 'non-entrée' policies that utilise measures of deterrence, detention, deportation and stigmatisation (symbolic violence) have become commonplace in the West in order to prevent the arrival of 'unauthorised' asylum seekers or to undermine their claims to asylum and compassion upon arrival (Chimni, 2001: 9; Tazreiter, 2004: 6, 13; Devetak, 2004: 106). A combination of factors are seen to have given rise to these punitive and deterrent policies such as the decreased demand for labour in the late 1970s with the international economic recession[12] (Gibney, 2004: 3); the rise in asylum claims in Western countries in the early 1980s (Gibney, 2004: 3); the removal of ideological grounds for granting asylum with the end of the Cold War[13] (Helton, 2002: 9; Gibney, 2004: 3); and the increased prominence of far right groups or parties in the 1990s (Levy, 2005: 44). The rise of globalisation has brought a new intensity to the 'politics of the border' wherein governments have sought to uphold the ideal of territoriality and national sovereignty (Collinson, 1999: 14-15), while public fears and uncertainties regarding globalisation have been projected onto asylum seekers who have become scapegoats for the insecurities of the nation (Purcell, 2002: 3). Globalisation has led to an increased mobility of flows of goods, information, and capital;

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[5] The legitimacy of the Convention has also come under question given its narrow grounds for granting refugee status (in accordance with risk of persecution) which fails to protect the majority of the world's most vulnerable people such as those fleeing famine, environmental catastrophe, war (including civil war) and other group-based claims (Head, 2002).

[12] Whereas resettlement opportunities were created for refugees between the period of 1950 to 1970 as a result of economic expansion and population and labour requirements (Gibney, 2004: 3).

[13] During the Cold War, Helton (2002: 9) argues, 'defectors from one side became trophies for the other in the ideological contest of the day'.

yet in terms of movements of people, mobility has become a powerful stratifying factor (Bauman in Castles, 2003: 16). These official regimes of exclusion are, in part, responsible for the emergence of an illicit 'migration industry' (Castles, 2003: 15).

While there has been a relative unification of policies in Western countries in terms of establishing non-entrée regimes (Tazreiter, 2004: 13), there are regional and national variations within these (Crisp, 2003: 4), some of which are influenced by the different historical evolutions of immigration policy and nationalism (Bhuta and Costello, 2001: 34) or by geopolitical matters. Levy (2005: 47-48) and Human Rights Watch (2002) suggest that Australia has been influential on the refugee policy world stage with its lobbying efforts and its legislative frameworks such as mandatory detention and the 'Pacific Solution' (the British Government's proposals for extraterritorial processing and naval interdiction programs were seen to be influenced by it). Humphrey (2003: 35) suggests that Australia has, in turn, been influenced by European Union policy strategies in relation to containment and repatriation (Humphrey, 2003: 35).

The Australian TPV Regime[14]

The Australian Government's introduction of the TPV in October 1999 was seen to mark a significant reversal of longstanding bipartisan policy towards immigration. Up until this point successive Australian Governments had been committed to permanent settlement of immigrants, seeking permanent commitment from those who came across the seas. According to Sidoti:

> ...the newcomers would become part of the Australian community, throwing in their lots with the rest of us for mutual advancement. All that changed in October 1999 (2002: i)

While the Temporary Protection Visa regime was formally introduced in October 1999[15] by the conservative Howard Government, the concept of 'temporary protection' was not entirely alien to the Australian humanitarian

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[14] Much of this section on the Australian TPV regime (except where otherwise referenced) is based on a forthcoming paper by F. Mansouri and M.Leach 'The Evolution of the Temporary Protection Visa Regime in Australia', to appear in *Refuge*, Canada.

[15] In 2001, the Federal Government proceeded to further erode the rights of refugees in Australia by introducing a host of new legislative amendments aimed at making Australia 'less attractive' to potential asylum seekers. The border protection amendments of 27 September 2001 created two new Temporary Protection Visa subclasses: the first (subclass 447) provided for the grant of a three-year Temporary Protection Visa to asylum seekers intercepted en route to Australia and processed under the so-called 'Pacific Solution'; and the second (subclass 451) provides for the grant of a five-year TPV to asylum seekers apprehended before boarding boats to Australia, in Indonesia or other receiving countries. These visa holders are eligible to apply for a PPV after four and a half years (Crock and Saul 2002: 99-106). Most disturbingly, the September 2001 amendments sought to severely restrict the access of all TPV holders to the ultimate award of permanent protection. These amendments preclude any person from gaining permanent residency 'who, since leaving their home country, resided for at least seven days in a country where they could have sought and obtained effective protection' (DIMIA 2003).

landscape. The first 'temporary' humanitarian protection visas for asylum seekers were introduced by the Hawke/Keating Labor Government in 1990 in response to the Chinese Government massacre of students at Tiananmen Square in 1989. Around 20,000 Chinese nationals in Australia on student visas were issued with four-year Temporary Protection Visas but were eventually permitted to remain on a permanent basis. The policy was considered unsuccessful and quickly ended. Along with the Temporary Safe Haven program for Kosovar refugees in 1999, this example reflected a standard use of temporary protection, offering short term group-based protection where individual assessment under the 1951 Convention was both impractical and untimely.

The introduction of the TPV in 1999 created a situation of open discrimination against onshore refugees who were specifically denied rights and services available to other Convention refugees. As the recent literature demonstrates (Leach and Mansouri 2004: 82-111), the emotional and psychological problems generated by the temporary protection regime adopted in Australia stem from the withdrawal of two fundamental rights; the right to family reunion and the right not to be forcibly returned to the country of origin while danger persists. TPV holders have also been denied access to most Commonwealth funded settlement services offered to other Convention refugees, including English language classes, housing assistance and Migrant Resource Centre support schemes. These exclusions have resulted in considerable levels of anguish and hardship for already traumatised refugees, and placed considerable strain on state-funded agencies and community-run services. Recent studies (Leach and Mansouri 2004; Manne 2004; Barnes 2003; Marston 2003; Pickering, Gard and Richardson 2003; Mansouri and Bagdas 2002; Mann 2001) have documented the uncertainty, insecurity, isolation, confusion, sense of powerlessness, and chronic health problems the TPV regime has created.

August 2004 – The Offer of Non-Humanitarian Visas

On 13 July 2004, the government announced that all TPV holders would be eligible to apply for permanent non-humanitarian visas, through the normal migration channels without first leaving the country to apply. Before this point, some TPV holders with skills considered to be in short supply have had to leave the country to apply for a skilled migration visa. Despite remedying this particular issue, these changes ultimately had the air of a quick electoral fix in the lead up to the Federal election on October 9, 2004, and leave TPV holders in the same limbo of uncertainty. These amendments involved three types of changes: eligibility for non-humanitarian visas; eligibility for the 'Return Pending Visa'; and eligibility for reintegration packages.

The major change, as noted above, gave TPV holders eligibility to apply for a range of non-humanitarian migrant visas. The official justification for this change included the need to 'acknowledge that some temporary visa holders have made strong contributions to regional Australia or have established strong links with Australians' (DIMIA 2004). Those most likely to benefit are those TPV holders who have contributed to regional industries, most notably Afghan farm and abattoir workers in regional New South Wales and Victoria. However, to put this development in context, a recent study by

A Just Australia estimates that little more than 9 percent of TPV holders live in regional Australia with over 90 percent living in the major cities (A Just Australia, 2004). There was no indication of relaxation of similar criteria for non-regional TPV holders, except in relation to student visas, which are temporary. As such, most urban TPV holders rejected for further protection will need to apply through standard skilled migration channels.

Under the skilled migration visa schemes, marketable skills and a host of other criteria, including English language proficiency, increase the applicants' chances of securing a visa. In effect, following attempts to systematically exclude them from Australian society, refugees on TPVs were now to be tested on the effectiveness of their integration. As such, it seems clear that only a minority of TPV holders will benefit from the August changes and that more vulnerable refugees would stand the least chance of accessing migrant visas. Such a policy is entirely inconsistent with Australia's moral and legal commitments under the 1951 Convention. Given that TPV holders were granted visas on humanitarian grounds, the government's announcement that they can access the migration program seems illogical and incoherent for several reasons. First, there is a great risk that many refugees will not be able to meet the stringent requirements of a competitive migration program where the emphasis is, quite rightly, on qualifications and work experience and not humanitarian needs. Secondly, the government seems unable to accept the basic fact that all the TPV holders residing in Australia are Convention refugees and no longer asylum seekers.

As such, the fundamental concern around the latest announcement remains, that is, the corrosive impact of uncertainty over their future. Refugees rejected for further protection must now commence another application process for a separate non-humanitarian visa. The requirement to go through the visa application process all over again will prolong the uncertainty and stress felt by temporary visa holders. Other problems for TPV holders include the costs of the migrant visas. Fees for most permanent visas are approximately $2000, and some up to $10,000, in addition to health assessment costs and extra charges for those with inadequate English to cover tuition. Critically too, some migrant visas are subject to a two-year waiting period for Centrelink benefits. Most importantly, those seeking family reunion face ongoing obstacles. For one, family sponsorship is only possible where a permanent migration visa is attained, costing up to $10,000 in fees, and more critically, excluding successful applicants from basic welfare support for two years. More broadly, it should be noted that the changes do not alter the damaging TPV regime in respect of any new onshore arrivals.

The second major component of the August changes was the Return Pending Visa (RPV) which has been introduced for applicants whom the Australian Government has deemed to be 'no longer in need of protection'. The RPV will be automatically granted where an application for further protection is refused by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) and the decision is not appealed to the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT), or an appeal to the RRT is unsuccessful. This will allow 18 months for rejected applicants to make arrangements to return home, and will carry the same rights and restrictions as the TPV. Like the TPV, RPV holders are entitled to Centrelink benefits, Medicare and work rights and are restricted from family reunion rights. RPV holders also can apply for any of the 36

migration visas during the 18 months, but at the end of this period they become 'unlawful' if no visa is pending. While this is undoubtedly a more humane alternative for rejected asylum seekers than immediate removal or detention, which are the extant responses, and will allow them to examine other alternatives, the visa is a cause for ongoing concern about the fate of TPV holders. The threat of repatriation is still firmly on the agenda and there is a risk the RPV could become a de facto form of bridging visa or temporary protection while repatriation arrangements are concluded.

Reflecting a continuance of the 'carrot and stick' approach, the August changes also outlined improved voluntary repatriation packages of $2000 per person, or up to $10,000 per family. These payments are contingent upon the withdrawal of applications for visas of any type.

2.2 TPV Holders' Needs and Service Provision by NGOs and Volunteers

The Australian Government considers the 'effective settlement of new arrivals' to be in the 'national interest' (DIMIA, 2003b: 319). In line with this recognition, different forms of settlement support are provided for migrants and for humanitarian entrants in varying degrees determined, in part, by the amount of support they are perceived to need (humanitarian entrants are generally seen to need more intensive settlement support than skilled migrants), and in part by the degree to which the government believes they are entitled to support. The TPV carries with it only limited entitlements to government subsidised services, although the needs of this group are no less pertinent than those of other refugees. Refugees holding a TPV are excluded from many settlement services as they are deemed to be temporary entrants only and therefore not encouraged to settle. 'Temporary' entrants typically spend many years living in the Australian community and may well become permanent residents – meanwhile, they struggle to learn the language, understand Australian culture, secure a job, find suitable accommodation, educate their children and get on with their lives.

Release into the community from immigration detention can be a disorientating process where TPV holders 'face enormous difficulties' in trying to settle and acclimatise (Leach and Mansouri, 2004: 83). After being dropped in a State or Territory chosen by DIMIA, TPV holders are given free accommodation for one night only, after which they are expected to find their own housing. The conditions attached to the TPV provide only limited access to services like Medicare and social security, and in practice, the gap left by government service provision in supporting TPV holders has been taken up by NGOs.

The immediate post-detention needs of TPV holders are: to apply for social security (the Special Benefit allowance) or to find paid work; to meet the basic survival needs of finding adequate accommodation, household goods and food; the establishment of a bank account; and the receipt of Medicare entitlements. After these needs are met, Barnes (2003) suggests that TPV holders will want to explore possibilities for learning English, enhancing their employment prospects or finding employment, to finding current information on immigration matters, and establishing contact with overseas family members (Barnes, 2003: 15). Recovery from the experience of seeking refuge commonly requires a 'core assumption of safety' in the new environment,

(Steel, 2003: 10) which, for TPV holders, is undermined by the denial of family reunion rights, the threat of repatriation, and difficulties in meeting the everyday needs of settlement.

As Federal policy does not encourage settlement of temporary entrants and therefore does not subsidise settlement services for this visa category, the responsibility for providing such people with minimal essential services has been shouldered largely by NGOs. The United Nations' Department of Public Information (2004) provides a useful functional definition of NGOs as:

> ...any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organised on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to governments, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements.

In some cases organisations were created specifically to provide services as a direct response to the TPV policy, while others have incorporated TPV holders into their existing client base – creating a potential drain on local community resources. Without DIMIA funded or coordinated service provision, settlement assistance occurs through visiting a range of NGO service providers with disparate offerings. While acculturating refugees require specialised services from professionals in cross-cultural service provision, what they often receive is piecemeal help from under-resourced and under-staffed organisations, often with the assistance of volunteers who are not qualified to deal with their complex needs.

The needs of settlement are complex and interdependent, and not easily contained by one set of services (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 19). Without the involvement of DIMIA-funded service providers, organisations have lost their usual referral networks (Barnes, 2003: 47), and have noted that highly constrained resources inhibited their ability to assume a coordinating role and to work collaboratively with other organisations (Mann, 2001: 29). Service delivery to TPV holders is fragmented, with no guarantees of services on the basis of need, and no method of ensuring that all needy applicants have come to the attention of service providers (Barnes, 2003: 48). Furthermore, where organisations' services are reliant on community donations, service provision is dependent on whatever resources are available at the time (Barnes, 2003: 18).

Various research projects have identified funding restrictions as one of the greatest (practical) obstacles to meeting the needs of TPV holders (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 20). Research from New South Wales found that 'all' interviewed service providers working prior to the introduction of the TPV regime 'reported increased pressure on the provision of services' as a result of the inclusion of TPV holding clients within their service frameworks (Pickering, Gard, and Richardson, 2003: 17). In Victoria, community service providers reported a similar increase in demand for services (Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 69), as did community service providers in Queensland in Mann's (2001: 26) study. TPV service providers often noted a need to provide additional services, sometimes outside their traditional area of expertise because they could not address certain needs without addressing other interrelated and

immediate concerns (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 15). Workers in NGOs found service provision to TPV holders difficult given: the Commonwealth's funding restrictions; the lack of understanding (by workers) of the TPV policy; the need for a heavy reliance on volunteer staff; and the sensitive nature of dealing with the language differences, cultural sensitivities and the mental health issues (of dealing with past and current trauma) of TPV clients (Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 71).

The resource limitations and complex needs of TPV holders create an extraordinarily high workload for service providers (Mann, 2001: 26), who often resort to working outside their normal working hours (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, nd: 21). The TPV regime had a 'profound' impact on workers ranging from the frustration of inadequate service provision and increased workload, to the sense of well being which came from bearing witness to the contributions made by local communities (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 16). Workers in DIMIA-funded organisations also resorted to unpaid overtime, given that they continued to receive pleas for help from TPV holders despite their inability to accept them as clients (Barnes, 2003: 43). In response to the 'humanitarian dilemma' of seeing the distress of TPV holders and not being in a position to respond, workers in DIMIA-funded organisations began to assist them in their unpaid time as private citizens – a practice which Barnes identified as 'common' (Barnes, 2003: 43-44). While this practice is likely to result in staff burn-out, it helps them to meet important personal commitments and to maintain a sense of personal integrity (Barnes, 2003: 44).

In addition to the unpaid overtime of NGO staff, the under resourced organisations often relied on volunteers to meet the extra demands of the TPV policy on their services. Mansouri and Bagdas found volunteers to play a 'vital role' in assisting TPV holders; teaching them skills for daily living, helping with immediate settlement needs, providing them with links to their local ethnic community and other networks, and providing advocacy on their behalf (Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 62-65). However, concerns have been expressed over the capacity of volunteers to meet the complex needs of TPV holders. Volunteers working with TPV holders are often inexperienced in dealing with refugee needs (Pickering, Gard, and Richardson, 2003: 18). Barnes found that English classes taught by volunteers were of 'limited assistance' given that they often lacked qualifications in the field (Barnes, 2003: 34). Concurring with other research on service provision to refugees, Pickering, Gard and Richardson argued that courses must be taught by 'professional language teachers' who have a good understanding of the trauma experienced by the refugee in the past, and the impacts this has on the progress of their learning (Pickering, Gard, and Richardson, 2003: 11). Like NGO providers of TPV services, volunteers were also found to be overworked. In the research of Mansouri and Bagdas, both independent volunteers and those working under the supervision of NGOs, described their experience of exhaustion from working between 30-45 hours a week. Volunteers expressed a strong sense of empathy with TPV holders and felt duty-bound to help because of the enormity of their needs and the lack of coordinated response to those needs. The work took an emotional toll on the volunteers who described experiencing stress to their family life, finances and health (Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 65- 68).

Building Social Capital – Volunteers, NGOs and TPV Holders

After their treatment by the Australian Government in relation to immigration detention, temporary protection, and the stigma incurred by both processes, some TPV holders began to fear that they would experience the same prejudice from the general Australian population (Barnes, 2003: 22). The fear of being received with an attitude of racism was sometimes confirmed in the course of their daily lives (Barnes, 2003: 22; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 10). However, in contrast with these few bad experiences and the predictions of immigration officials, TPV holders have indicated in various studies that they have been pleasantly surprised by the general reaction of the Australian community. In a study by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, TPV holders 'spoke warmly' of their treatment by the general population and contrasted this with the actions of the government which had 'made their lives more miserable' (in Gilley, 2002: 4). Within the community, TPV holders developed friendships with a range of people in the including 'neighbours, employers, [and] English language teachers' (Leach and Mansouri, 2004: 93).

While arguing that it would be 'almost impossible to precisely detail the range of formal and informal organisations that have been established' in Australia to help asylum seekers and refugees, Reynolds claims that the 'range and level of activity' is 'unprecedented in Australian history' (Reynolds, 2004: 3). People who had visited detention centres or met refugees released on TPVs reported a range of emotions including 'deep sympathy' and 'admiration' for the resilience of refugees, and a sense of anger and shame over the government's policies (Reynolds, 2004: 9). The actions of volunteers in assisting refugees included visiting, writing to, or telephoning asylum seekers in detention centres, campaigning to change the mandatory detention and TPV regimes, holding public meetings, conducting letter writing campaigns, and sending gifts such as food parcels, vouchers or telephone cards (Reynolds, 2004: 9-12).

Recent research suggests that initiatives such as the Fitzroy Learning Network's Opening Doors to Our Community program has enabled refugees on TPVs to develop friendships with Australian citizens, whom many now regard as their 'family' (Humpage and Marston, 2005: 144). These relationships had been crucial for TPV holders, they felt, since many TPV refugees are dislocated from their biological families and are denied the right to family reunion. Furthermore, since their sense of faith or trust in humanity can be seriously undermined by the conditions which gave rise to their flight and the conditions under which the government has received them, these relationships can important for allowing TPV refugees to regain a sense of trust. Social relationships also have positive effects on the functional aspects of settlement by providing 'a point of intersection' between 'powerful members of the community' and vulnerable TPV refugees (Humpage and Marston, 2005: 143).

TPV holders are not the sole beneficiaries of these relationships of voluntarism. TPV refugees associated with the Fitzroy Learning Network have been voluntarily engaged in norms of reciprocity (Humpage, 2004: 30). The Australian 'Mum' of one Afghani refugee, for example, suggests that she receives much more than she gives. While she assists him with language classes and everyday advice, he assists her by undertaking repair work in her

house and bringing her food (Humpage, 2004: 30). TPV holders have made considerable efforts toward social inclusion by participating in the Australian community and by contributing to their own ethnic groups and visa-based communities. They have been 'pulling together as a community' by participating in voluntary associations representing the Afghani and Iraqi communities, and through the Al-Amel TPV Holders' Association (Humpage, 2004: 31).

These relationships between NGO workers, volunteers and TPV holders can be seen to build social capital – a phenomenon described by the World Bank as 'the institutions, the relationships, the attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development' (Productivity Commission 2003:1). According to the Productivity Commission, social capital can generate economic and social benefits. While acknowledging that the process of devising policies that maximise social capital is problematic, the Commission recommends that it is in the interests of governments to seek ways to harness and enhance it, whilst being mindful of not crowding out civil society (Productivity Commission, 2003: xiii).

2.3 Temporary Protection in the International Context

The Australian Temporary Protection Visa stands in contrast with the manner in which temporary protection has typically been used internationally, and particularly within Europe. Australia's earlier uses of temporary protection – for Chinese students after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989 and for Kosovar refugees in 1999 – reflect a more traditional use of this type of protection.[16] That is, temporary protection has commonly been used for group-based determinations where it is necessary to deal promptly with situations of mass crisis or mass influx (which may or may not be based on grounds of persecution) (Leach and Mansouri, 2004: 7). The Australian TPV is unusual in that it is applied to persons who have been individually determined and granted refugee status. While the Australian TPV is at odds with temporary protection in the international context, it is important to understand the context within which temporary protection has increasingly been used over the last 25 years (Hathaway, 2003).

It is clear that in recent years, while there has been an increasing need for asylum worldwide there has also been declining support internationally for refugees. Certainly within the West there has been the dual policy of restricting access to refugee protection while strengthening national borders against displaced people. These policies appear to be linked to changes in the international balance of power and the distribution of resources (Mann, 2001: 12). Furthermore, it is clear that refugees' rights across the globe are being systematically weakened due to the events of September 11 and the subsequent 'war on terror' which seem to have given reason for Western nations to harden their stand against the most recent arrivals at their borders. Ironically, many of these recent arrivals are fleeing the countries most

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[16] F. Mansouri and M.Leach (forthcoming) 'The Evolution of the Temporary Protection Visa Regime in Australia' to appear in *Refuge*, Canada.

affected by the 'war on terror' and arriving at those countries waging the 'war on terror' – Australia being one such country.

Crisp (2004) suggests that the trend in international protection has shifted from an agenda of resettlement and local integration to repatriation. Between the period of 1960 to the mid-1990s, he argues, industrialised states typically allowed refugees to 'remain indefinitely on their territory' and to 'acquire a wide range of rights and entitlements' (Crisp, 2004: 4). More recently, however, these states have increasingly granted temporary and limited forms of protection 'with the expectation that those people will return to their country of origin...as soon as it is safe to do so' (Crisp, 2004: 4). Temporary protection and repatriation (voluntary and involuntary) have become key priorities of Western nation states. In the international refugee framework of the UNHCR (Crisp, 2004: 4), voluntary repatriation has been identified as 'the most preferred solution' (Executive Committee Conclusion 79 of 1996 cited in Crisp, 2004: 5), while temporary protection is seen as necessary in certain circumstances, but to be used under 'exceptional circumstances' where protection from *refoulement* is retained and minimum standards of treatment are assured (Executive Committee Conclusions 19 and 22).

Broadening the Sphere of Protection or Restricting Refugee Rights?

It is in this context that temporary protection has been increasingly embraced as a solution to migration flows. During the late 1960s, the 1970s and 1980s, temporary forms of protection provided a useful solution to the question of refugee intake for countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America that either were not signatories to the Convention, had poor socio-economic conditions, or wanted to prevent the extension of conflict into their regions (Amore, 2002: 3). In the West however, temporary protection has been used predominantly since the 1990s to deal with situations of mass influx where individual processing for refugee status would place strain on the traditional refugee administrative system or where groups may require immediate protection yet their status does not fit within the limited terms of the Convention. Alternative forms of protection were already on the agenda of international debate prior to the pragmatic implementation of temporary protection regimes in response to the Bosnian crisis (Appelqvist, 2000: 95). Programs of temporary protection can appeal to groups with liberal and restrictive views of refugee policy, with the former arguing for more inclusive grounds under which displaced people can be offered protection, and the latter arguing to restrict the rights accorded to refugees (Brekke, 2001: 14).

Some of the key justifications for supporting temporary protection regimes are based on concerns over the relevance of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol (Appelqvist, 2000: 92). Under the terms of the refugee Convention, refugee status is granted upon a 'well-founded fear' of persecution 'for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' (Article 1). Advocates of temporary protection as a means of broadening the sphere of protection, feel that the terms of the Convention are too limited to meet the requirements of refugees in the current global climate. Since the creation of the Convention and its Protocol, situations of 'mass flight' have become more common with the advent of 'generalised violence', 'massive and persistent patterns of human rights violation, economic emergency' or environmental catastrophes and human

induced disasters (Appelqvist, 2000: 93). While asylum seekers fleeing these conditions could be denied protection under the strict terms of the Convention, temporary protection can be used as a complementary instrument for broadening the sphere of protection to include such situations.

Calls for temporary protection on the basis of restricting refugee rights are made on a similar basis to those for extending it. Again, the post Second World War context in which the Convention system was created is seen to have provided an outmoded framework that has no relevance in the current context (Appelqvist, 2000: 92). In Norway for example, the Labour Government undertook a review of refugee policy in 1991, during which an initial proposal was made to receive all refugees on a temporary basis (Brekke, 2001: 7). The justification for this policy was to use Norway's limited resources to maximum efficiency by helping refugees only during the period at which they were at risk. Therefore, based on the principle of 'circulation' or 'rotation', a maximum number of refugees could be supported for a limited time (Brekke, 2001: 7). This review had been inspired by debates in the international arena regarding the legitimacy of the principle of permanent residence for refugees, but was discarded with the onset of the pragmatic concerns of dealing with a Bosnian refugee influx in 1992. While a second working group was meant to explore the question of temporary protection in greater detail, the Bosnian refugee crisis shifted the focus of the debate from a wider application of temporary protection to a specific application of temporary protection for dealing with situations of mass influx (Brekke, 2001: 7). In the final version of the report in 1995, temporary protection was seen as a policy instrument that was 'parallel' to the traditional 'asylum regime' that is specifically used for dealing with situations of mass influx (Brekke, 2001: 7).

While Norway merely made a proposal for granting temporary protection to Convention refugees (as well as other types of refugees), Australia and Denmark had some success in implementing this type of policy, to varying degrees. The US Committee for Refugees argues that the Danish Immigration Ministry has introduced some of the 'strictest laws in the world' concerning immigration and asylum (Country Report on Denmark by USCR, 2003). From 2001, Danish laws prohibited asylum claims from being made at Danish embassies, and permanent residence for refugees (and the full level of public benefit for asylum seekers) has been made conditional upon residence in Denmark for a period of seven years, during which refugees may be repatriated if the conditions in their home country have improved and are deemed safe (USCR, 2003). This seven-year period of living in limbo is likely to leave refugees feeling unsettled, given that they could be repatriated at any point during this period. While the Danish system applies this seven-year condition to all refugees, the Australian TPV is applied only to onshore refugee claimants – thus creating two classes of refugee status on the basis of mode of entry. Unlike the Danish system however, after September 2001, the Australian system denies TPV holders the right to apply for a permanent visa if, en route to Australia, they have spent more than seven days in a so-called 'safe' transit country (as noted, however, more recently they have been able to compete for non-humanitarian visas, which themselves bring certain problems) (Leach and Mansouri, 2004: 6). Governments (such as the Australian Government) that aim to adopt restrictive refugee policies can use temporary protection to avoid the stigma of 'passive receiving country' status

by undertaking greater levels of intervention (Brekke, 2001: 14). Where the Australian Government has not prevented the arrival on onshore asylum seekers through 'border protection' mechanisms, its restriction of rights to those who enter in such a manner and subsequently receive refugee status in the very least gives the appearance of control over 'unauthorised' arrivals by punishing those who do arrive and deterring those considering an undocumented arrival.

The Pragmatic Problems of Temporary Protection

The scope of entitlements and rights accorded with temporary protection has varied from country to country (Appelqvist, 2000: 91). The denial of mechanisms for integration as evident in the Australian TPV regime is not the only path that has been taken. In temporary protection frameworks, policy advisers have considered the merits of promoting, as well as the merits of preventing, the integration of those granted temporary protection. In the Norwegian case, the strategy of promoting relative isolation was considered to have particular strengths. The prohibition of labour market participation and access to the education system, for example, were seen to be policies that would prevent those with temporary protection from forming an attachment to the society and thus could increase their willingness for voluntary repatriation (Brekke, 2001: 9). By contrast, integration could increase the likelihood for forced return. However, Norwegian policy-makers deemed the integration strategy to be preferable to a strategy of isolationism, on the basis that the latter, if applied in the long-term, would have detrimental effects on the physical and mental health of the temporarily protected. Furthermore, integration could better prepare them for their future lives, whether this was to be in Norway or their country of origin (Brekke, 2001: 9). The isolation strategy was seen to be particularly difficult to defend if the conditions that gave rise to the influx were prolonged (Brekke, 2001: 9).

Where temporary protection is prolonged, uncertainty and the risk of repatriation will influence the refugee's perspective on the participation in life in the host country (Amore, 2002: 6). In Germany, Bosnian temporary protection holders were found to have experienced a 'permanent state of anxiety' as a result of their temporary status (Luebben, 2003: 399). In addition to supportive therapy that included giving protection holders the opportunity to give their 'testimony' of events, a refugee rehabilitation centre in Frankfurt used the tactic of advocating for policy change toward longer-term protection (Luebben, 2003: 396). After lobbying for almost five years, the government granted a concession allowing those who could prove they were 'severely traumatised' and receiving treatment for this trauma to remain in Germany (Luebben, 2004: 396). In a report evaluating the Bosnian experience of temporary protection in the UK, a 'sad and unsatisfactory picture' was presented where refugees felt unsettled and unable to plan their futures (Amore, 2002: 6). Although certain rights were given, such as the right to work and the provision of accommodation, the inability of refugees to plan for the future was a major setback.

Koser and Black suggest that the features of temporary protection that are attractive to policy makers are often unable to be implemented in practice (Koser and Black, 1999: 523). As Appelqvist notes, war and other conflicts

'seldom unfold in accordance with political predictions' (Appelqvist, 2000: 92). For example, while the Bosnian refugees in Europe were initially granted temporary protection, most countries eventually granted them permanent residency rights (Koser and Black, 1999: 524). Local integration was not the proposed solution, yet the integration of Bosnian refugees was seen to be acceptable given their 'positive impact upon labour markets and the relative ease of their cultural assimilation' (Koser and Black, 19999: 534). By the end of 1997, Germany was the only EU state not to have developed plans for the transfer of Bosnians to a more permanent status (Koser and Black, 1999: 528). Germany was seen to be in a difficult position given that they had not only received around 60 percent of the EU's Bosnian protection seekers, but also the greatest number of asylum applications in the EU (Koser and Black, 1999: 528; 530). If permanent residency becomes the norm for temporary protection regimes, then its use as a path to repatriation can be considered unsuccessful (Brekke, 2001: 11).

Temporary protection failures have not only been addressed with the provision of permanent humanitarian visas. Upon cessation of their TP status in 1998, Bosnian refugees in Italy were given three options: 1) the opportunity to claim asylum under the Convention; 2) the conversion of a humanitarian residence permit to a two-year immigration permit on the condition of evidence of a job offer; or 3) the grant of a residence permit on humanitarian grounds (Amore, 2002: 7). Amore (2002) suggests that each option entailed particular problems or weaknesses. Given that three years had passed since the Dayton Agreement, applications for Convention status were seen to be an unlikely option. The second option, of basing residency upon an employment offer essentially fails to recognise the vulnerable status of the applicants by defining them as labour migrants. While, the third option involved recognition of their vulnerable status, protection was only granted to those who could provide evidence of an inability to find work (due to health, age or personal issues) (Amore, 2002: 7-8). The Kosovar-Albanians were offered similar terms and options many years later (Amore, 2002: 9).

The threat of forced repatriation which underlies the policy of temporary protection is prone to 'controversy' (Brekke, 2001: 6). Forced repatriation can be particularly difficult if those offered protection have lived in the host country for a considerable period of time. The prolonged presence of Bosnian refugee families in Sweden, for example, was given as one of the key reasons why a deportation order from the government was overturned by the Aliens Appeal Board (Appelqvist, 2000: 92). This is an indication of the tensions between 'political deliberations and legal interpretations, and thus the problematic character of the concept and practice of temporary protection (Appelqvist, 2000: 92). For temporary protection to be a success, Brekke argues, the temporary period needs to be significant enough to allow for substantial changes in the homeland, but short enough so that the burden of temporary conditions for the protection seeker are kept to a minimum (Brekke, 2001: 10). Furthermore, once the protection seekers have become visible to the local population, it is more difficult for the government to force repatriation (Brekke, 2001: 13).

Hathaway (2003) suggests that justifications for temporary protection are often based on two principal misunderstandings of the Convention system. The first misunderstanding is that the Convention status is a legal fetter on 'the

right of governments to bring protection to an end when and if circumstances in the country of origin allow' (Hathaway, 2003: 1-2). This assumption, which has been the basis of many alternative forms of protection, is not supported by international law. The Cessation clauses of the Convention make clear the requirement that protection only needs to last for the duration of the persistence of the well founded fear of prosecution (Hathaway, 2003: 2). The second misunderstanding is in relation to the validity of the alternative labels and their differential forms of treatment. Regardless of whether or not an individual is assessed for refugee status, Hathaway argues, once that person fits the Convention definition of a refugee they are automatically entitled the rights that belong to the status, and must be 'treated with respect for the system of incremental entitlement established by the Convention' (Hathaway, 2003: 2). Therefore while the Convention 'does not require states formally to determine refugee status, neither does it authorise governments to withhold rights from persons who are, in fact, refugees just because status assessment has not taken place' (Hathaway, 2003: 3).

The European Union – The Temporary Protection Directive and 'Harmonisation'

With the acknowledgement of problems inherent in temporary protection regimes, those who uphold the relevance of the Convention argue that refugee law can be adapted to the context it exists within and can protect these 'new' types if it is applied 'in a liberal manner' (Appleqvist, 2000: 93). Based upon these arguments one could either advocate the abandonment of the use of temporary protection altogether, or argue for the restriction of temporary protection to a mechanism for providing rights to asylum seekers whilst their claims for refugee status are being assessed. For van Selm (2001: 23), this latter case is exemplified by the Temporary Protection Directive of the European Union. According to van Selm, the Directive provides member states with a mechanism for extending the terms of refugee protection, but primarily serves as a device for enabling the 'full operation of the Geneva Convention' by providing a limited time during which to meet the administrative and resource challenges that a mass influx can bring (van Selm, 2001: 24, 31-32).

The Council of the European Union has established a Directive on standards for temporary protection across member states. The Directive outlines minimum standards that must be applied to holders of temporary protection, but does not prevent member states from granting more favourable conditions. The rights of temporary protection include:

o Residence permits for the duration of protection and documentation of evidence of this residency (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 8:1).

o The right to engage in employment or self-employment, as well as opportunities for education and vocational training (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 12).

o Access to suitable accommodation or housing assistance (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 13:1).

o Assistance in terms of social welfare and means of subsistence, as well as for medical care (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 13: 2).

o Education for persons under 18, under the same conditions as nationals of the host society. Access the general education system for adults (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 14:1 & 14:2).

o Family reunion for persons who have a TP status but are in different EU member states. Family members not in a member state can be reunited with another family member with protection, given that they are also in need of protection and fit the definition of family agreed upon by the Council (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 15:3).

Under the terms of the Council, temporary protection is defined as an 'exceptional scheme' for 'cases of mass influx of displaced persons who cannot return to their country'. It can be granted to spontaneous arrivals (groups that are fleeing a crisis) as well as to groups that arrive as a result of humanitarian evacuation. The maximum period of duration is three years – it is initially granted for one year, with the possibility of extensions for two six month periods, and then the EU Council of Ministers can decide upon a further extension for one year. After the maximum period of temporary protection has been reached or after a decision by Council that safe, durable return can be permitted, member states should enable the process of voluntary return, with the condition that this is undertaken with 'respect for human dignity' (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 21:1). Member states are also permitted to impose the forced return of those whose status has ended, again on the condition that this is conducted with 'due respect for human dignity' (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 22:1). Before member states can impose forced return, they are required to consider any compelling reasons which may make return impossible or unreasonable in specific cases (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 22:2). The granting of temporary protection can not be used to prejudge refugee status (Council of the European Union, 2001 - Directive 2001/55/EC, 3:1).

Levy (2005), however, questions whether the broader harmonisation project within the EU (of which the Temporary Protection Directive is a part) is a framework for exclusion or a mechanism for protecting asylum seeker rights and standards of refuge. European nation-states and the EU have defined undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers as the 'other' upon which European citizenship and belonging to Europe are measured and forged, at the same time that the sanctity of international law and the refugee Convention have been defended, repeatedly, in EU documents (Levy, 2005: 36, 44). While a harmonisation of asylum and refugee policy could potentially save the Convention system, he argues, the calls for extraterritorial processing could threaten the international refugee protection system (Levy, 2005: 45-46). The British Government's proposal for 'transit-processing centres' was considered more radical and controversial than the Australian Pacific Solution

as it argued for the deportation of asylum seekers already within the territory of the EU to external transit-processing centres (Levy, 2005: 47-48). Other EU member states have not been as keen as the British Government to implement extraterritorial arrangements (Levy, 2005: 49). Proposals for harmonisation to take a restrictive rather than an inclusive character, Levy (2005: 57) argues, have typically been justified on the basis that this would save the principle of *non-refoulement*. However, the securitisation focus of migration control since the events of September 11th which make it more difficult for spontaneous asylum seekers to reach EU member countries without violating the law could effectively 'empty the 1951 Convention of any real content'(Levy, 2005: 54)

3. Section One: The Impact of Policy on TPV Refugees – Economic and Social Conditions and Coping Capacity

One hundred and twenty semi-structured questionnaires and focus group interviews were conducted over a three-year period with TPV holders in Australia to monitor the social and economic impacts of the TPV policy and the coping capacity of TPV holders. The first phase of interviews in 2002 canvassed a total of 56 people – 28 participants from Melbourne,11 participants from Shepparton and 17 participants from Brisbane. This first phase documents the immediate post-detention experience during which TPV holders are focused on meeting their numerous early settlement needs. Previous research (such as Mann, 2001; Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002; Barnes, 2003; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003; Marston, 2003) indicates that this is a difficult task due to the Federal Government's policy of denying funding for settlement services for TPV holders. The second phase of interviews in 2003 canvassed a total of 47 people - with 21 participants from Melbourne and 26 participants from Sydney. This phase documents the longer-term experiences of life on a TPV – exploring many of the same questions posed in the first phase regarding access to settlement services, in addition to questions specifically relating to the longer-term impacts of living on a TPV, such as the process of undergoing visa reapplications and facing the threat of repatriation. The third phase of interviews in 2004 canvassed the views of TPV holders in Melbourne only (these 17 interviews were supplemented by group discussions). The questions posed in this phase were the same as those in the second phase, but document an even longer-term experience of life on a TPV.

For the longitudinal element of the research, a total of 66 TPV holders were interviewed in Melbourne. Twenty-five of the 38 respondents in the second and third surveys were interviewed two or more times over the three-year period.[17]

For the cross-sectional component of the research, the sample comprises respondents from the three States in which most newly released TPV holders have chosen to settle – New South Wales (Sydney), Victoria (Melbourne and Shepparton) and Queensland (Brisbane). By documenting the experiences of TPV holders residing in different States, any potential differences between the States in terms of service provision and economic and social conditions can be understood. Furthermore, the inclusion of respondents from Shepparton and Melbourne in the State of Victoria enables an understanding of any potential differences between a regional and metropolitan experience for TPV holders.

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[17] 6 participants did not respond when asked if they had previously participated in the survey.

3.1   National Overview

i) Economic and material conditions

Tenure of housing secured

Beer and Foley (2003a: 2) note that the capacity to secure appropriate and affordable housing 'plays a crucial role in the successful settlement and integration of refugees'. In addition to having significant impacts on functional components of settlement such as finding employment, housing tenure and conditions impact on the capacity of refugees to regain the dignity and independence which is typically lost in the pre-flight experience of persecution and the unsettling process of seeking asylum and resettlement (Beer and Foley, 2003a: 4). Secure and adequate housing can provide an opportunity for 'security, shelter and personal space' (Zetter and Pearl in Beer and Foley, 2003a: 4). Yet because the Australian Federal Government deems onshore refugee applicants to be ineligible for 'resettlement' opportunities, TPV holders face barriers to finding accommodation that are not experienced by other refugees who are granted accommodation assistance on arrival (Beer and Foley, 2005:2). Without the settlement support available to refugees with permanent visas, TPV holders have been found to face numerous difficulties in their search for 'adequate and affordable accommodation' (Beer and Foley, 2003b).

Post-detention period

In the immediate post-detention phase, 34 percent of the TPV holders surveyed across the three States were found to be living in short term housing,[18] followed closely by 32 percent of TPV holders living in long term housing.[19] Those living in medium term housing[20] made up 22 percent of the 56 TPV holders surveyed in the post-detention period. A substantial majority (88 percent) of TPV holders had secured housing that lasted for a period longer than six months, while those living in unsecured accommodation (either temporary accommodation[21] or emergency accommodation[22]) represented a minority of 12 percent.

One year on

In the second phase of the research, documenting the experiences of TPV holders in Sydney and Melbourne, respondents were most commonly found living in short term housing (48 percent). The rates of access to medium and long-term accommodation were similar to one another at 23 percent for long term and 24 percent for medium term housing. Only 14 percent were in temporary accommodation.

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[18] Short term housing involves tenure that lasts between six months and one year

[19] Long term housing involves tenure that lasts for a period greater than two years.

[20] Medium term housing involves tenure that lasts for a period between one and two years.

[21] Temporary housing involves tenure that lasts between three and six months.

[22] Emergency housing involves tenure that lasts for up to two months.

Two years on

In the third phase of the research, documenting the experiences of TPV holders residing in Melbourne, none of the respondents were living in emergency or temporary accommodation. Twelve percent were living in short term accommodation, while almost half (46 percent) were living in medium term accommodation. Twenty-four percent had secured longer term accommodation, while 18 percent were living in their own home.

Availability of services

Post-detention phase

Given the lack of federally-funded settlement services for TPV holders, it is likely that the immediate post-detention period will require a significant outlay in terms of time and effort in order to meet everyday settlement needs. For this reason, only TPV holders in the post-detention phase were asked questions relating to their capacity to access settlement services and to secure employment and a sufficient level of income security (whether this is through social security benefits or wages). TPV holders in the first, second and third phases were asked their views on the quality of service provision.

The types of services likely to be accessed by TPV holders are: the few federally-funded services such as income support (Centrelink), health services (Medicare) and education; and the myriad of largely uncoordinated and under-funded settlement services provided by State or Local Governments and NGOs in the Federal Government's absence, such as English language classes, housing assistance, educational opportunities, employment services (assistance with seeking employment rather than the capacity to find employment), and material aid (such as the provision of food, clothing or furniture). The capacity to find employment also has a considerable impact on settlement.

TPV holders in the post-detention phase were found to have relatively low levels of access to services. That is, the rates can be considered low granted the importance of such services to the capacity of TPV holders to function in everyday life. The most frequently secured service was housing (52 percent), which was closely followed by English language tuition (50 percent). Both these services were secured by just over 50 percent of TPV participants, which is, in fact, a low rate given the primary nature of these services and their impact on achieving other indicators of settlement. An average of one third of the respondents secured services related to education (34 percent) and income security (31 percent). This again is considerably low, particularly in the area of income security. Employment (15 percent) was recorded as the least secured indicator amongst the post-detention TPV holders. 40 percent indicated that they had not secured employment, while 15 percent indicated that they had secured employment (45 percent of respondents did not respond to this question).

Quality of services

Post-detention phase

The first wave of respondents tended to rate the majority of services, and their opportunities for employment and income security in negative terms. The list of options from which TPV holders could rate their services/opportunities included (ranging from negative to positive responses): 'poor', 'satisfactory', 'good', 'excellent' and 'other'.

The indicator with the poorest rating was employment with a mean of 1.2193 within a range of 1-1.75 for the lowest category (the lowest possible rating being 1). One service, Medicare, was rated as 'good', although on the lower value range of good, with a mean of 2.5428 within a range of 2.51-3.25. Health was generally rated by survey participants across each region as 'satisfactory', with a mean of 2.1351 within a range of 1.751-2.50.

Employment services were given the highest negative rating of the services listed: 66 percent considered employment services to be 'poor', while 7 percent considered them to be 'satisfactory'. Only a meagre 2 percent considered them to be 'good'. English language services were given the next highest negative rating, with 54 percent considering them to be 'poor' and 29 percent considering them 'satisfactory'. Material aid services and income support services also received a high negative response. Material aid and income support services were considered 'poor' by 48 percent, while the former were considered satisfactory by 32 percent and the latter by 45 percent. Only 2 percent considered their income support level to be 'good' and the same number (2 percent) considered it 'excellent'.

Health care and housing services received majority positive responses – with 52 percent considering the former as 'satisfactory' and 23 percent considering them 'good' and 48 percent considering the latter to be 'satisfactory' (although 37 percent also considered them to be 'poor', thus it also recorded a relatively strong negative response).

One year on

Overall, respondents in the second phase tended to rate the services they had accessed as 'satisfactory'. The most positive responses received were for Medicare and health services, both of which had between 40-45 percent of TPV holders rating them as either 'good' or 'excellent'. The least positive responses were for employment services, which had over half the participants (55 percent) giving them a rating of 'poor'. English language support was rated as 'poor' by 40 percent of people and 'satisfactory' by a further 32 percent. Income and housing support were given a majority satisfactory rating: 55 percent found their income arrangements as 'satisfactory' (while 23 percent found them to be 'poor') and 51 percent found their housing arrangements as 'satisfactory' (while 23 percent found them to be 'poor'). Material aid was considered 'satisfactory' by 38 percent of respondents (and only a slightly lower percentage, 34 percent found them to be 'poor').

Two years on

Overall, respondents in the third phase of the research rated the level and quality of support being received in the range from 'satisfactory' to 'poor'. Employment services received the poorest rating. Nearly 60 percent (59 percent) gave employment services the lowest possible rating of 'poor'. Almost one quarter (23 percent) conceded them to be 'satisfactory', while only 6 percent considered them 'good'. The next two services to rate a significant negative response were material aid and income support. Nearly half the respondents (47 percent) considered the material aid support they were receiving to be 'poor'; while over 40 percent of the remainder considered it to be 'satisfactory' - only one respondent considered it to be good. Income support rated a little better – with 59 percent rating their level of support as 'satisfactory – yet this is a relatively low figure given the essential nature of this service. Over a third considered the income support they received to be 'poor', while only 6 percent believed the support they were given was 'good'. English language support is a similarly vital service for settlement. Here, over 40 percent of respondents rated the services they were receiving as 'satisfactory'; more than a third of respondents rated them as 'poor'; 6 percent considered them 'good, while 12 percent of respondents considered this service to be 'excellent'. Housing support, health services and Medicare – particularly the latter – were the most positively rated services. 64 percent of respondents considered their level of housing support to be 'satisfactory', 12 percent considered it to be 'poor', while 24 percent believed it was 'good'. The majority of the respondents (58 percent) considered the support they received for health to be 'satisfactory'; 12 percent considered it to be 'poor', while 24 percent considered it to be 'good' or 'excellent'. Medicare received the most positive rating of all the services. All those who responded to the question rated Medicare as 'satisfactory' or higher. Over half the respondents considered it 'satisfactory', more than a third considered it a 'good' service, and 6 percent rated it as 'excellent'.

ii) Social conditions

Previous research has indicated that, despite receiving an unwelcome response from the Australian Government, TPV holders have managed to build friendships and bonds in the Australian community with a range of people such as 'neighbours, employers, [and] English language teachers' (Leach and Mansouri, 2004: 93). TPV holders have spoken 'warmly' of their treatment by the general population and noted how this has contrasted with their treatment by the Government (Gilley, 2002: 4). The 'range and level of activity' of refugee-related voluntarism (ranging from activities such as visits to detention centres, material aid assistance, or lobbying to change government policy) has been 'unprecedented in Australian history' (Reynolds, 2004: 3). TPV holders have made considerable efforts toward social inclusion by participating in the Australian community and by contributing to their own ethnic groups and visa-based communities. Social capital – 'the institutions ... relationships ... attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development' (Productivity Commission 2003: 1) – appears to be strengthened and involved in these relationships between NGO workers, volunteers and TPV holders.

The questions in this survey canvassed the levels of social connectedness and trust both within the TPV holders' own ethnic communities and with the wider Australian community.

Post-detention phase

In the post-detention period, the majority of the 54 TPV holders surveyed did not have contact with the Iraqi community in regional centres. Fifty-five percent indicated that they had no contact with their ethnic community, while 39 percent indicated in the affirmative. In terms of post-detention social capital, 60 percent of TPV holders indicated that they did not feel valued by Australian society and 57 percent felt that most Australians could not be trusted (48 percent of which *strongly agreed* that Australians could not be trusted). In terms of voluntary work within the local community, almost 67 percent indicated that they had not participated, while just over 26 percent indicated that they had volunteered their time. Despite the high rate of non-participation in local community work, and the majority having no contact with the Iraqi community, 55 percent of TPV holders indicated that they could get help from friends when required (which suggests the social strength of the local communities).

One year on

After their first year on a TPV, respondents generally gave high positive responses to questions relating to the establishment of social capital. Positive responses were given to all social capital questions – with between 72 percent and 85 percent of participants answering 'yes, a little' or 'yes, definitely' to each question.

Fifty-one percent of the participants felt they were 'definitely' treated well by Australian society, while 32 percent felt they were treated well by Australian society 'a little' and 15 percent were 'unsure' of whether they were treated well. Their capacity for general trust in Australians achieved similar ratings with 51 percent suggesting they 'definitely' trust Australians, 32 percent suggesting they trust Australians 'a little', 8 percent indicating that they do not trust Australians ('not at all' or 'not really') and 4 percent demonstrated uncertainty. In reference to finding help from friends and community when needed, 38 percent of respondents in indicated they 'definitely' could, 34 percent indicated that they could receive 'a little' assistance when required, and 6 percent were 'unsure'. Fifty-seven percent felt they 'definitely' had good experiences in the Australian community, while 28 percent answered 'a little' and 4 percent were 'unsure'. Sixty-six percent indicated that they had 'definitely' made friends within the Iraqi community, 21 percent felt they had made friends 'a little', and 6 percent indicated that they had either 'not really' made friends or they had not made friends 'at all'. In terms of building friendships outside the Iraqi community, 57 percent felt they 'definitely' had, 28 percent felt they had 'a little', 4 percent indicated that they had not made friends, while 6 percent were 'unsure'.

Two years on

In the second year of life on a TPV, respondents appeared to enjoy a high level of social capital and social inclusion. The majority of TPV holders have strong friendship networks both within and outside of their communities, and report being treated well by Australian society and having good experiences. Most felt they could trust Australians, but while most felt that Australians trusted them, nearly four out of ten respondents felt unsure about whether or not they were trusted. Eighty-two percent believed they were treated well by Australian society - only one person was 'unsure', and one person did not feel they were treated well. More than three quarters (76 percent) of the TPV holders felt they could rely on some level of support from friends and community when they needed it. The majority of participants (88 percent) reported having good experiences in the Australian community. Slightly more than 10 percent reported that they did not have good experiences. This may reflect the ambivalence of the community itself. As one person remarked, 'the Australian community is friendly and open-minded and it welcomes refugees. Actually, this varies among them, as a minority rejects the refugees, but the majority responds positively to the migrants and refugees.' Almost all TPV holders (94 percent) had made friends within the Iraqi community, and the majority (82 percent) had also made friends outside the Iraqi community. TPV holders reported enjoying a reasonably high level of trust with the Australian community. 65 percent felt they could generally trust Australians, while 59 percent felt that Australians trusted them.

iii) Coping capacity (practical and emotional aspects)
Voluntary repatriation

Post-detention phase

Questions relating to visa reapplications and the threat of repatriation were not part of the first wave of surveys, given that they were either not relevant or not considered (by the researchers) as prominent concerns during the immediate post-detention period.

One year on

After one year on a TPV, nearly half of all respondents (45 percent) were worried that voluntary repatriation would remove their choice to stay in Australia (all of these respondents *strongly agreed*). A similar amount (47 percent) did not agree that they were worried. Less than 10 percent of the TPV holders either did not respond to the question or did not agree nor disagree.

Forty-nine percent of the participants' visas were still valid. Over 70 percent had applied for a permanent visa since many had begun the process of re-application before their TPV expired. Only 6 percent stated that they had not applied for a permanent visa while the rest did not answer the question. Respondents reported mixed feelings regarding the process of visa re-application: 32 percent described the experience as 'traumatic'; 28 percent described their response as 'worried'; 23 percent noted that it made them

'sad', while 23 percent also suggested the process was 'good'. A few people also reported feeling 'frightened', 'hopeful' or 'uncertain'[23].

Over 85 percent of respondents strongly refuted the statement that Iraq was a safe place (at the moment). Only 4 percent of people believed Iraq was safe, and less than 10 percent did not respond or neither neither agreed nor disagreed. Given the strong belief held by the TPV holders that Iraq is not a safe place to be at the moment, it is unsurprising that a similar number did not feel safe returning to Iraq. Only 8 percent agreed that they felt safe returning, which reflects the number of people who felt Iraq is a safe place at the moment. Again, the number of people who responded that they felt anxious about their family in Iraq corresponded with the number of people who felt Iraq was not a safe place at the moment. The number of people who prefer not to live in Iraq also corresponds with the degree of perceived safety there.

Two years on

Most TPV holders who had been on a TPV for two years indicated that they were very concerned that the choice of staying in Australia would be taken from them as a result of the August 2004 amendments to the *Migration Act* which opened up non-humanitarian program for TPV holders but also introduced the Return Pending Visas for those refused further protection. The most common response to the question of whether the changes could remove their choice to stay was to 'agree'.

More than three quarters (76 percent) of the third wave of respondents had experienced an expiration of their temporary visas and 88 percent had applied for a new visa. All those who had applied for a new visa applied for a permanent one. The question of how respondents felt about the process of reapplication received mixed responses. The most common replies were 'stressful' and 'uncertain' (53 percent), followed closely by 'hopeful' (41 percent) then 'traumatic' (35 percent). Twenty-three percent indicated that they found the process to be 'good', while the categories of 'worried', 'sad', 'excited' and 'relieved' were each chosen by 18 percent of respondents. The predominant reaction to reapplying for a visa is stress and uncertainty, but TPV holders also displayed optimism and hope at the possibility of gaining stability in their lives.

There was a mixed response to the statement that the reapplication process is straightforward and easy to understand. 59 percent disagreed – half of them 'strongly'. 35 percent agreed, but only 12 percent 'strongly agreed'. Women appeared to find the reapplication process more difficult to understand, with eight of the ten women *disagreeing* with the statement and only two *agreeing*. Of the seven men, four *agreed* that the process was straightforward, two *disagreed* and one did not respond. The surveys also showed that respondents 'strongly agree' that: they are scared by not knowing where they'll be in the near future; they are happy about the chance for permanent protection, and they feel they have already proven themselves to be refugees.

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[23] For the question of identifying feelings which describe the visa re-application process, respondents could choose multiple answers. Thus the total percentage is greater than 100.

Eighty-eight percent expressed anxiety about the prospect of being placed in detention again, and most of these 'strongly agreed' with the statement. The third wave of TPV holders indicated that they felt less secure at the time of the survey than they did one year earlier. No-one strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel more secure now than I did a year ago'. Thirty percent of those who answered agreed that they did feel more secure now than a year ago, while seventy percent disagreed. There was a high non-response rate to this question (41 percent) which was most likely due to a printing error on the questionnaire. The response to this question is deeply concerning, as it indicates that TPV holders' sense of security is decreasing, rather than improving over time.

The vast majority of respondents (88 percent) 'strongly' disagreed with the statement that 'Iraq is a safe place at the moment'. The remainder of respondents (12 percent) simply 'disagreed'. All respondents answered the question and not one person agreed that Iraq was a safe place or remained neutral. Ninety-four percent revealed that they felt anxious about family in Iraq. The large majority of respondents said that they would not prefer to be in Iraq than Australia. Ninety-four percent stated clearly that they would prefer to be in Australia and 76 percent 'strongly' disagreed that they preferred to be in Iraq than Australia. The response to these statements regarding repatriation and safety in Iraq firmly communicate the belief that Iraq is not a safe place at the moment either in terms of return or in terms of safety for those currently living there.

Practical aspects of coping

One year on

The second wave of TPV holders appeared to be coping well with the practical aspects of their daily existence. The general responses showed that they felt they could communicate with anyone they met, believed they had appropriate housing for themselves and their families, and that they had no trouble accessing the services that they need. While most believed they had enough work to support themselves, there was a mixed response about having enough work to support their families, with roughly half agreeing and half disagreeing.

Two years on

The third wave of respondents gave positive responses to the statements 'I have appropriate housing for myself and my family' (65 percent) and 'I have access to health services' (88 percent). However, a mixed response was given to self-assessed health status. Relatively even numbers agreed and disagreed with the statement 'I have no health problems' (41 percent agreed that they had no health problems, 12 percent neither agreed nor disagreed, while 47 percent disagreed). Interestingly, of those who disagreed, six 'strongly' disagreed while only two 'disagreed', indicating that most those who are unhappy with their health are very unhappy. It is fortunate that

although people do not assess their health as particularly good, they feel more confident about being able to access the services they need.

Mixed responses were also given to the statements about having enough work to support themselves and their families, and about the ability to communicate with anyone they met. Eighteen percent neither agreed nor disagreed that they had enough work to support themselves and their family. The remainder were equally split between agreeing and disagreeing (41 percent). However, only one out of seven who agreed, *strongly agreed*, while of those who disagreed, four out of the seven 'strongly' disagreed. This means that over 40 percent of the TPV holders surveyed are struggling to support themselves financially, and only one respondent was emphatic about having sufficient work to be financially secure. Two people neither agreed nor disagreed that they were able to communicate with anyone, while the rest were roughly divided between agreeing and disagreeing. The only negative response given was to the statement 'I have no trouble accessing services'. Fifty-nine percent indicating that the majority of people find it difficult to access services they need. This contrasts with the positive response given to the availability of health services.

Emotional aspects of coping

Overall, the responses to the statements about emotional wellbeing demonstrated a disturbing level of stress, anxiety and hopelessness. People responded that they felt lonely, anxious about their family's future safety, and are worried about being able to support their family. They responded that they did not feel hopeful about the future, and that they felt less hopeful about the future than they did one year ago. The responses were emphatic, with over 75 percent of respondents expressing such feelings. The only positive emotional response was to the statement 'I feel safe in Australia', which received a strong positive response (82 percent of the people surveyed agreed). While it is a good sign that people enjoy a feeling of safety in Australia, this is not necessarily a consolation if they are simultaneously living with the fear of having to leave. There was a high response rate to the questions about coping emotionally, with all respondents answering all questions but one. The low response rate for this question was most likely due to a misprint in the survey.

3.2 Longitudinal Findings – The Impact of Time on TPV Holders in Melbourne

i) Economic and material conditions

Housing tenure

In terms of housing tenure, this research indicates a trend of TPV holders securing longer term accommodation with increased length of time spent in Australia. The insecurity in housing tenure that was evident in the first two waves of interviews had decreased by the third wave in 2004.

During the first wave of interviews, 7 percent of TPV holders were living in emergency accommodation[24] and the same number (7 percent) were living in temporary accommodation.[25] Over a third (36 percent) were living in short term accommodation. [26] By the second round of interviews there were no longer any TPV holders living in emergency accommodation, but the number of people living in temporary accommodation had risen correspondingly to 14 percent. There were also more people living in short term (48 percent) housing than in the first wave of interviews. While the rates of medium term accommodation[27] in the first and second waves were similar (18 percent in the first wave and 24 percent in the second wave), more TPV holders had obtained long-term accommodation[28] in the first wave (32 percent) than in the second wave (14 percent) of research. By the third survey there were no TPV holders in either emergency or temporary accommodation. The number of people in short term accommodation had decreased dramatically to 12 percent and 47 percent had secured medium term accommodation. Almost a quarter (23 percent) had managed to secure long term housing and for the first time TPV holders reported living in their own home. A substantial number of the survey participants (18 percent) responded that they were living in their own house, despite the fact that none are yet living in Australia on a permanent visa.

The length of time spent living in the community appears to impact on the permanency of accommodation found by TPV holders. Shortly after release from detention more than 12 percent were living in temporary or emergency housing and less than a third (32 percent) had secured accommodation that was for two years or longer. Two years later no TPV holders were living in emergency or temporary housing and 41 percent of people had found

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[24] Emergency accommodation is defined as tenure that is less than two months duration.

[25] Temporary accommodation is defined as tenure that lasts between three and six months.

[26] Short-term accommodation is defined as tenure that lasts between six months and one year.

[27] Medium-term accommodation is defined as tenure that lasts between one and two years.

[28] Long-term accommodation is defined as tenure that lasts for a period greater than 2 years.

accommodation of two years or longer. Significantly nearly half this number wasliving in their own homes.

Level of support received

In terms of level of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the range of settlement services offered, the responses of TPV holders indicate that an improvement occurred over time. Even by the third survey, however, most services did not manage to rate a higher response than 'satisfactory', and very few received a rating of 'good' or 'excellent'. Employment services was the area that respondents rated most poorly. There was a marginal improvement over the three surveys, but it was still rated as 'poor' by 59 percent of respondents in the final survey. English language and income support both improved steadily over time but were both still reported as 'poor' by over a third of respondents in the third survey. The assessment of material aid support improved slightly over the three surveys. Medicare and health received the most positive responses in all the surveys, and continued to improve their rating over the time period studied. The most significant improvement was noticed in housing support, where the rating of 'poor' dropped from 43 percent to 12 percent between the first and last survey, and by the third survey the rating of 'good' was chosen by 23 percent of respondents.

In terms of satisfaction with housing support, the longitudinal comparison shows a steady improvement over time. While a decreasing percentage of respondents chose the rating of 'poor' across each interview wave, the ratings of 'good' and 'satisfactory' both increased over time. The rating of 'excellent' was not chosen by any participants in reference to the area of housing.

Forty-three percent of respondents considered housing support to be 'poor' in the first wave, while this rating dropped to 33 percent in the second wave, and 11.8 percent in the third wave. Only 2 percent of TPV holders gave housing support the rating of 'good' in the first wave, whereas this increased to 17 percent in the second wave and 24 percent in the final wave. The rating of 'satisfactory' increased in less dramatic increments than the rating of 'good', but the former increased steadily and was the top response across each wave. 48 percent of the first wave of respondents chose the response of 'satisfactory', while 51 percent of respondents chose this rating in the second wave and 64 percent chose it in the final wave.

In terms of rating the level of satisfaction with income support, TPV holders primarily chose the categories 'satisfactory' and 'poor'. Over half the total respondents rated the support received in this area as 'satisfactory' while 42 percent rated it as 'poor'. Only a small number considered it to be 'good' or 'excellent'.

TPV holders were more likely to rate the income support they were receiving as 'poor' in the earlier stages of their release from detention (57 percent). The rating of 'poor' had decreased to 35 percent by the third survey and the number of people who considered it 'satisfactory' had risen from 45 percent to 59 percent. However, after a period of two years, very few TPV holders rated the income support received as 'good' and none rated it as 'excellent'.

Overall, TPV holders tended to rate the support they had received in terms of health services as 'satisfactory' to 'good'. There was very little improvement over time in the rating of health support. In the initial survey 11 percent of respondents rated health support as 'poor'. This rose slightly by the third wave of surveys to 12 percent. Conversely, the rating of 'satisfactory' had dropped from 61 percent to 59 percent. The rating of 'good' increased from 14 percent to 23 percent. Between 5 and 10 percent of people in the second and third surveys considered the health support they were receiving to be 'excellent'.

The material aid support being received by TPV holders improved slightly over time. This category failed to be nominated as 'excellent' by any respondents at any point in the survey period. The rating of 'poor' had dropped from 57 percent to 47 percent, by the third survey, 6 percent of the respondents chose 'good' and the rating of satisfactory had increased from 29 percent to over 40 percent.

Rating of English language support improved over time. Just over a third of respondents (35 percent) rated it as 'poor' in the third survey, compared with 68 percent in the first survey. The rating of satisfactory had improved from 25 percent to 41 percent, and 12 percent of respondents considered it 'excellent'. While this is a significant improvement, more than a third of TPV holders are still allocating the most negative rating available to English language support.

Medicare, which had received one of the most positive ratings for support received, continued to improve its standing with TPV holders. By the third survey there were no responses of 'poor' , and the categories of 'satisfactory' and 'good' had increased considerably from 32 percent to 53 percent, and from 21 percent to 35 percent respectively. Interestingly, 18 percent of respondents in the first survey considered Medicare to be 'excellent', although these figures may be distorted by the high non-response rate to the question (25 percent).

The rating for employment support improved over time, but continued to be rated very poorly by respondents. Over three quarters (79 percent) of the initial respondents had rated employment support as 'poor' which had dropped a little to 59 percent by the third survey. The rating of 'satisfactory' showed the greatest improvement, jumping from 4 percent to nearly a quarter of respondents (23 percent). The response of 'good' was negligible, and there were no responses of 'excellent'.

ii) Social conditions
The overall picture of TPV holders' social inclusion in Australian society is positive. High levels of trust, strong friendship networks and feelings of comfort within Australian society have been developed by TPV holders living in the community after only a few years, and the response appears to be only improving with time.

The responses in the first survey to questions of whether TPV holders were treated well by Australian society, whether they were able to call on the assistance of friends and community when they needed it, and whether they trusted Australians, largely fell into the category of negative responses.

Roughly two thirds of TPV holders in the first survey answered 'no' to these questions.

By the third survey less than 12 percent answered questions relating to social capital and social inclusion in the negative. Between 85 and 90 percent of the second and third wave of respondents reported having good experiences in the Australian community. This contrasts markedly with the response of those in the first survey of whom over two thirds answered in the negative when asked if they were treated well by Australian society. The strong feelings held about not being treated well probably reflected their recent detention experiences.

By the second survey nearly all TPV holders had made friends within the Iraqi community (94 percent) and a significant number (86 percent) had also made friends outside the Iraqi community. These friendships were sustained in the third survey, with 94 percent of TPV holders claiming friendship within the Iraqi community and 82 percent having made friends outside the Iraqi community. Although this question was not asked in the first survey, over three quarters (79 percent) of the TPV holders reported at the time that they had no contact at all with the Iraqi community which would suggest that at least this number had not made friends within that community.

The effect of this level of social connectedness is evident in the degree to which TPV holders felt they could rely on friends and community for help when needed. In the first survey, over half the respondents (64 percent) did not feel they could count on this level of support. Within a few years more than three quarters (76 percent) of the people surveyed felt that support was available to them if they needed it.

The levels of trust displayed in the responses increased significantly with the length of time the TPV holder had been out of detention. In the first survey, over half (57 percent) had misgivings about trusting Australians, and 43 percent felt they could trust Australians to some degree. By the third survey none of the respondents gave a negative response, nearly two-thirds answered in the affirmative, and just over a third were 'unsure'. 'Unsure' was not given as an option in the first survey.

The third survey asked the additional question of whether or not they felt that Australians trusted them. No respondent answered this question in the negative, although a large number expressed uncertainty (41 percent) and around a third (35 percent) answered with a strong affirmative, 'yes, definitely'. This appears to roughly correlate with the level of trust they felt for Australians, although they were a little less likely to feel that they were trusted by Australians.

iii) Coping capacity (practical and emotional aspects)
In most practical aspects of life TPV holders appear to be having more difficulties coping as time progresses. The exceptions are access to health services - which is good and getting better - and having appropriate housing - which improved between the second and third surveys. Fewer people claimed to be free of health problems, less people felt they could readily access services they needed, less people felt able to communicate with everyone they met and less people felt they had enough work to support their family.

A closer look paints a picture of people struggling to survive – nearly half the people in the third survey report having heath problems, over 40 percent do not have enough work to support their family, over 40 percent cannot freely communicate with everyone they meet, and nearly 60 percent have trouble accessing services. Even though there was a positive response to whether or not they had appropriate housing and the response had improved, it is concerning that one in three respondents still do not feel that they have appropriate housing for themselves and their families.

The second and third surveys responded to the announcement that Iraqi TPV holders may be offered 'voluntary repatriation' packages by exploring the reaction of asylum seekers to this information. The chance that voluntary repatriation would remove the choice to stay was a concern for a third of the people participating in the second survey (33 percent), but by 2004 this had increased to 71 percent. It would appear that the longer TPV holders spend in Australia, the more concerned they are about not having the choice to stay. This could be due to a combination of factors, including an increasing attachment to Australia and reluctance to leave, a reaction to government policy which they perceive as more threatening to their stability, or a response to the changing situation in Iraq.

There was strong agreement that Iraq was not a safe place at the time the interviews occurred. Not one respondent in either survey agreed that Iraq was a safe place. Consequent to the perception of Iraq as being dangerous, few people felt they would be safe returning or that they would prefer to live in Iraq, and most expressed anxiety about family remaining there. In all cases the response was more emphatic in the third survey, indicating that the anxiety of the TPV holders is increasing over time.

In both the second and third surveys, the words chosen to describe the feelings aroused by the prospect of voluntary repatriation were negative, and indicated a high level of distress. In the second survey the most commonly chosen word was 'traumatic' (chosen by 86 percent of respondents) followed by 'frightened' (76 percent), 'distressed' (52 percent), 'worried', 'bored', 'punished' and 'failure' (all 43 percent). Eighty-two percent of respondents in the third survey claimed to be 'worried', then 'frightened' and 'stressful' (both chosen by 65 percent), 'traumatic' (59 percent) and 'bad' (53 percent). These responses obviously do not reflect the same things. For example 'frightened' describes the TPV holders' feelings about repatriation whereas 'failure' is often used to describe the state of Iraqi society. Whilst individual TPV holders do feel 'frightened' or 'worried', they whereas it is the situation that is 'stressful'

As could be expected with the passage of time, there was a significant increase in both the number of TPV holders whose visas had expired and the proportion of people who had applied for a permanent visa. In the second survey less than one in five of the respondents' visas had expired, which had increased to over three quarters a year later. Consequently, all of those who had responded to the question had reapplied for a permanent visa.

In both the second and third surveys, the respondents displayed mixed emotions about reapplying for visas. When given a choice of words to describe their feelings about this issue, 'stressful', 'uncertain' and 'traumatic'

were all frequently selected, but 'hopeful' and 'good', 'excited' and 'relieved' were also common choices.

People were less likely in the second survey to feel they were informed about the reapplication process. Nearly half in the second survey and a third in the last survey did not feel informed. The high non-response rate in the second survey precludes any meaningful comparison. It appears, from respondent's responses, that the reapplication process is getting harder to understand. In the second survey, 38 percent agreed that the process was straightforward and easy to understand, while over one quarter (29 percent) disagreed. In the third survey only a third (35 percent) found the process straightforward and more than half (59 percent) disagreed. A number of policy factors may be contributing to this change, including the introduction of new visa categories for which TPV holders are eligible to apply, and a freeze on processing applications by Iraqi TPV holders.

Respondents were emphatic that the uncertainty of their future frightens them. In the second survey over two thirds (67 percent) of respondents agreed that they were afraid about their future, and by the third survey this number had risen to 94 percent. All of those who agreed chose the most definitive response of *strongly agree*. Likewise, there was a high degree of anxiety expressed in both surveys about being placed in detention again. Less than 10 percent of respondents disagreed or expressed a neutral opinion about the possibility of being re-incarcerated.

Coping emotionally

Most TPV holders feel lonely in Australia, and were more likely to feel lonely as time increases (responses were up from 57 percent in the second survey to 76 percent in the third survey). While this appears to contradict the healthy indicators of social inclusion noted in the last section, it can perhaps be explained by the uncertainty of living on a temporary visa and the threat of repatriation which undermines their capacity for genuine inclusion and is a factor which distinguishes them from the broader community.

The majority (82 percent) of respondents indicated that they feel safe in Australia, but conversely (and perhaps consequently) do not feel hopeful about the future. Most people (over three quarters) expressed anxiety about their prospects for providing support and a safe future for their family. Worry about being able to support family increased over time.

Overall, the TPV holders[29] expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their children's health, education and feelings of safety and happiness. However, between the second and third surveys, there was a decrease in positive responses to each of these categories. A sharp drop was evident in the question of whether their children felt safe in Australia, where the number of people who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement fell from 94

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[29] In this category, we have excluded those people who stated that they did not have children. Therefore, n=18 in T2 and n = 16 in T3. Furthermore, some of those children are too young for some questions to be relevant (e.g. adequate education) which may contribute to the 'missing' responses.

percent to 75 percent. TPV holders were also less likely to think that their children worried about their future safety. The overall level of agreement dropped from 89 percent to 69 percent.

The non-response rate in the third survey was high for most of the questions, which may impact on the results. Furthermore, many of the respondents in the third survey had very young children, for whom the questions may not have been applicable.

3.3 Cross-Sectional Findings – Regional and Comparative

i) Economic and material conditions

Housing terms secured

Post-detention period (Melbourne, Shepparton and Brisbane)

In the immediate post-detention period, the majority of TPV holders surveyed registered that they had secured short, medium or long term housing. One third of TPV holders surveyed across these three regions are living in short term housing (34 percent), followed closely by almost one third of TPV holders surveyed living in long term housing (32 percent). Those living in medium term housing made up 22 percent of the 56 TPV holders surveyed. Twelve percent are living in unsecured accommodation, that is, either temporary accommodation (4 percent) or emergency accommodation (8 percent).

Melbourne
During the first time period, the terms of housing secured by most participants in Melbourne were short term, with 36 percent suggesting that this was the type of accommodation they had. The second most common form of accommodation in Melbourne was long term housing, secured by 32 percent. Medium term housing had the third highest frequency amongst respondents at 18 percent. Temporary and emergency housing each scored 7 percent.

Shepparton
Nearly half (45 percent) of the participants in Shepparton had secured long term housing during the first time period, followed by short term housing, which was secured by 36 percent of participants. Medium term housing had the lowest frequency of 18 percent. No TPV holder surveyed in Shepparton identified their housing type as temporary or emergency accommodation.

Queensland
The types of housing secured by most participants in Queensland during the first time period were medium and short term in equal measure. Medium term housing and short term housing were both recorded by 29 percent of participants. Long term and emergency housing were also equally matched – each was recorded by 18 percent of participants. Temporary housing was recorded by 6 percent of respondents.

Comparative
While the levels of temporary and emergency housing utilised in Melbourne is quite low, and is non-existent among those surveyed in Shepparton, the levels of emergency housing secured in Queensland are quite high. Short term to medium term were the most common forms of housing secured in Brisbane (59 percent), while long term and short term were the most common forms of housing in Melbourne (68 percent) and Shepparton (82 percent). In Shepparton all survey respondents had secured short term accommodation or longer. Emergency housing was significantly high in Brisbane with 18

percent of survey participants registering that they have secured emergency housing followed by almost 6 percent registering they have secured temporary accommodation.

The forms of housing secured by the TPV holders surveyed generally range across the scale. However as noted above, Brisbane has a higher rate of emergency housing being accessed at 18 percent.
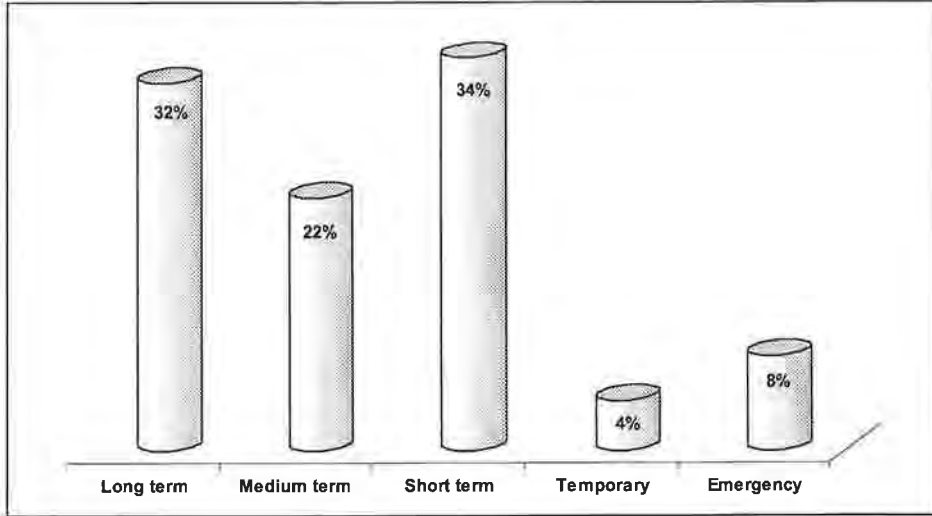
Figure 2: Statistics for Terms of Secured Housing [Total Cohort]
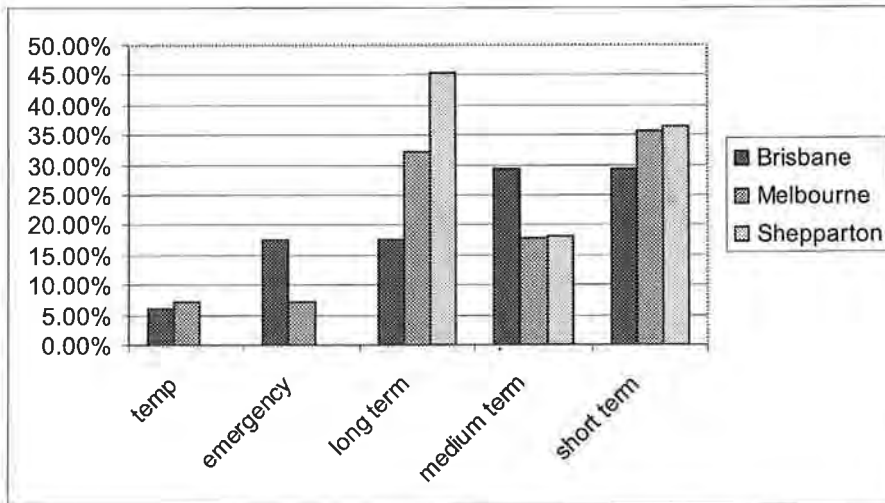
Figure 3: Comparative Post-detention Housing Terms

One year on (Melbourne and Sydney)

The most common type of housing for the TPV holders surveyed was short term housing. Nearly a quarter of people interviewed (23 percent) were in long term accommodation, while smaller numbers were in medium and temporary accommodation.

Sydney

The majority of housing secured by the TPV holders surveyed in Sydney is long term (31 percent) and short term housing (31 percent). Temporary housing (11 percent) is the third most frequent form of housing secured followed by medium term housing (8 percent). The type of housing secured by the TPV holders participating in Sydney does not appear to be very stable despite the positive responses to earlier questions regarding accommodation.

Melbourne

The clear majority of housing secured by TPV holders surveyed in Melbourne is short term (48 percent) followed by medium term housing (24 percent). Long term housing and temporary housing were secured by an equal number of respondents (14 percent).

Comparative

In Melbourne the most common type of accommodation was short term (48 percent) followed by medium term (24 percent), while in Sydney short term accommodation and long term accommodation were equally common (both held by 31 percent of participants). Both cities found between 10-15 percent of TPV holders surveyed living in temporary accommodation of between three to six months, and in neither city were any of the respondents living in emergency accommodation.
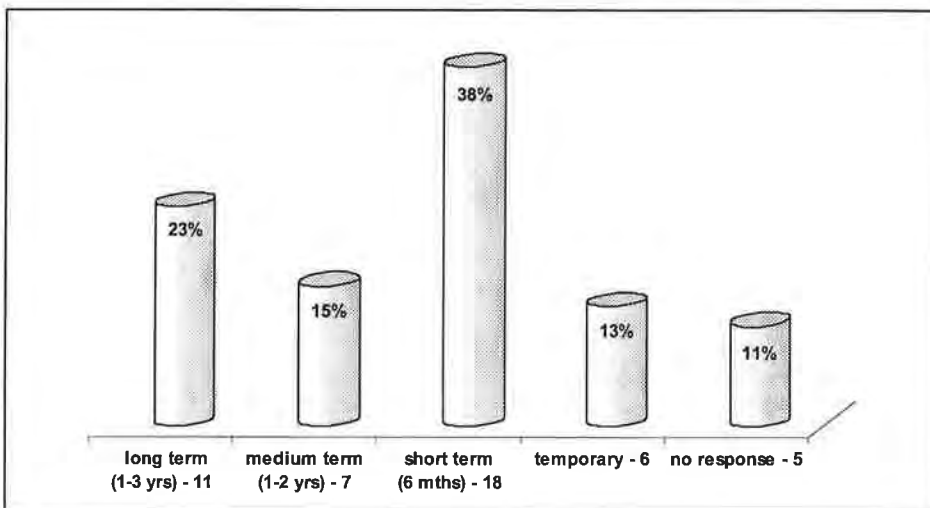
Figure 4: Terms of Housing [Total Cohort]

Two years on (Melbourne Only)

None of the TPV holders surveyed in Melbourne were living in emergency or temporary accommodation. Two people (12 percent) were living in short term accommodation, while nearly half (47 percent) were living in medium term accommodation. Nearly one quarter of respondents (24 percent) had secured longer term accommodation, while three people (18 percent) were living in their own home.
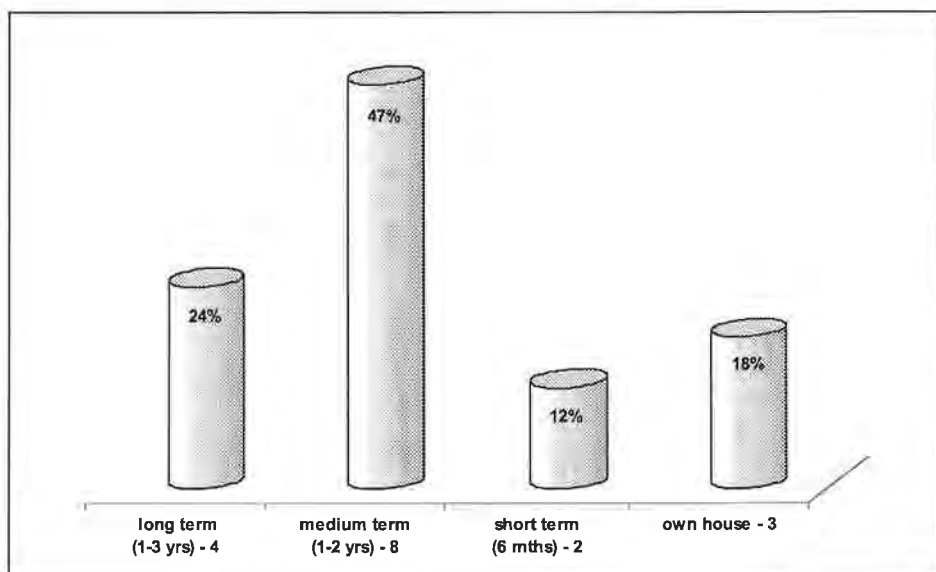
Figure 5: Housing Terms Secured [Melbourne]

Level of services secured and evaluation of services

Post-detention phase

Access to post-detention services is poor. In Brisbane, Melbourne, and Shepparton stable housing is the most secured service, closely followed by English language services, however access to these two services is still relatively low with just over 50 percent of respondents registering that they have secured these services. Education, accessed by 34 percent, and income security by 31 percent, provided a middle range service, though it is still considerably low. Just over 50 percent of respondents indicated they had not have income security.

Employment was the least secured service by TPV holders surveyed in every region sampled, with 100 percent of survey participants in Shepparton registering that they had not secured employment services. In Shepparton, housing was rated equal lowest. In Brisbane all services were rated as 'poor' apart from health and Medicare, which rated an overall 'satisfactory'.

Medicare rated higher in Victoria, receiving a 'good' rating in both Shepparton and Melbourne.
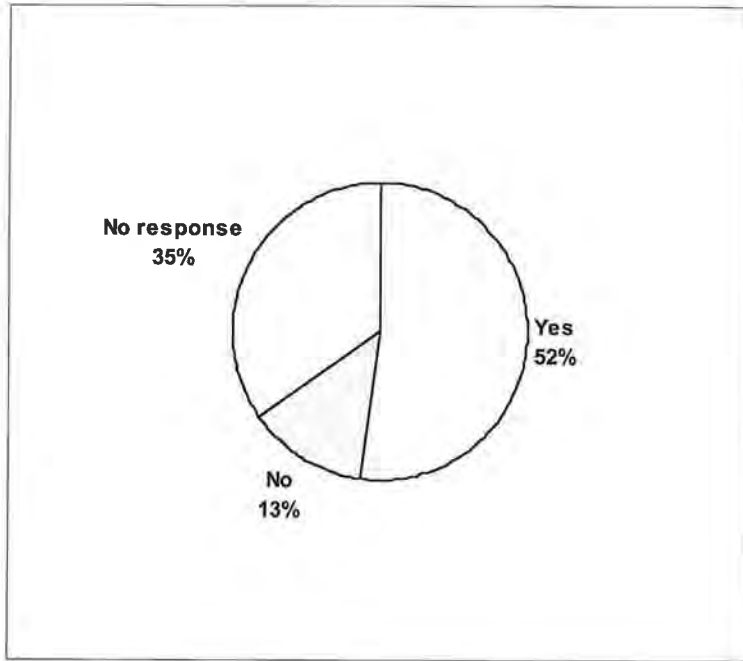
Figure 6: Secured Housing
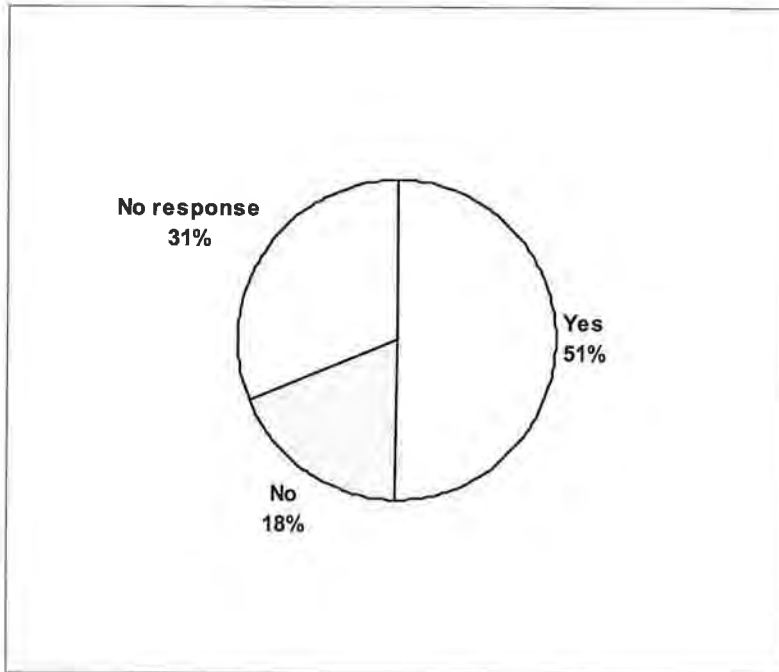
Figure 7: English Language Classes
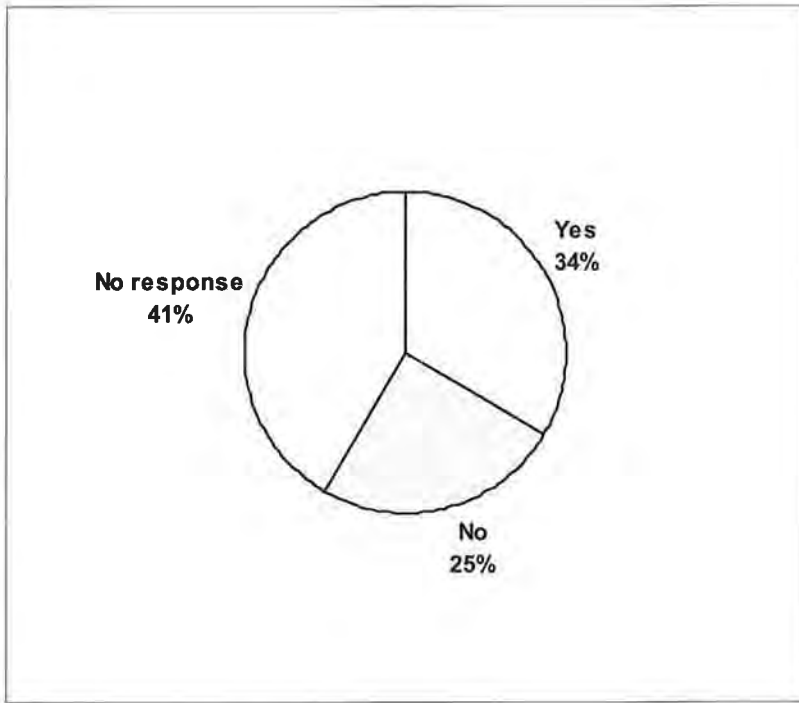
Figure 8: Secured Education
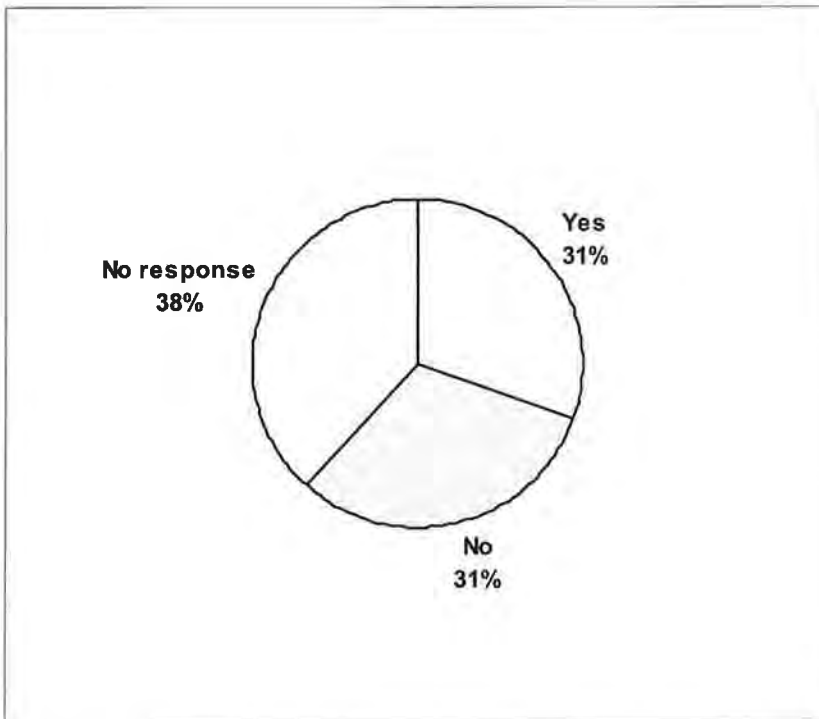
Figure 9: Income Security
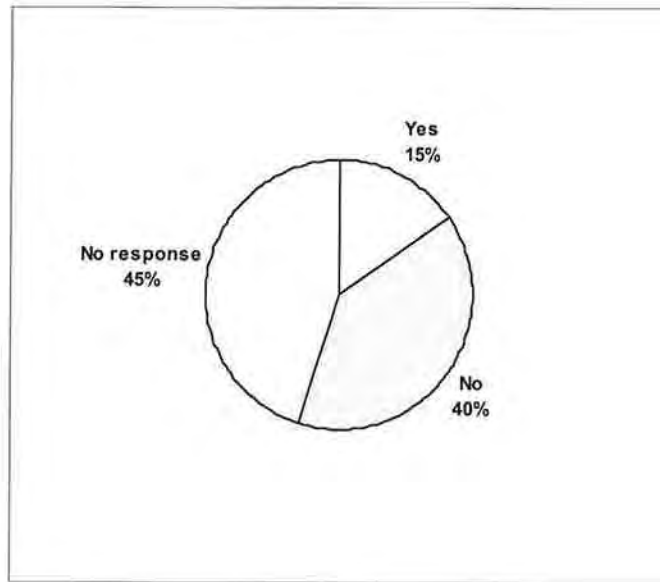
Figure 10 Secured Employment

The majority of support services were 'poor' according to the 56 TPV holders surveyed. The service with the poorest rating was employment – with a mean of 1.2193 within a range of 1-1.75 for the lowest category and the lowest possible rating being 1. One service, Medicare, was rated as 'good', although on the lower value range of 'good', with a mean of 2.5428 within a range of 2.51-3.25. Health was generally rated by participants from each region surveyed as satisfactory, with a mean of 2.1351 within a range of 1.751-2.50.

Melbourne
English language was the service secured by the highest number of Melbourne TPV holders. Thirteen respondents recorded having secured this service, while two recorded that they have not secured this service. This means that only 15 survey respondents answered this question, which is just above 50 percent – a low response rate. Housing was the second highest service recorded as being secured by 12 Melbourne TPV holders and again the response rate was very low. Only 12 people out of 28 surveyed responded to this question, which is a rate of 43 percent. Employment was recorded as the least secured service amongst the Melbourne TPV holders surveyed. Only 8 people (29 percent) registered that they had secured employment and two people (7 percent) registered that they had not secured employment. Only 36 percent of those surveyed answered this question, representing a very low response. In terms of social security, five respondents (18 percent) registered as not having secured social support, while nine (32 percent) responded affirmatively to having secured income security. Social support had the second highest recorded response rate for this section, but this rate is still low at 50 percent.

Across the Melbourne sample, the service with the poorest rating was employment. This scored a mean of 1.0435 within a range of 1-1.75 for the

lowest category and the lowest possible rating being 1. 79 percent of respondents chose the lowest rating possible for employment – 22 people out of a possible 28. One service, Medicare, was rated as 'good'. Yet even this rating is numerically at the lower end of 'good' – having a mean rating of 2.71 within a range of 2.51-3.25. Health received a rating of satisfactory. All other services (income, housing, material aid and English language) were rated as 'poor'. Both English language and material aid received ratings of 'poor' that were only fractionally above employment.

Shepparton

English language was the service secured by the second highest number of Shepparton TPV holders (64 percent). Seven respondents recorded having secured this service, while four recorded that they have not. Housing was the service recorded as most secured in Shepparton with eight people (73 percent) recording that they had found housing. This means that three people recorded a negative response to finding housing which may be explained by the presence of three people under the age of 19 who are studying and living with family. Employment was recorded as the least secured service amongst Shepparton TPV holders surveyed. Not one person responded that they had secured employment. This may be partially explained by the fact that the demographic in Shepparton is still very young, and seven participants (64 percent) identified as 'student' or 'child' in their occupation. The majority of respondents from Shepparton had not secured income support services. Seven people (64 percent) answered this question negatively. More than half the respondents in Shepparton had not secured education services and six (54 percent) had not secured education services.

Overall, TPV holders residing in Shepparton identified the services provided as satisfactory. Those with the poorest rating were employment and housing, with 36 percent of respondents choosing the lowest rating possible for each category. 54 percent of respondents thought housing services were satisfactory, while only one respondent considered employment services to be 'good'. The rest did not respond. Medicare and health services were rated as 'good', yet even these ratings are numerically at the lower end of 'good' – having a mean rating of 2.7 for Medicare and 2.36 for health within a range of 2.51-3.25. All other services (income, material aid and English language) were rated as satisfactory. 'Excellent', the highest possible rating, was only selected by one person in one category, and that was for Medicare.

Queensland

Housing and English language were the services secured by the highest number of Queensland TPV holders surveyed. Seven respondents recorded having secured both these services, while two recorded that they had not. This means that only nine survey respondents (just above 50 percent) answered this question, which is a low response rate. Education and income security were the second highest services recorded as being secured by four Queensland TPV holders, while two responded had not secured these services. Again, the response rate was very low. Only six people out of 17 surveyed (a rate of 35 percent) responded to this question. Employment was recorded as the least secured service amongst the Queensland TPV holders surveyed. Only three people (18 percent) registered that they had secured employment and two people (12 percent) registered that they had not

secured employment. These figures are a very low response to the question, representing only 29 percent of those surveyed. The overall response frequency for this section is very low with the question attracting the highest response rate only garnering nine out of 17.

The service with the poorest rating was employment with a mean of 1.2143 within a range of 1-1.75 for the lowest category and the lowest possible rating being 1. 65 percent of respondents choose the lowest rating possible for employment – 11 people out of a possible 17. No service was rated as 'good', though Health and Medicare were rated as satisfactory. All other services (income, housing, material aid and English language) were rated as 'poor'. Both English language and material aid received ratings of 'poor', which is only fractionally above employment.

Comparative

The overall response rate to these questions was very low with the exception of Shepparton where the response rate was 100 percent. English language and housing were the two most secured services in both States. Education and social security provided the middle range of services secured by those surveyed. Employment was recorded as the least secured service, which is in keeping with the previous section's overall rating of employment as the worst service.

Employment was the service with the lowest rating in Shepparton, Brisbane and Melbourne. Health was 'satisfactory' in Melbourne and Brisbane, and 'good' in Shepparton; and Medicare was 'good' in both Melbourne and Shepparton, but only satisfactory in Brisbane. Income, housing, material aid and English language were all rated as 'poor' in Melbourne and Brisbane, while in Shepparton income, material aid and English language rated satisfactory, and housing was rated 'poor' .

The overall assessment of the services available to those surveyed is very low. Even the rating of 'good' was towards the lower end of the range. Brisbane saw no ratings above satisfactory, meaning that no services were thought to be providing support that was either 'good' or 'excellent'. In Melbourne no services were recorded as providing support that was 'excellent'. Shepparton had the most positive response, rating two categories – Medicare and health – as 'good'.

Figure 11 Rating of Income Services [Total Cohort]

Figure 12: Rating of Housing [Total Cohort]

Figure 13: Rating of Health Services [Total Cohort]

Figure 14: Rating of Material Aid Services [Total Cohort]

Figure 15: Rating of English Language Services [Total Cohort]

Figure 16: Rating of Medicare [Total Cohort]
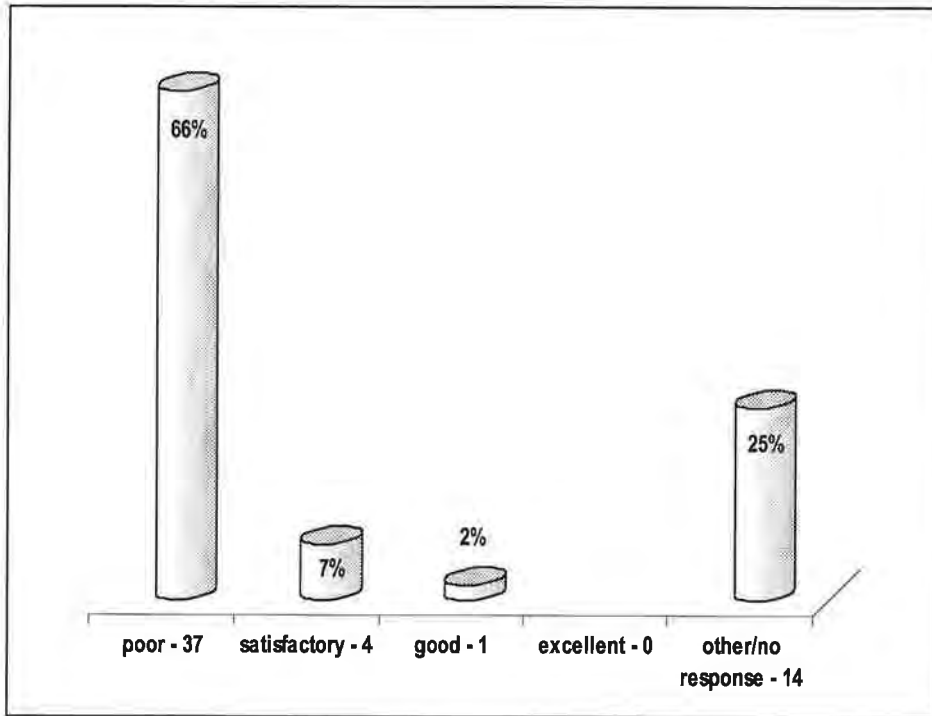
Figure 17: Rating of Employment Services [Total Cohort]
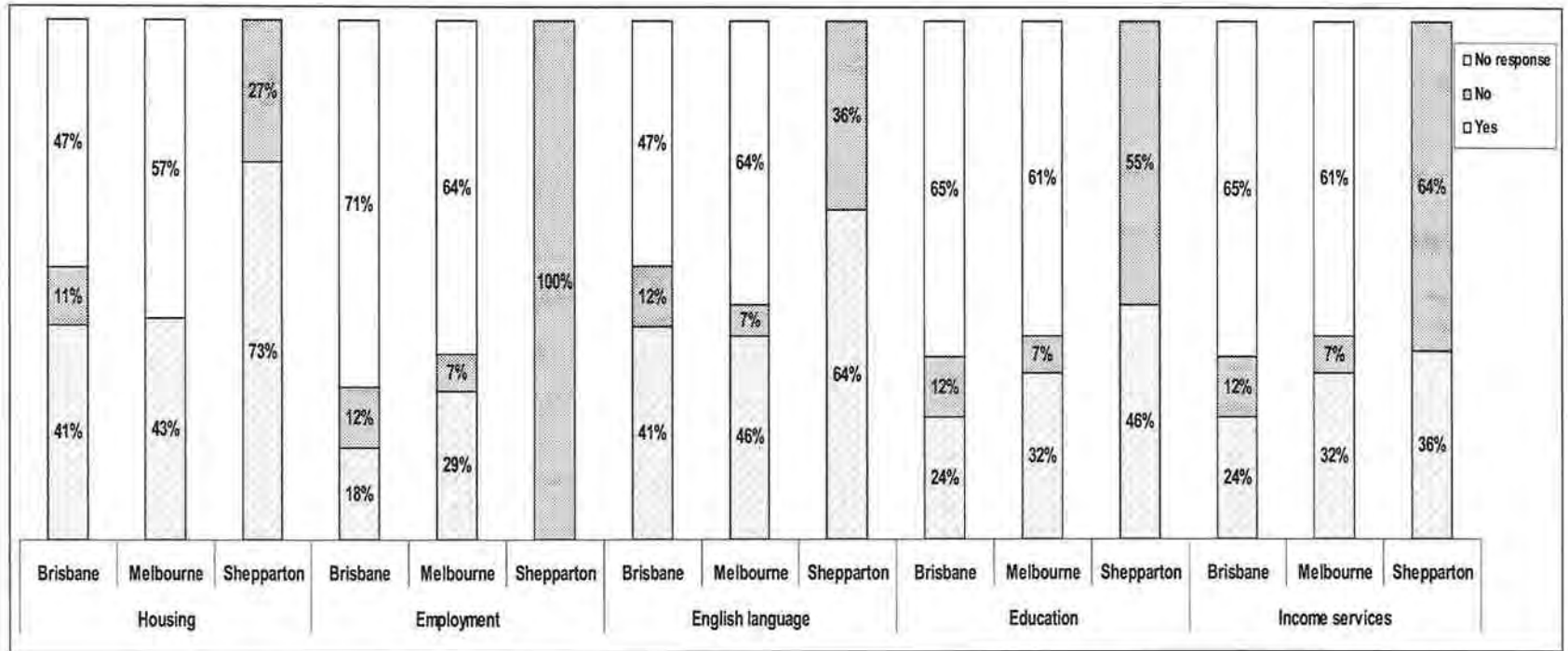
Figure 18: Post-detention Services Secured [Comparative]
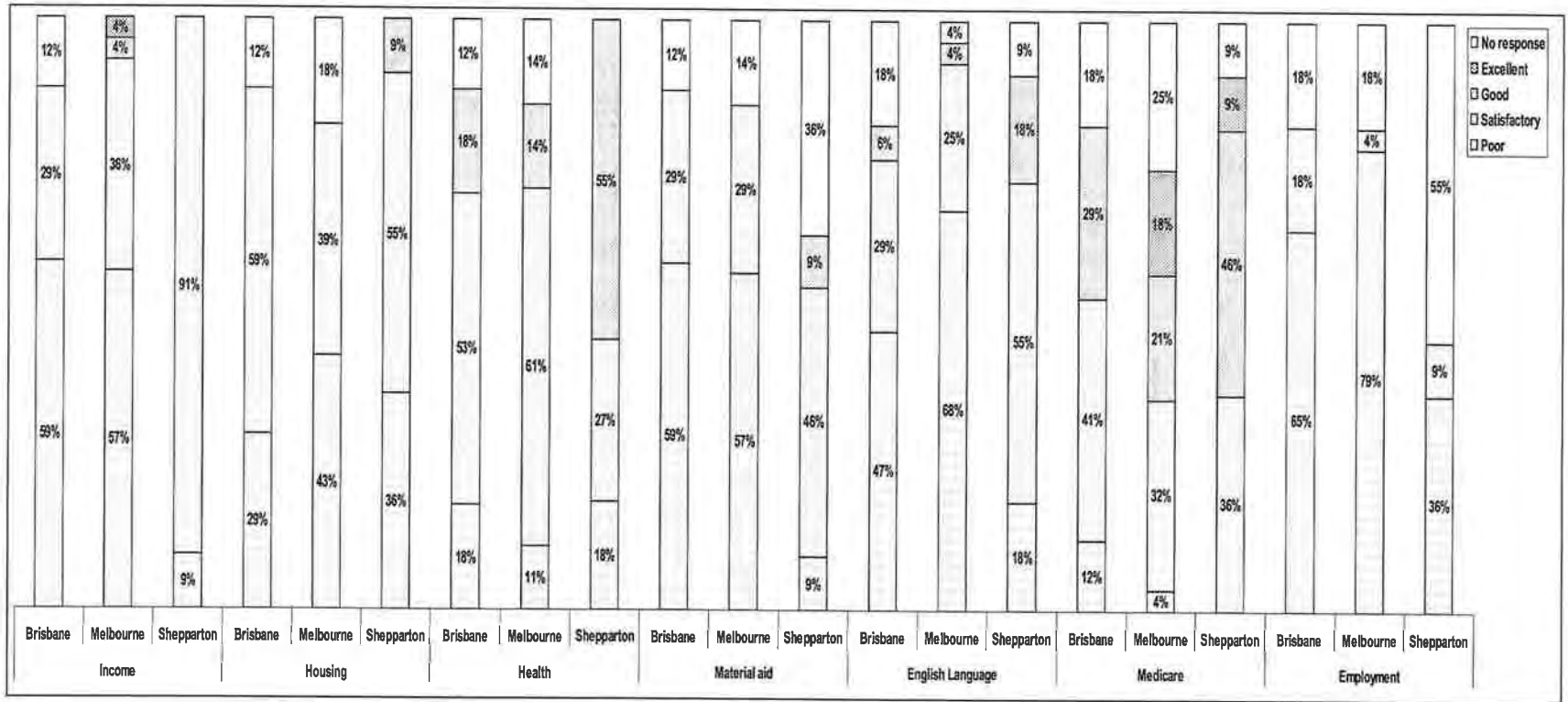
Figure 19: Rating of Post-detention Support [Comparative]

One year on (Melbourne and Sydney)

In the second phase, general responses to the level of support being received were satisfactory. The most positive responses were for Medicare and health services with 43 and 36 percent of TPV holders, respectively, rating them as satisfactory and 28 and 34 percent as 'good'. The least positive responses were for employment services, which had over half the participants (55 percent) giving them a rating of 'poor' (the lowest rating available) and for English language support which was rated as 'poor' by 40 percent of people and satisfactory by a further 32 percent. Material aid, income and housing support all ranked most highly as satisfactory, followed by 'poor'.

Sydney

The overall response of the TPV survey participants in Sydney in rating the services that they are receiving was positive. The majority of the ratings were of a satisfactory nature. Medicare and health services received the most positive responses, and employment received the least positive response.

Melbourne

In Melbourne the majority of TPV holders surveyed responded that the services they were receiving were 'poor'. Medicare and health were rated as satisfactory. The two ratings of satisfactory were the most positive ratings, which would indicate that satisfaction with the essential services on offer was very low.

Comparative

The level of satisfaction with support received varied between the two cities. Respondents in Sydney were on the whole more positive about the support they were receiving and consequently gave higher ratings to each of the services. Melbourne residents appeared less happy with the support they were receiving, with five out of seven of the categories receiving ratings of only 'poor' or satisfactory. Of particular note was the difference in employment services which 86 percent of Melbourne residents rated as 'poor', and 9 percent as satisfactory, compared with 31 percent of Sydney residents rating their employment support as 'poor', 31 percent rating it as satisfactory, 15 percent as 'good' and 8 percent as 'excellent'.
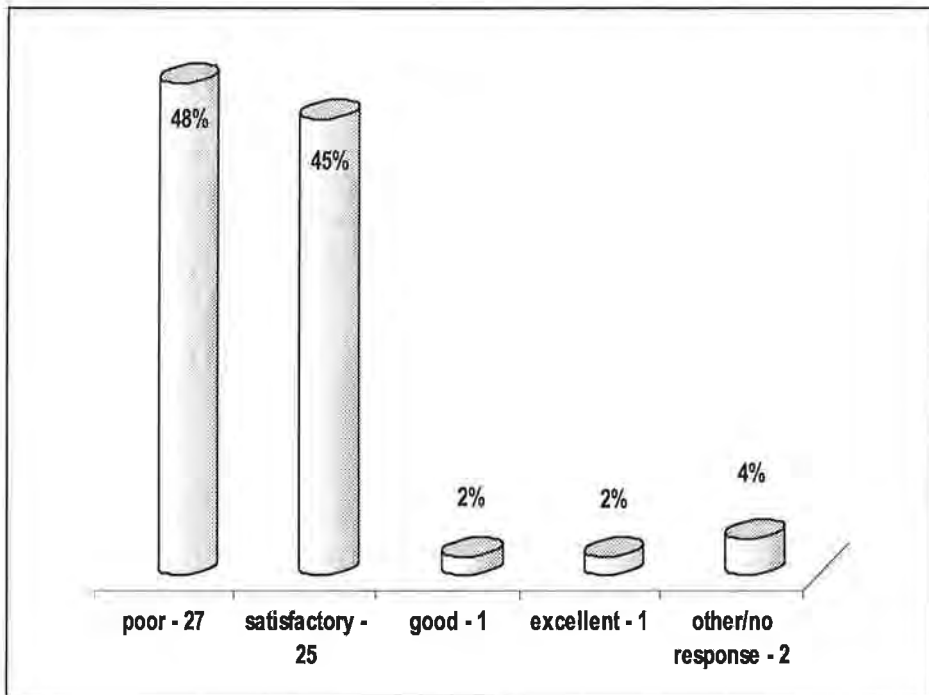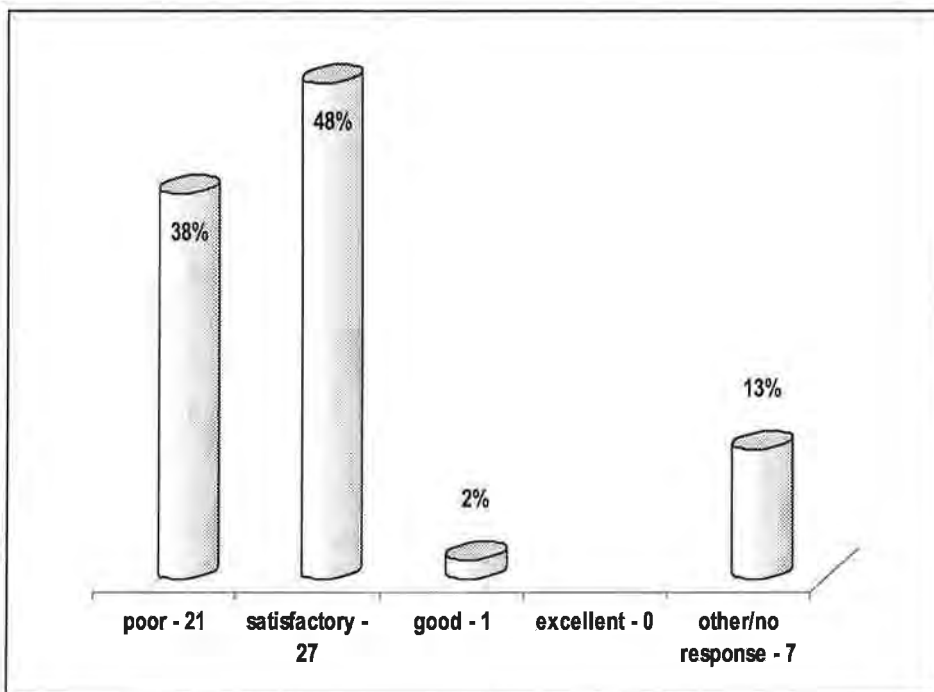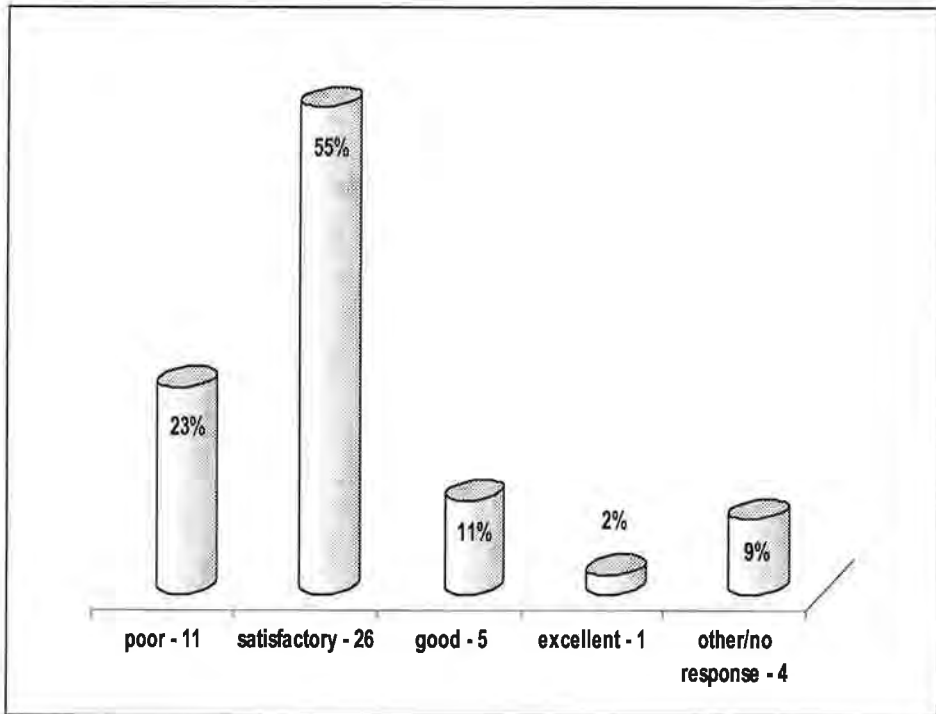
Figure 20: Rating of Income [Total Cohort]
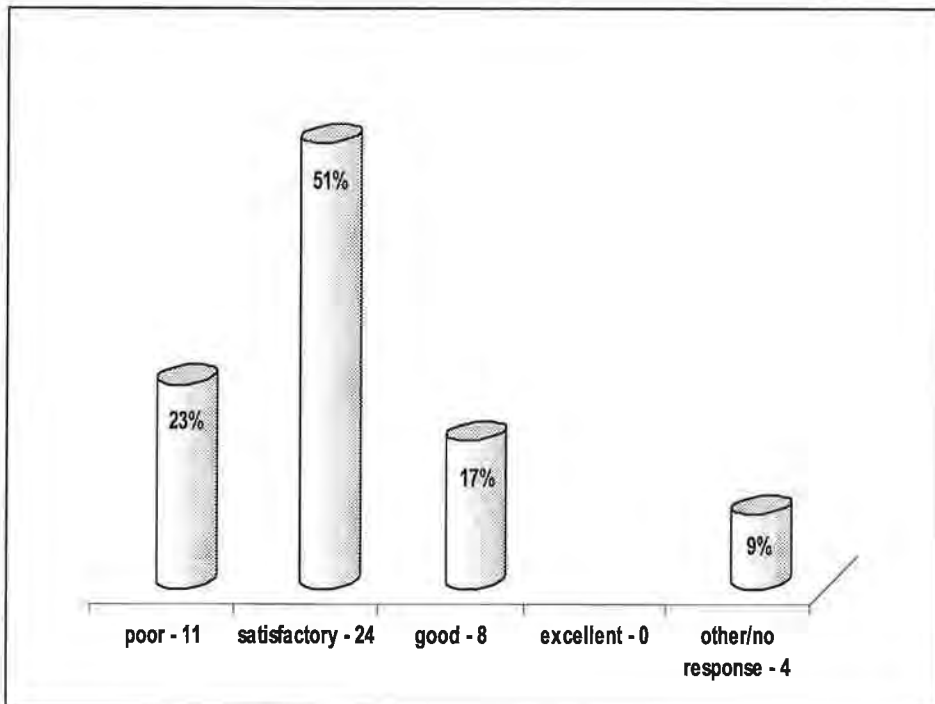
Figure 21: Rating of Housing [Total Cohort]
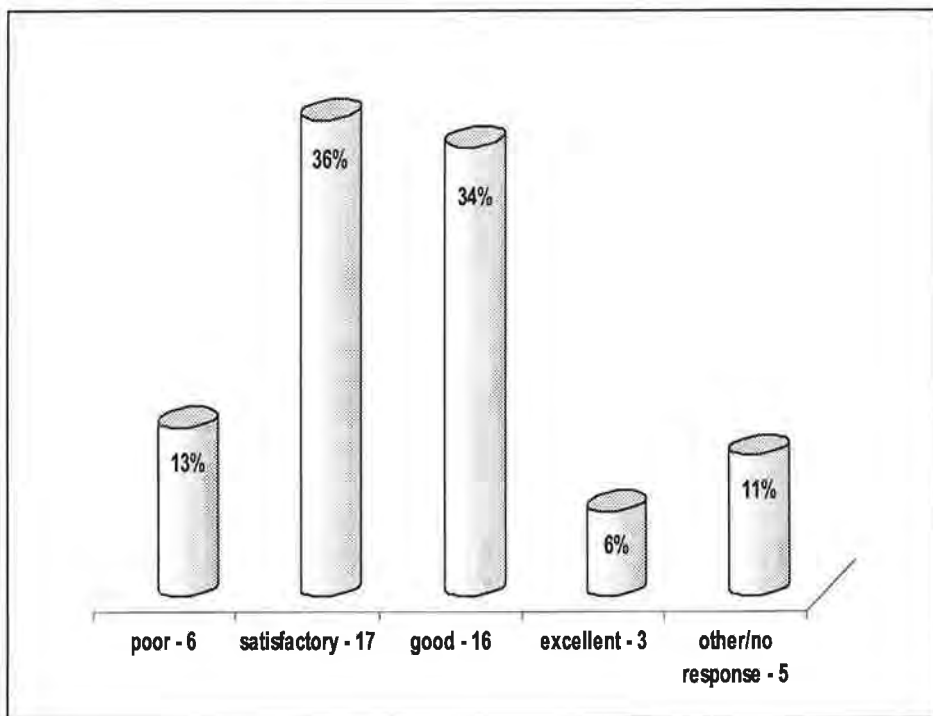
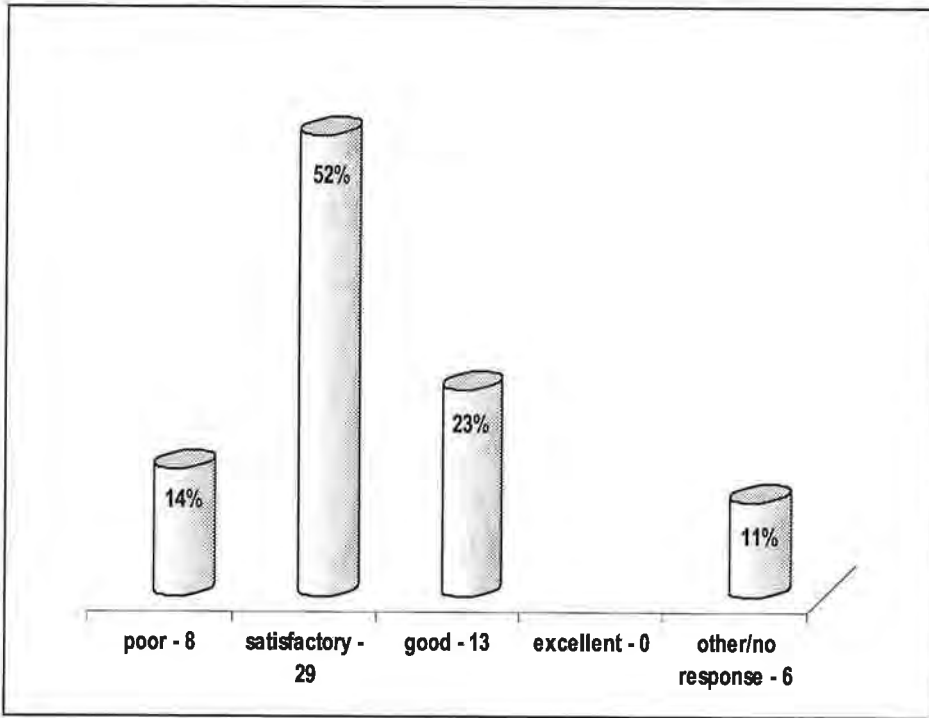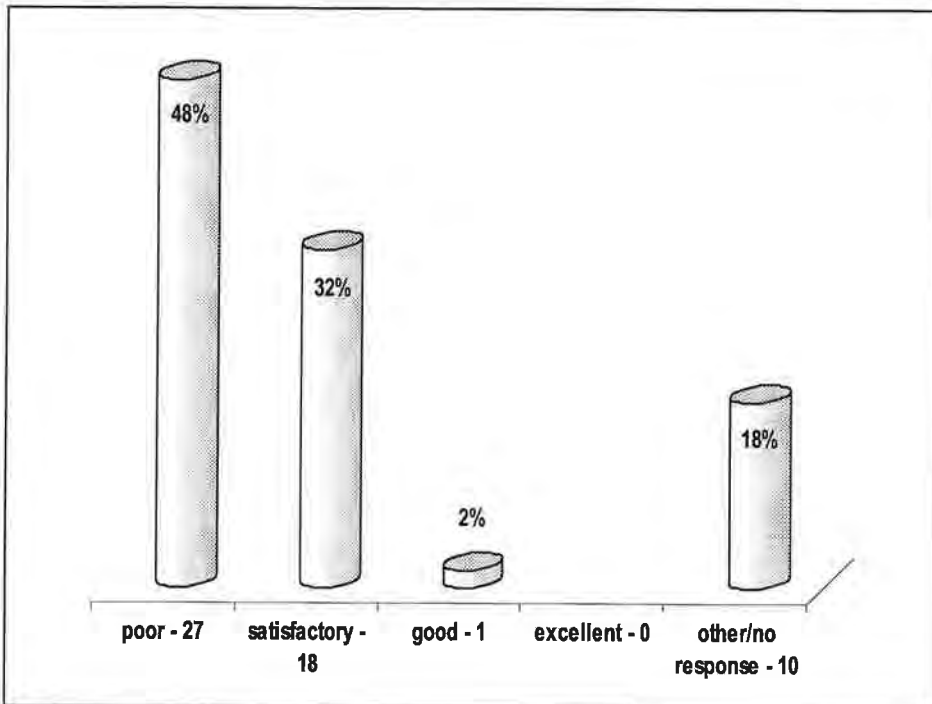**Figure 22: Rating of Health [Total Cohort]**
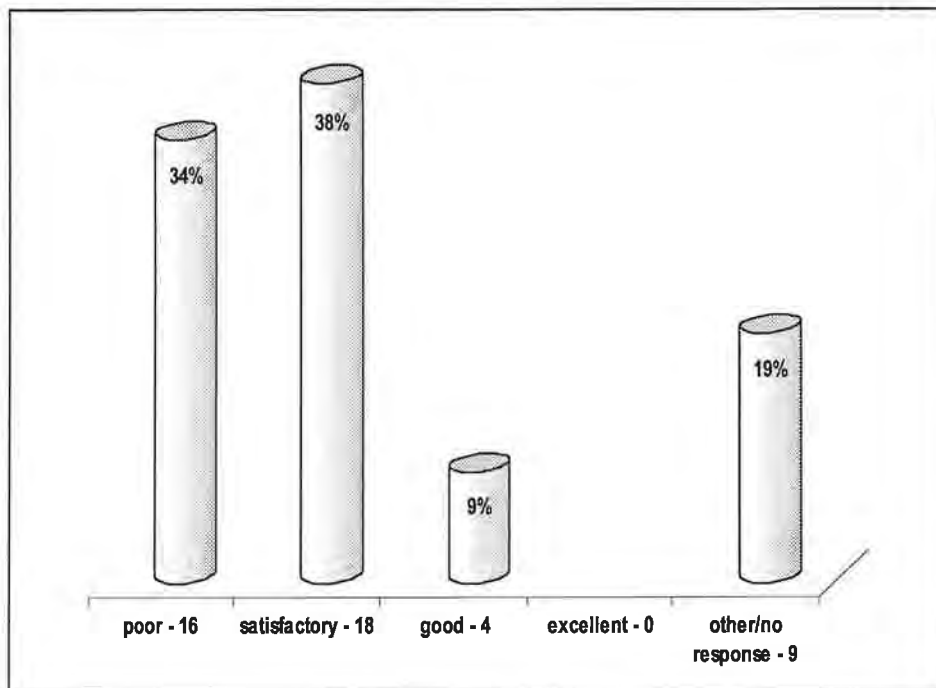
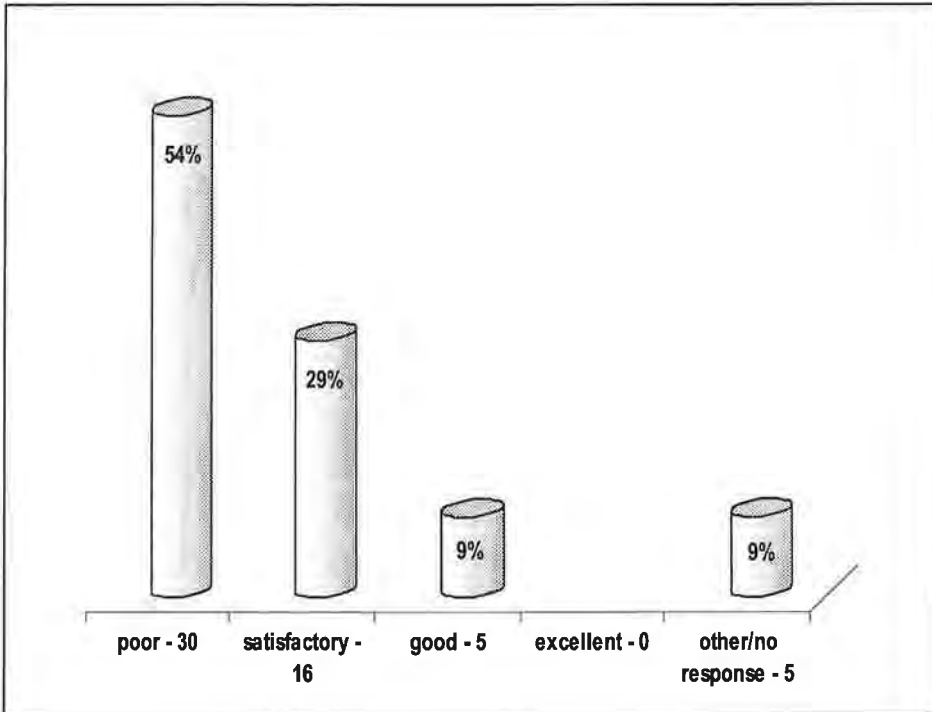**Figure 23: Rating of Material Aid [Total Cohort]**
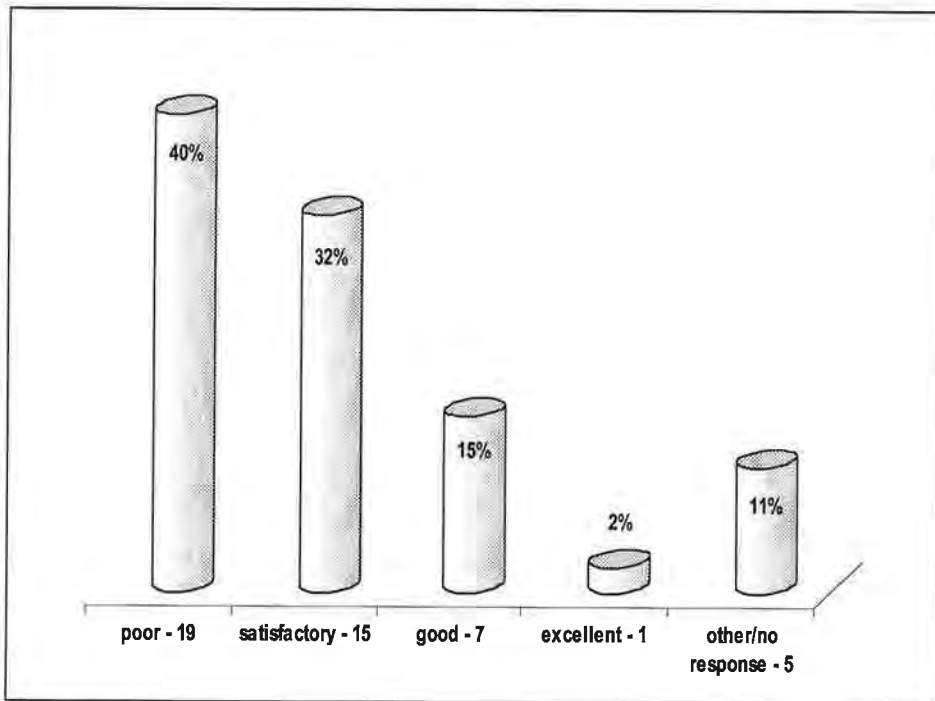
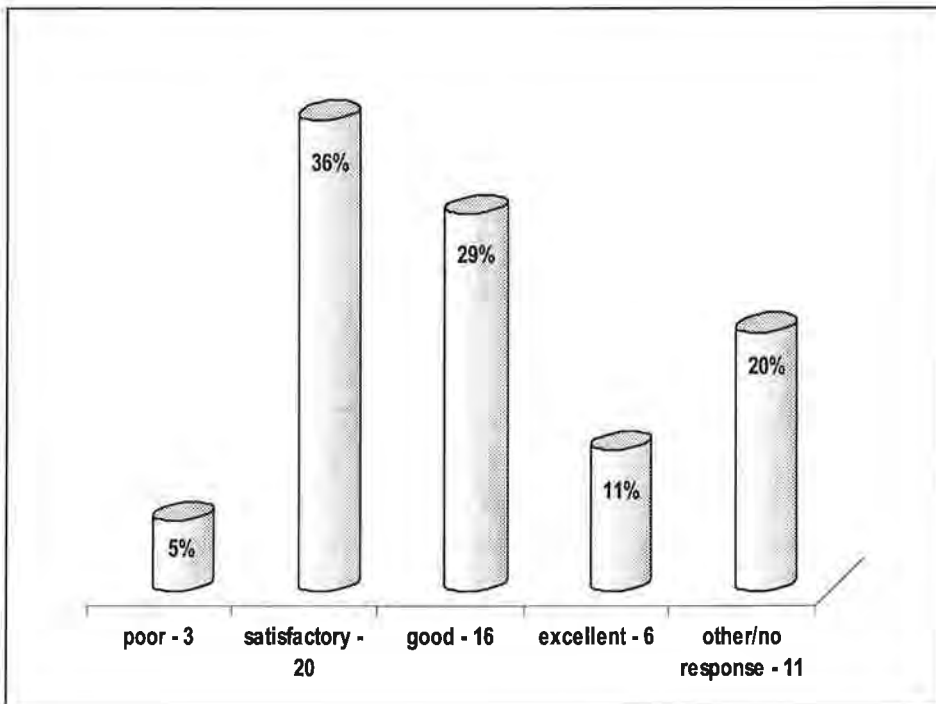*Figure 24: Rating of English Language Services [Total Cohort]*
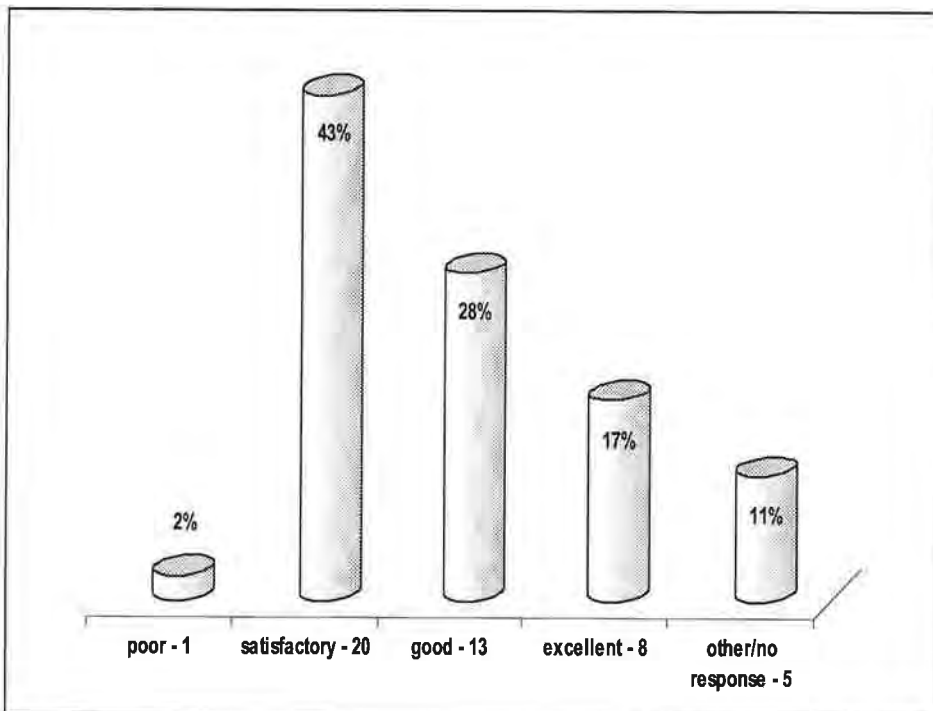

Figure 25: Rating of Medicare [Total Cohort]
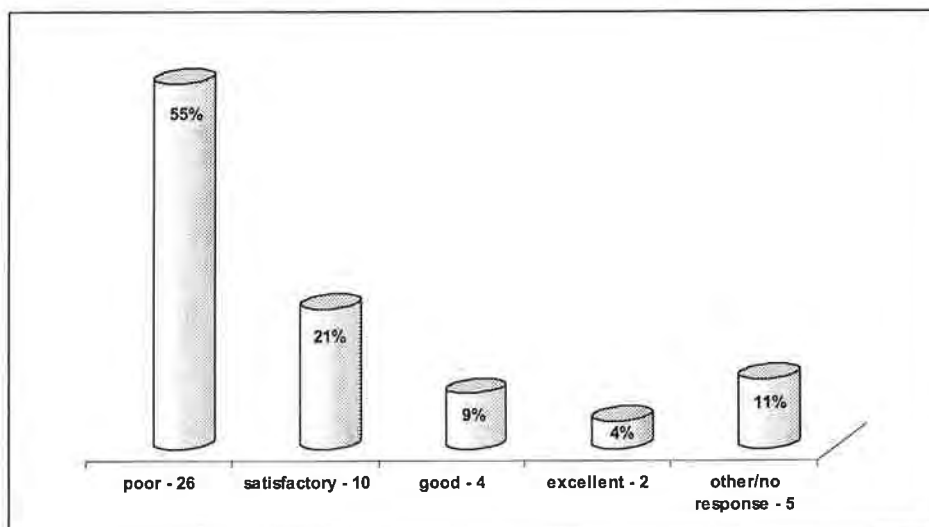
*Figure 26: Rating of Employment Services [Total Cohort]*

Two years on (Melbourne only)

In the third phase, the level of support being received by TPV holders is mostly perceived as between satisfactory and 'poor'. Income, housing, health and English language services all rated as satisfactory to 'poor' overall, while material aid and employment support received negative responses, and health and Medicare received positive responses. 60 percent of the respondents surveyed rated the level of income support they received as satisfactory. Over a third of the respondents considered the support they received to be 'poor', while only one person (6 percent) believed the support they were given was 'good'. Nearly two thirds (64 percent) of respondents considered the level of housing support they were receiving to be satisfactory. Two people (12 percent) considered it to be 'poor', while four people (24 percent) believed it was 'good'. Over 40 percent of respondents rated the English language services they were receiving as satisfactory, and more than a third of respondents rated them as 'poor'. Some respondents however, considered this service to be 'excellent' (12 percent) and 6 percent considered it 'good'. Employment services received the poorest rating. 60 percent gave employment services the lowest possible rating of 'poor'. Almost one quarter (23 percent) conceded them to be satisfactory, while only 6 percent considered them 'good'. Nearly half the respondents (47 percent) considered the material aid support they were receiving to be 'poor'. Over 40 percent of the remainder considered it to be satisfactory, with only one respondent considering it to be 'good'. The majority of the respondents (58 percent) considered the support they received for health to be satisfactory. Two people (12 percent) considered it to be 'poor', while five people (24 percent) considered it to be 'good' or 'excellent'. Medicare received the most positive rating of all the services. All those who responded to the question rated Medicare as satisfactory or higher. Over half the

respondents considered it satisfactory, more than a third considered it a 'good' service, and 6 percent rated it as 'excellent'.

ii) *Social conditions*

Post-detention period (Melbourne, Shepparton and Brisbane)

The majority of the 54 Australian TPV holders surveyed do not have contact with the Iraqi community in regional centres. The overall responses to the question of social capital or social inclusion for Brisbane and Melbourne were in the negative value range, while Shepparton rated in the positive value range. The most negative response in this section was to the question regarding feeling valued by Australian society, particularly in Brisbane and Melbourne where 71 and 39 percent, respectively, feel strongly that they are not valued by Australian society. In contrast, in the regional centre of Shepparton, 45 percent of participants say that that they do, very much, feel valued by Australian society.

This difference may be accounted for by the rural and urban differences in sense of community and participation within the local community. This claim is supported by the response to the question 'do you do volunteer work in the Iraqi community?' A majority of Shepparton participants (55 percent) responded favourably to this question, while in Brisbane (18 percent) and Melbourne (7 percent) responded negatively.

The following question again supports the difference noted between the two main cities of Melbourne and Brisbane and the regional centre of Shepparton. The question of whether survey participants could get help from friends when needed elicited the most positive response from all three regions: Shepparton, with 54 percent, was the highest, followed by Melbourne (18 percent) and Brisbane (18 percent).

The overall results for the post-detention social capital section were in the negative value range (57 percent). A majority of the 54 TPV holders surveyed in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales responded that they do not feel valued by Australian society (61 percent) and 57 percent felt that most Australians could not be trusted. On the social aspects of participating within the local Iraqi community through local volunteer work, just over 26 percent of respondents volunteered their time, while almost 67 percent do not contribute at all. On the other hand, the majority of the TPV holders surveyed claimed that they can get help from friends when they need it (55 percent), which suggests the social strength of the local communities.

Melbourne

The most negative response in this section came from the question regarding volunteer work in the Iraqi community. Eighty-four percent of those who answered this question responded that they did not do any volunteer work in the Iraqi community, representing 75 percent of all who participated in the survey. The question of whether most Australians can be trusted elicited the most positive response from survey participants. However, this response was

still expressive of a negative value in that it was 2.1786 within a range of 1.76-2.50 expressing a no, rather than an emphatic no. The responses to the question of feeling valued by the Australian community, and whether they could get help from friends when needed, both recorded negative responses, 2.0714 and 1.9259 respectively (Range: 1-1.75 No, not much; 1.76-2.50 No; 2.51-3.25 Yes; 3.26-4.00 Yes, very much). All survey participants responded to the question of being valued by Australian society and all but one responded as to whether help can be gained from friends if needed.

A clear majority of the TPV holders surveyed in Melbourne do not have contact with their ethnic community (Iraqi). 79 percent of respondents said that they do not have contact with the Iraqi community while 21 percent of respondents said that they do have contact.

Shepparton

A majority of the TPV holders surveyed in Shepparton have contact with their ethnic community. 73 percent of respondents said that they do have contact with the Iraqi community, which was much higher than for Melbourne respondents. The smaller size and rural location of the town may account for the greater community cohesion.

The social capital section had a positive response overall. All questions received a positive response, with the strongest response being to the question of whether they could get help from friends when needed. This registered a mean value of 3.4545 (with 'Yes, very much' having a range of 3.26-4.00). The questions about feeling valued by Australian society, whether most Australians can be trusted, and whether they perform voluntary work in the Iraqi community, all received positive responses: 3.0, 2.6364 and 2.6 respectively ('Yes' range: 2.51-3.25). Overall the responses indicate a high level of mutual trust and support both within the Iraqi community and with the wider Australian society for TPV holders in Shepparton.

Queensland

The most negative response to a question in this section was the question regarding feeling valued by Australian society. Seventy-one percent of people who answered this question responded with the most negative option available to them to express their feelings. The question of whether survey participants could get help from friends when needed elicited the most positive response. However, this response was still expressive of a negative value in that it was 2.2941 within a range of 1.76-2.50 expressing a no, rather than an emphatic no. All responses in the social capital section of the survey returned negative responses, while the response rate to the questions was very high.

A majority of the TPV holders surveyed in Queensland do not have contact with their ethnic community. 59 percent of respondents said that they do not have contact with the Iraqi community while 24 percent said that they do have contact. 18 percent did not answer this question.

Comparative

The majority of surveyed TPV holders in the major city centres of Brisbane (59 percent) and Melbourne (79 percent) do not maintain contact with Iraqi communities. This describes a situation in which Iraqi TPV holders in Melbourne and Brisbane are quite removed from the local communities with whom they may share much in common. In the more regional setting of Shepparton the majority (73 percent) recorded that they do have contact with the local Iraqi community, indicating a strong sense of community and less opportunity for loneliness although this does not absent the possibility of isolation from the wider community.

All of the responses to the questions in the social capital section of both the Brisbane and Melbourne TPV holders surveyed were negative. This presents a picture of a group of people who do not feel comfortable within Australian society and do not trust the members of this community either.

The question of trusting Australians returned the highest (most positive) value, but it fell into the clearly negative. When examining the breakdown of responses that created the mean value displayed above, we see that there were people who did not trust Australians at all and a small number who trusted Australians very much. So, it was not a unanimous response but, rather, slightly contradictory. However, the mean value clearly indicates that the overall sense of trust is not strong at all.

The sense of being valued by Australian society was also quite low for both States. Both means were clearly indicative of negative values – not feeling valued by Australian society. Brisbane had a much lower mean in response to this question than Melbourne, even though the Queensland Government offers far more comprehensive services to TPV holders.

The response rates to these questions in Brisbane and Melbourne are also very high. This heightens the sense that those surveyed feel very disconnected from the society around them.

The instances of doing volunteer work in the Iraqi community were very low and so too were the chances of getting help from friends when needed. All of these factors appear to describe a grim picture of isolation and concern on behalf of those surveyed.

Shepparton sharply contrasts with both Brisbane and Melbourne in that the general attitude expressed through the surveys seems far more positive, by comparison.
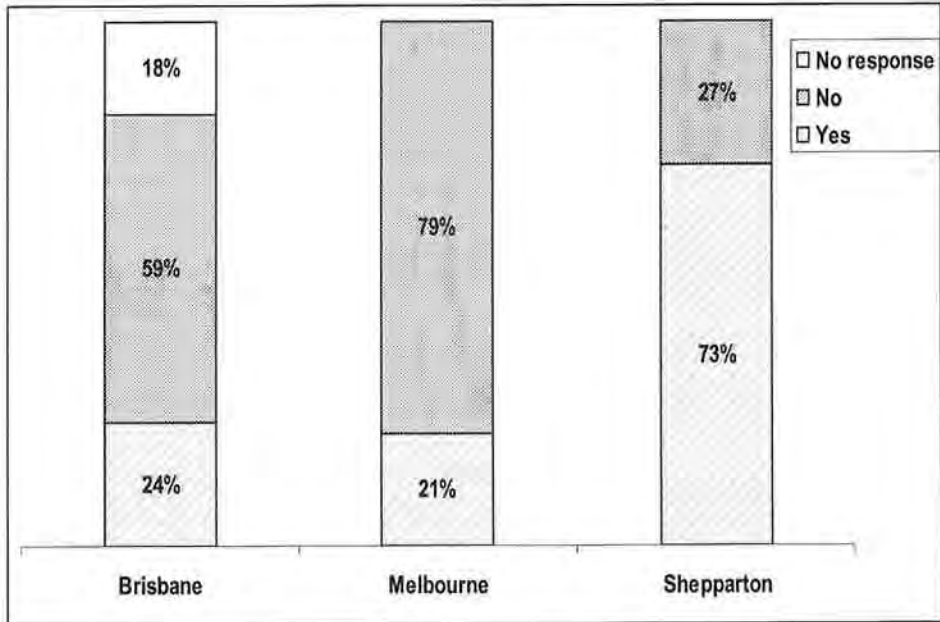
Figure 27: Post-detention Contact with Iraqi Community [Comparative]

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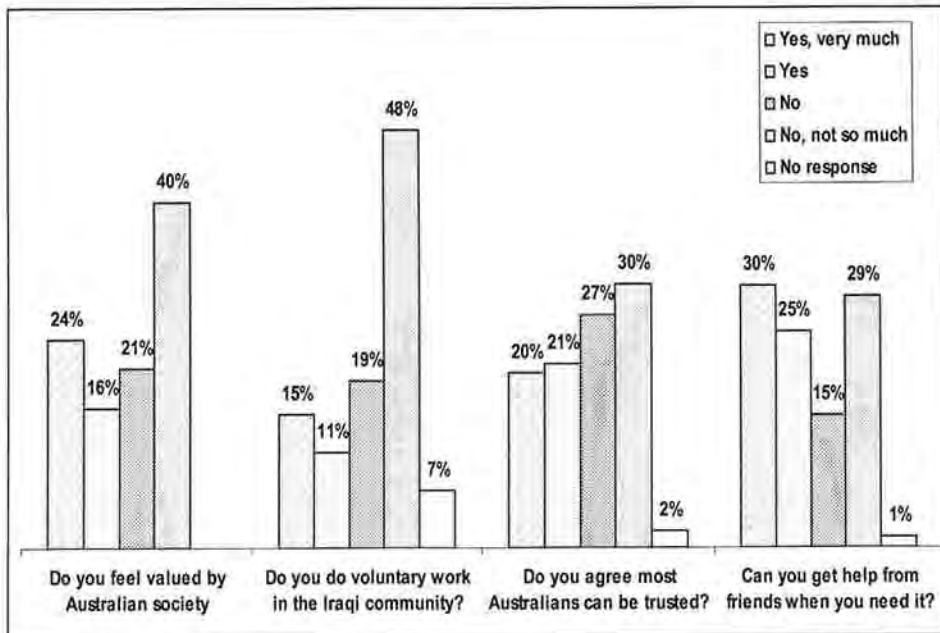
Figure 28: Post-detention Social Capital [Total Cohort]
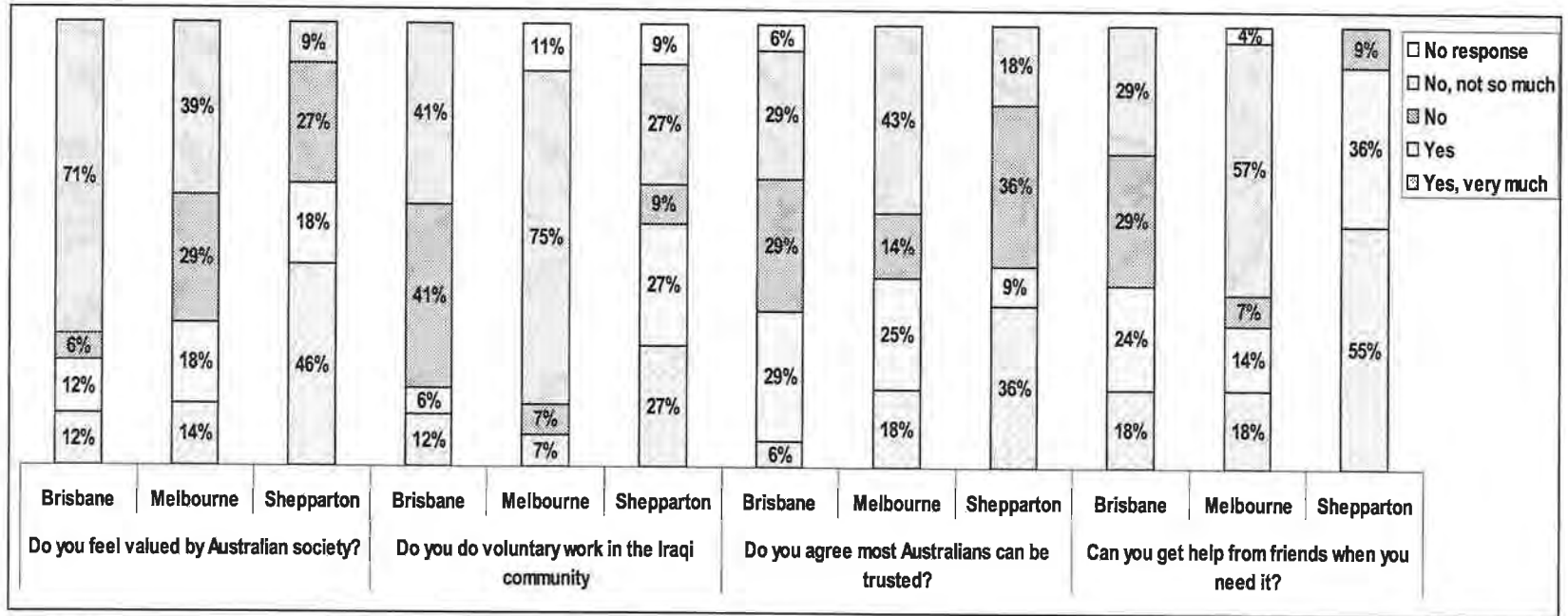
Figure 29: Post-detention Social Capital [Comparative]

One year on (Melbourne and Sydney)

In the second phase of the research, the responses to the questions establishing the level of social capital of TPV holders was generally high. The questions canvassed the levels of social connectedness and trust both within the TPV holders' own ethnic communities and within the wider Australian community. All questions received positive responses with between 72 percent and 85 percent of participants answering 'yes, a little', or 'yes, definitely', to each question.

Sydney

All the responses to the social capital questions given by the survey participants in Sydney are positive. In fact the answers were almost unanimously the most positive answer available in the survey: 'yes, definitely'. The only question to which 'a little' was the mean response was the question asking about whether the respondents trust Australians.

Melbourne

All the responses except for one were the most positive option available. One response was neutral and that was responding to the question regarding being able to receive help from friends and community when needed.

Comparative

All questions except the questions asking about trusting Australians and receiving help from friends and community when needed registered the most positive option available. This seems to indicate that in both Sydney and Melbourne the TPV holders interviewed felt comfortable within the Australian community. However the TPV holders surveyed in Sydney seem more positive about their circumstances than those surveyed in Melbourne.
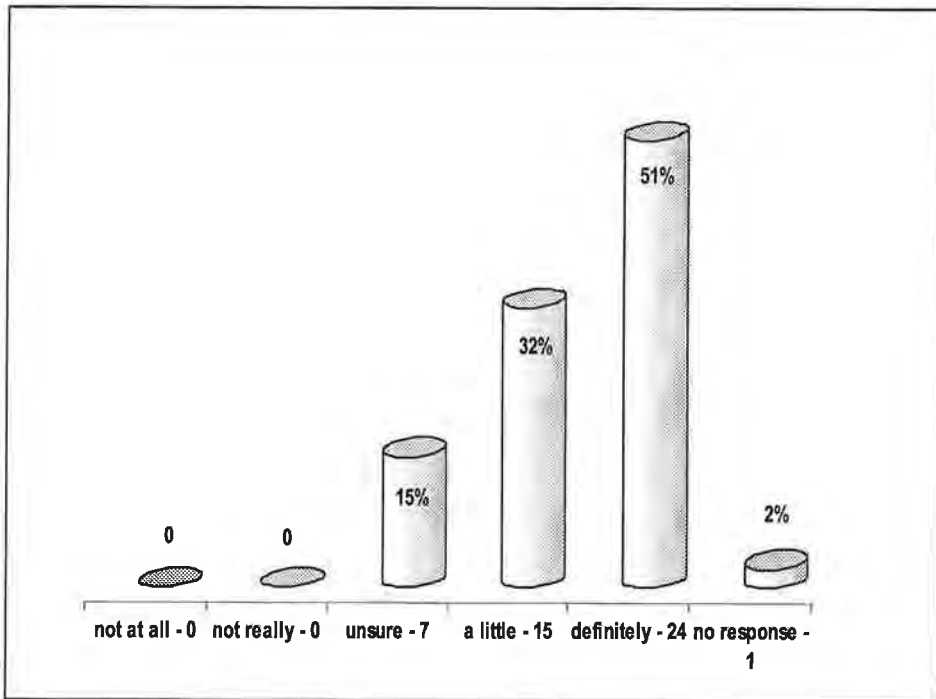
Figure 30: Do you think you are treated well by Australian society? [Total Cohort]
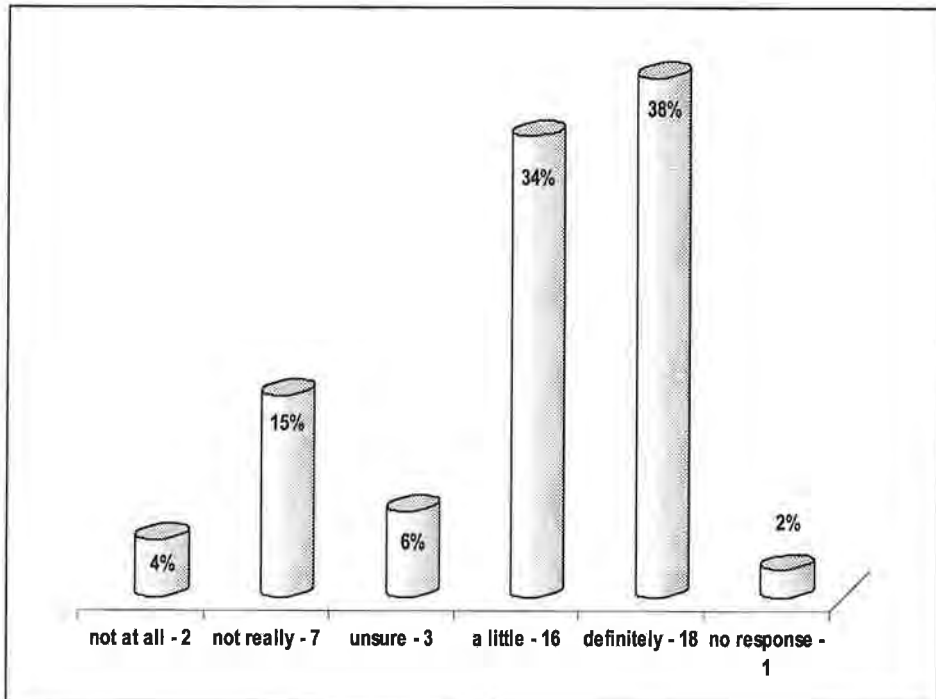
Figure 31: Do you receive help from friends and community when needed?
[Total Cohort]
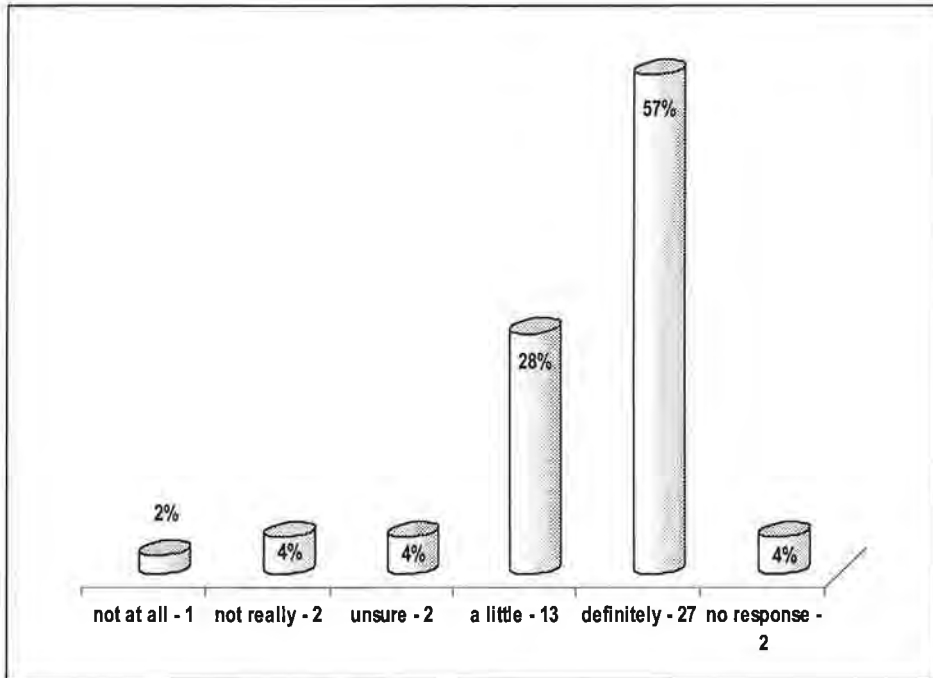
Figure 32: Do you have 'good' experiences in the Australian community?

[Total Cohort]
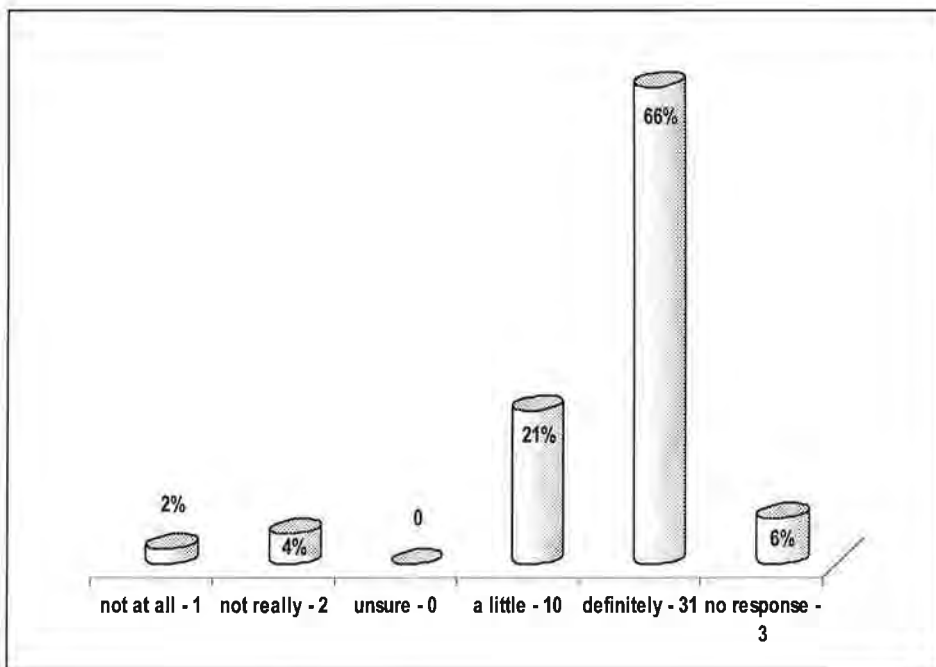
Figure 33: Have you made friends within the Iraq community?

[Total Cohort]
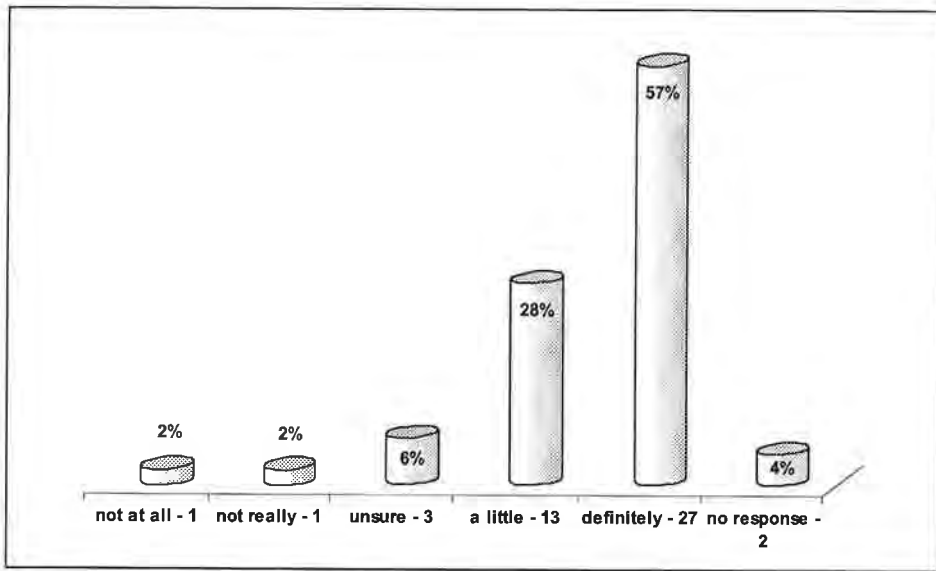
Figure 34: Have you made friends outside of the Iraqi community? [Total Cohort]
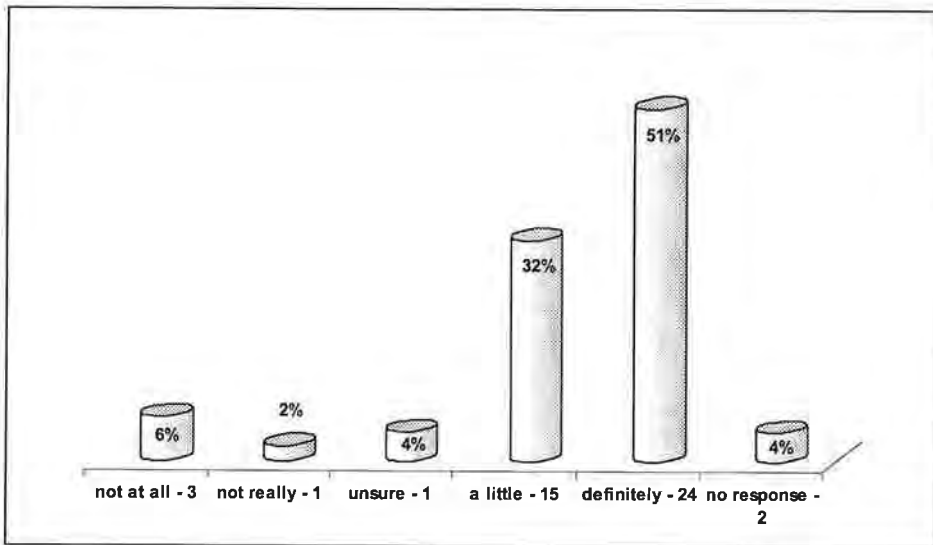
Figure 35: Do you generally trust Australians? [Total Cohort]

Two years on (Melbourne only)

In the third wave, the level of social capital enjoyed by the TPV holders surveyed appears to be high. The majority have strong friendship networks both within and outside of their communities, and report being treated well by Australian society and having good experiences. Most felt they could trust Australians, but while most felt that Australians trusted them, nearly four out of

ten respondents felt unsure about whether or not they were trusted. Most of the respondents (82 percent) believed they were treated well by Australian society either 'a little' or 'definitely'. Only one person was 'unsure', and one person did not feel they were treated well. More than three quarters (76 percent) felt they could rely on some level of support from friends and community, either 'a little' or 'definitely', when they needed it. The majority of participants (88 percent) reported having good experiences in the Australian community. Slightly more than 10 percent reported that they did not have good experiences. This may reflect the ambivalence of the community itself. As one person remarked:

'The Australian community is friendly and open-minded and it welcomes refugees. Actually, this varies among them, as a minority rejects the refugees, but the majority responds positively to the migrants and refugees.'

Almost all TPV holders surveyed (94 percent) had made friends within the Iraqi community, and the majority (83 percent) had also made friends outside the Iraqi community. One person, however, commented on the barriers to meaningful relationships both within their communities and outside it:

'The social discrimination among the Australian community is another issue. People look at temporary visa holders as a segment that doesn't belong to the Australian community, considering that they are temporary people. The same applies within the refugees' communities; whether Iraqis or Afghanis. These communities see dealing with temporary visa holders as a difficult task and the marriage matter is the best example. Permanent visa holders mostly refuse any proposal of marriage by a temporary visa holder, considering the future uncertainty of the latter. Therefore, this issue has created a social gap. The temporary visa holder is rejected by his/her own ethnic community, and you can imagine the situation when it comes to the Australian community.'

He sees the temporary nature of his visa as carrying a triple stigma – from the Australian Government, the Australian people, and from his own ethnic community.

TPV holders reported enjoying a reasonably high level of trust with the Australian community. 65 percent felt they could trust Australians, either 'a little' (24 percent) or 'definitely' (41 percent), while 59 percent felt that Australians trusted them. Some see a relationship between Australia's foreign policy in Iraq and the government's treatment of asylum seekers on TPVs:

'These two policies go hand in hand. I think the Australian foreign policy has a direct and severe impact on the way the government deals with us.'

One person noticed a recent change in the attitudes of Australian society:

'They look at Arabs and Muslims in a racist and non-humanitarian manner sometimes. Once again, that is an outcome of the government regulations. The refugee has to be accepted within the Australian social fibre ... I view [the TPV] as a death penalty. This refugee is alive explicitly but dead implicitly and merely a body. I blame the government regulations for that, which if remain unchanged, would destroy the personality of those refugees for being unable to produce or to participate in the community.'

Another person put it more succinctly:

'I feel that I'm oppressed by the Australian Government and that I'm targeted and insecure. I'm afraid that one day they will accuse me of being a terrorist.'
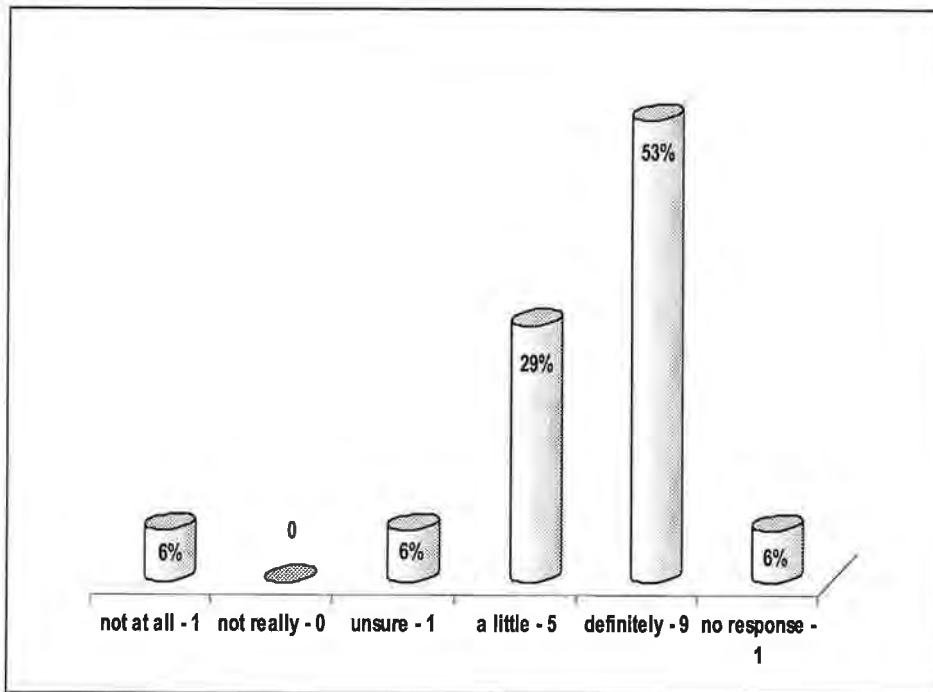
Figure 36: Are you treated well by Australian society?
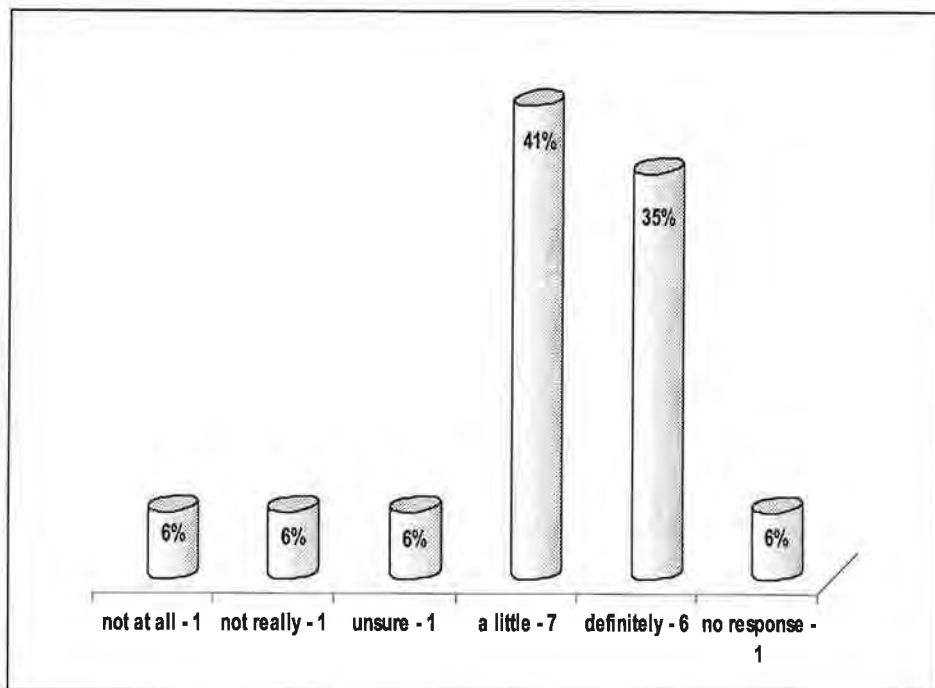
Figure 37: Do you receive help from friends and community when needed?
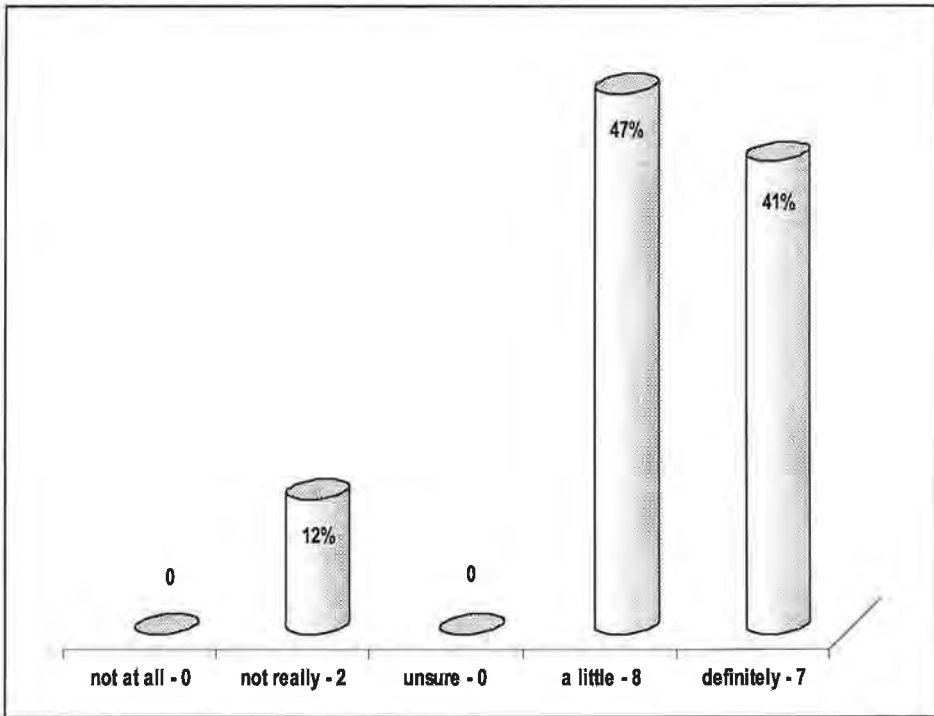
Figure 38: Do you have 'good' experiences in the Australian community?
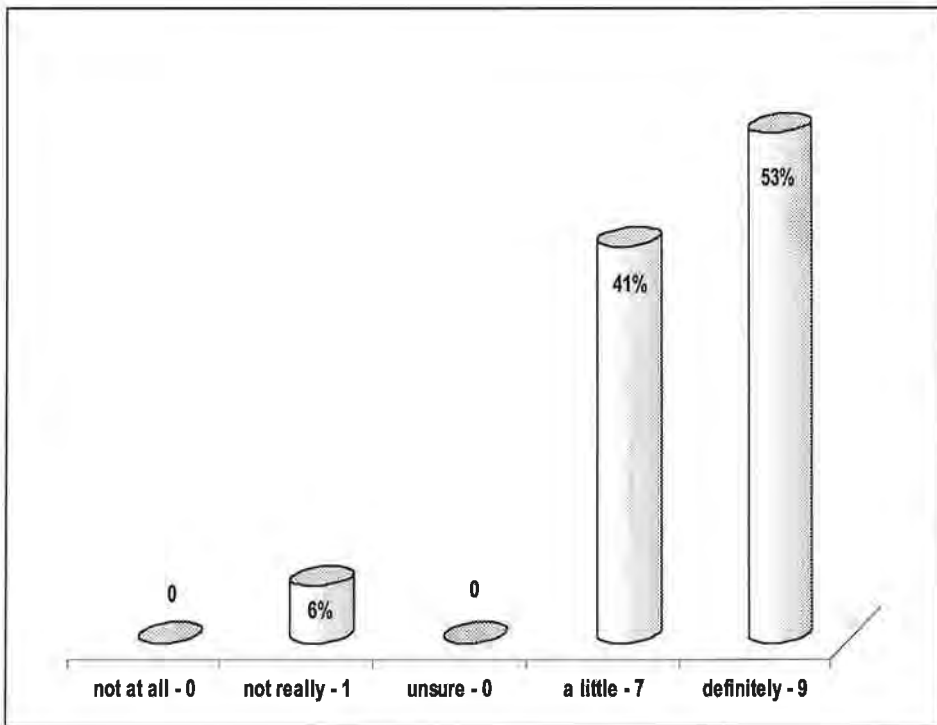
Figure 39: Have you made friends within the Iraqi community?

not at all - 1   not really - 2   unsure - 0   a little - 3   definitely - 11
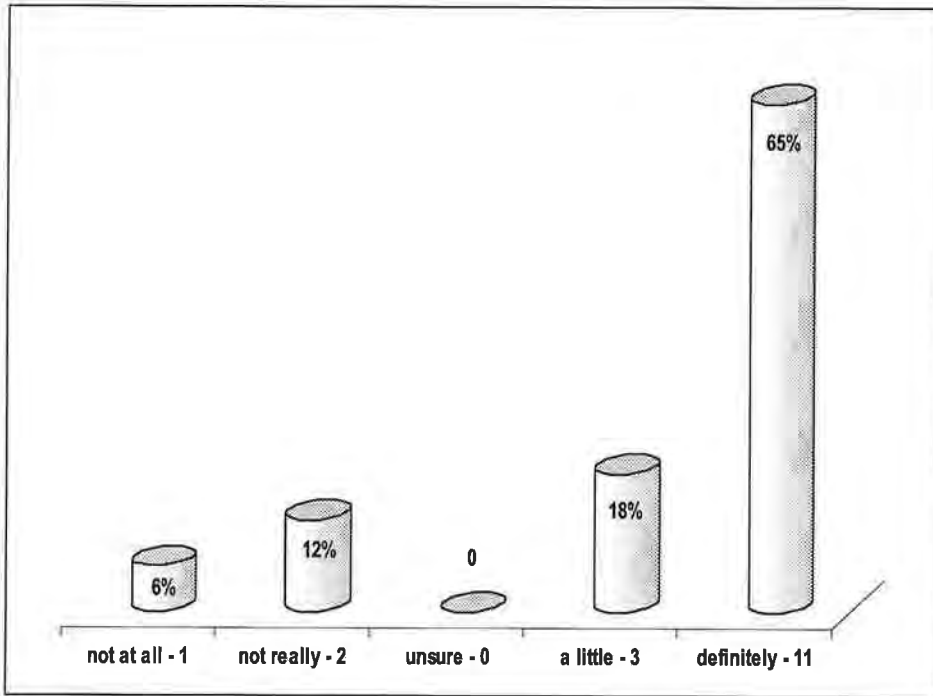
Figure 40: Have you made friends outside of the Iraqi community?

not at all - 0   not really - 0   unsure - 6   a little - 4   definitely - 7
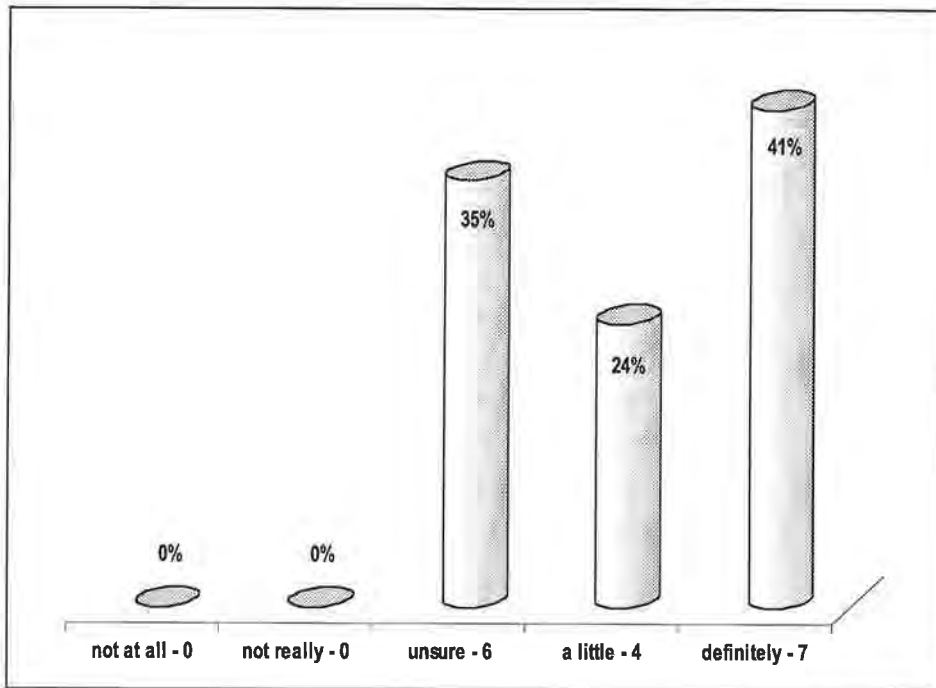
Figure 41: Do you generally trust Australians?
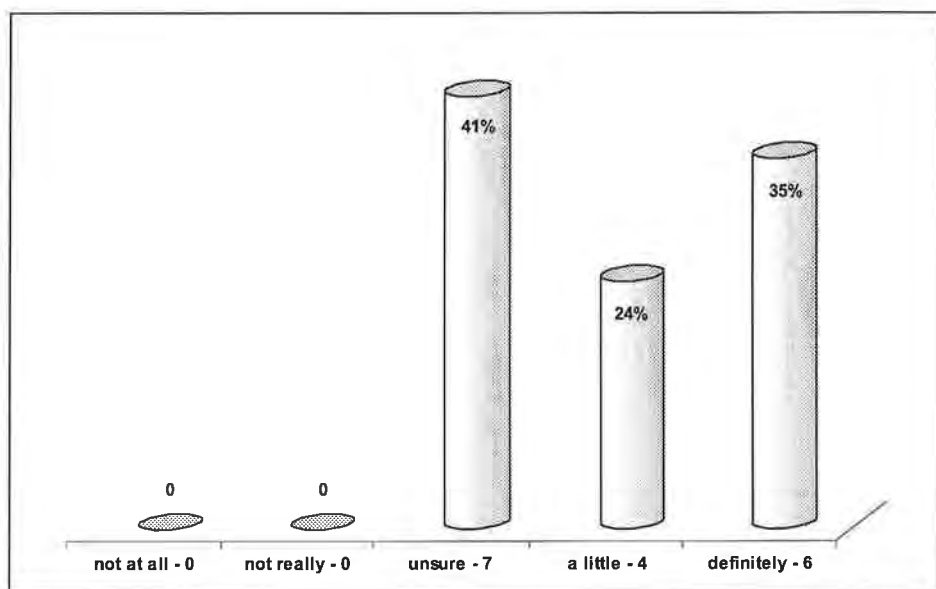
Figure 42: Do you feel that Australians trust you?

iii) Coping capacity (visa and repatriation issues, and practical and emotional aspects)

One year on (Melbourne and Sydney)

Nearly half the participants' TPVs were still valid (49 percent), while a slightly lower number (45 percent) had expired. Three people did not respond to the question. Over 70 percent of TPV holders had applied for a permanent visa since many begin the process of re-application before their TPV expires. Only three people (6 percent) stated that they had not applied for a permanent visa while the rest did not answer the question. Between a quarter and a third of all respondents admitted that reapplying for another visa was traumatic, and made them feel 'worried', 'good' and 'sad'. A few people also reported feeling 'frightened', 'hopeful' and 'uncertain'.

Nearly half of all respondents (45 percent) were worried that voluntary repatriation will remove the choice to stay in Australia, and all of these strongly agreed that they were concerned. A similar amount (47 percent) did not agree that they felt worried. Less than 10 percent of the TPV holders surveyed either did not respond to the question or did not agree nor disagree. The prospect of being offered voluntary repatriation to Iraq aroused overwhelmingly negative emotions in the Iraqi TPV holders surveyed. Of the adjectives offered to describe their feelings, negative emotions expressing 'fear', 'trauma' and 'anxiety' were all selected, while the adjectives conveying a positive emotional response were chose by few, if any, of the respondents. The word 'traumatic' was chosen most frequently by TPV holders and was selected by 83 percent of respondents to describe their feelings towards being offered voluntary repatriation. More than half the respondents (53 percent) also chose 'frightened', followed by 'bored' (45 percent), 'distressed' (43 percent), 'worried' and 'failure' (both chosen by 38 percent of

respondents), 'bad' (36), 'punished' (34 percent) and 'stressful' (28 percent) 'Fair', 'calm' and 'uncertain' were not selected by anyone, while 'good' (4 percent) and 'peaceful' (2 percent) were selected by very few respondents

The TPV holders strongly refuted the suggestion by the Australian government that Iraq is a safe place at the moment. Over 85 percent of respondents disagreed, the majority of these disagreeing strongly. Only 4 percent of people believed Iraq was safe, and less than 10 percent did not respond or neither agreed nor disagreed. Given the strong belief held by the TPV holders that Iraq is not a safe place to be at the moment, it is unsurprising that a similar number did not feel safe returning to Iraq. 83 percent of respondents disagreed that they felt safe returning to Iraq, and most of these (70 percent) 'strongly' disagreed. Only 8 percent agreed that they felt safe returning, which reflects the number of people who felt Iraq is a safe place at the moment. Again, the number of people who responded that they felt anxious about their family in Iraq corresponded with the number of people who felt Iraq was not a safe place at the moment. The number of people who prefer not to live in Iraq also corresponds with the degree of perceived safety there.

Sydney

The majority of the visas (65 percent) of the TPV holders in Sydney had expired. The respondents noted that their TPVs had been expired for periods of between two and 11 months. Nearly three quarters had applied for a permanent visa, and only one person stated that they had not applied for one. In Sydney the most frequent words chosen to describe reapplying for protection were 'traumatic' (42 percent) and 'sad' (42 percent).

The responses to the question asking whether the TPV holders have concerns over the possibility of being offered voluntary repatriation was overall one that elicited worry from those surveyed in Sydney. By agreeing with this question the respondents are indicating concern about having their choice to stay in Australia removed. A small majority of respondents (54 percent) expressed strong concern over what an offer of voluntary repatriation would mean for their situation. Eight (31 percent) respondents expressed a lack of concern regarding what voluntary repatriation would mean for them. While the majority of respondents expressed concern over offers of voluntary repatriation, this was by no means a unanimous position. In Sydney 81 percent of survey participants also registered 'traumatic' as the word most expressive of their feelings in relation to the possible offer of voluntary repatriation back to Iraq. The second most frequent word selected in Sydney was 'bored'. The rest of the words selected in both cities are quite similar in their frequency.

Iraq was on average thought not to be a safe place at all. The quantified answers firmly fell within the numerical value of 'strongly' disagree in response to a positively framed statement. This average consisted of 17 (65 percent) respondents responding with 'strongly disagree' while five (19 percent) responded with 'disagree'. Overall, 21 (85 percent) of respondents disagreed to varying degrees with this statement. This response can be seen together with the response to the previous statement as expressing a deep concern about both safety in Iraq and what the Australian Government plans to do with Iraqi TPV holders. The mean response to the statement about feeling safe returning to Iraq brought about a response of 'strongly disagree' reflecting a

forceful rejection of any notion that the TPV holders may feel this way. 21 (81 percent) survey participants responded negatively to this question with 16 (61 percent) responding that they 'strongly disagree' and five (19 percent) that they 'disagree'. The respondents 'strongly agree' that they felt anxious about their families in Iraq. In fact all of those who responded to this question (88 percent) noted that they 'strongly agree' that they are concerned about family in Iraq. Three survey participants (11 percent) did not respond to this question. The mean response to the statement regarding a preference for being in Iraq over Australia was to 'strongly disagree'. Thirteen people (50 percent) responded with 'strongly disagree' with this statement while seven (27 percent) responded with 'disagree'. The respondents expressed a clear concern about returning to Iraq at this point in time as they have already stated that they think that Iraq is not currently a safe place. The strongest response registered by the survey group expressed a high level of concern about family members residing in Iraq.

Melbourne

Most TPV holders in Melbourne were still covered by their initial temporary visa with over three quarters (76 percent) of TPVs not yet expired. Even though only 19 percent of the TPVs had expired, two thirds of the survey participants had already reapplied for a permanent visa. In Melbourne the two most frequent words to describe reapplication were 'good' and 'worried'. 'Traumatic' was a close third, but the general response rate to these questions was very low in the Melbourne survey.

The overall response in Melbourne to the statement expressing concern about 'voluntary repatriation', potentially removing the choice to stay in the country, was to disagree. Two thirds of the respondents were not worried about having the choice to stay taken from them, perhaps believing that the decision to stay or leave would be theirs to make. In Melbourne 86 percent of survey participants registered 'traumatic' as the word most expressive of their feelings in relation to the possible offer of voluntary repatriation back to Iraq. 'Frightening' (76 percent) was the second most frequent word selected to describe feelings in response to voluntary repatriation.

The statement regarding Iraq being a safe place was answered with a 'strongly disagree'. Over 90 percent of respondents disagreed that Iraq was a safe place and most of these (86 percent) 'strongly' disagreed. Eighteen respondents (86 percent) answered that they would not feel safe returning to Iraq at the current time. Out of these 17 (81 percent) answered that they 'strongly' disagreed with feeling safe about returning to Iraq while one respondent disagreed with feeling safe returning to Iraq. Only one respondent answered 'strongly agree' that s/he would feel safe returning to Iraq at this point in time. Again 18 respondents (86 percent) responded in the affirmative to the statement that they are anxious about family who are still in Iraq. Two respondents (10 percent) disagreed with feeling anxious about family in Iraq while one person did not answer the question. The large majority of respondents responded that they would not prefer to be in Iraq than Australia. Nineteen responses (90 percent) stated clearly that they would prefer to be in Australia with 12 (57 percent) of these expressing a strong disagreement with the idea of Iraq being a preferable place to reside

currently, while seven of these respondents (33 percent) were to disagree. The response rate for these statements regarding repatriation and safety in Iraq are strongly expressive of not seeing Iraq as a safe place at the moment either in terms of return or in terms of safety for those currently living there. There is a high level of anxiety when thinking of the safety of family members still living in Iraq as there is expressed over the thought of returning to Iraq. The overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they would prefer to be in Australia than Iraq at this point in time.

Comparative

In both Sydney and Melbourne DIMIA is the major source of news and information regarding the reapplication process (accessed by 50 percent and 38 percent of respondents respectively). This is as it should be given that DIMIA is the government body charged with administrative control of assessing refugee and special humanitarian visas. In Sydney legal centres were recorded as the second most frequent sources of information regarding the reapplication process by 19 percent of the respondents. In Melbourne community centres were listed as the second most frequent sources of information about visa reapplication by 19 percent of respondents.

The expiry rate of TPVs amongst the refugees in Sydney was much higher than in Melbourne. In Sydney 65 percent had seen their Temporary Protection Visas expire, while in Melbourne 19 percent of the respondents' TPVs had expired. In Melbourne 76 percent of respondents still had valid TPVs, while in Sydney only 27 percent still had a valid TPV. Despite the differences in the number of survey participants whose TPVs had expired in both cities the number of respondents who have applied for permanent protection visas is high in both Sydney (73 percent) and Melbourne (67 percent). While Melbourne had a very low response rate to this question relating to reapplication, Sydney had a quite consistent negative reaction in the choice of words to describe the feelings around reapplication. The response from Melbourne was mixed (the most popular words were 'good' and 'worried'), and differed from Sydney which had a fairly consistent negative response. The reason for the disparity here is not obvious in its source. There appears to be little or no supporting information for any assertion in the data. In both Sydney and Melbourne respondents registered a neutral valued mean in response to the statement asserting the possibility of living a comfortable life while awaiting ongoing protection. Respondents in both cities 'agree' that they were: anxious about re-applying for protection; that they feel informed about the reapplication process and happy to be re-applying for a protection visa. The surveys also showed that respondents in Sydney and Melbourne 'strongly agree' that: they were scared by not knowing where they'll be in the near future; that they are happy about the chance for permanent protection; that they feel they have already proven themselves to be refugees; that they are anxious about being placed in detention again.

Sydney and Melbourne respondents' statements diverged in relation to having felt like they had already applied for protection. Where the mean in Sydney expressed strong agreement with this, in Melbourne the mean was expressive of a neutral value. The other divergence was the Sydney survey's mean of agreeing that the reapplication process is straightforward and easy

to understand, while those surveyed in Melbourne had a mean that expressed a neutral value. The results in this section are a combination of worry and anxiety concerning the immediate future at the same time as happiness over the chance to be applying for permanent protection despite feeling that they have already proven themselves to be refugees. Both cities had significant missing values in this section, meaning a number of people did not answer any given question. In Melbourne the percentage of people who did not answer this question got as high as 38 percent and the lowest was 29 percent. In Sydney the missing values ranged between 19 percent and 31 percent.

Overall survey participants in both Sydney and Melbourne had high response rates to the question of safety in Iraq, and displayed very similar responses. Both cities expressed major concerns over the safety situation in Iraq together with worry over the thought of having to return to Iraq at the current time. Respondents in Sydney and Melbourne both expressed very high levels of anxiety over the safety of family members residing in Iraq. Again, both Sydney and Melbourne respondents expressed a clear preference for residing in Australia rather than Iraq at the present time. Respondents in both States selected mostly negative adjectives to describe their feelings about being offered voluntary repatriation. Neither State recorded a high response to any of the emotionally positive adjectives.
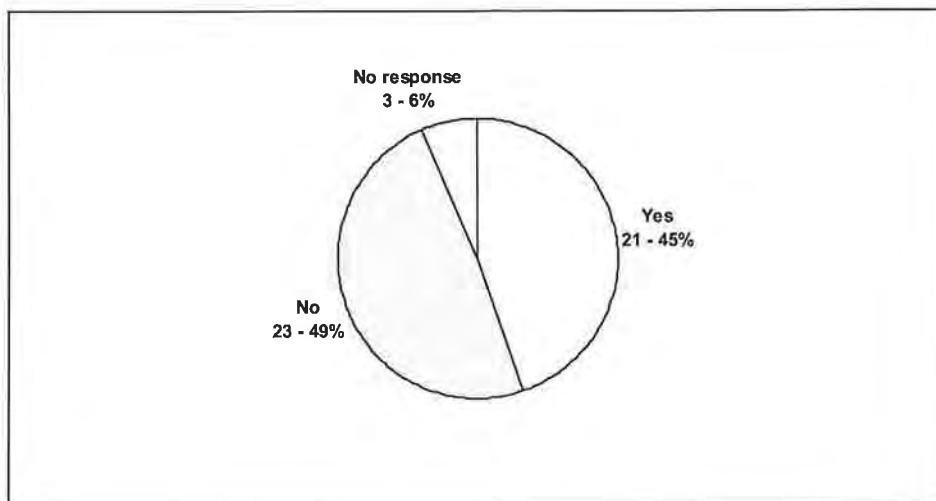
Figure 43: Has your TPV expired? [Total Cohort]
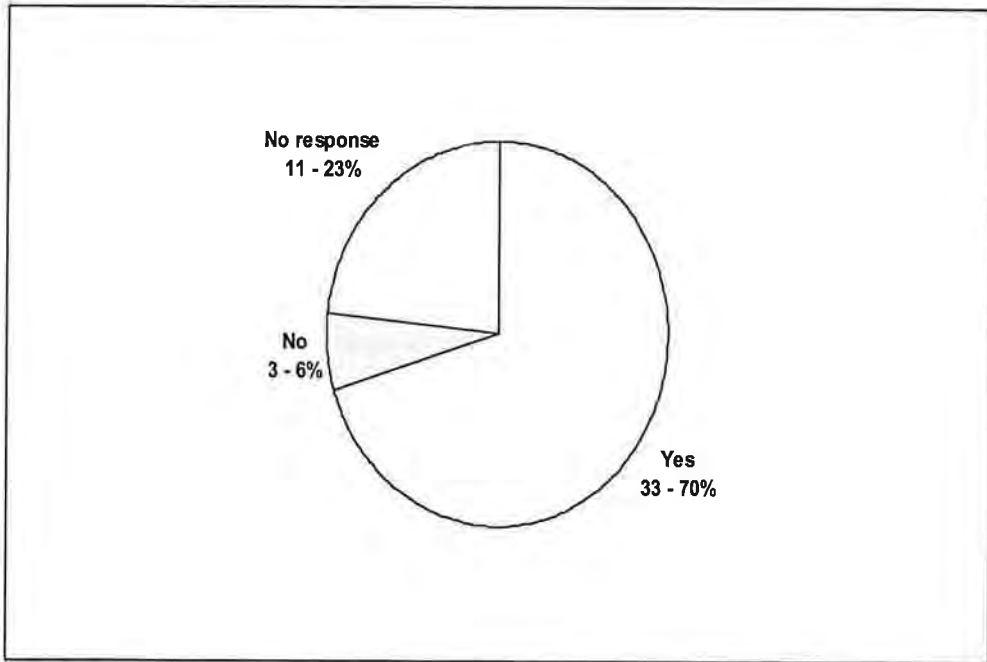
Figure 44: Have you applied for a PPV? [Total Cohort]
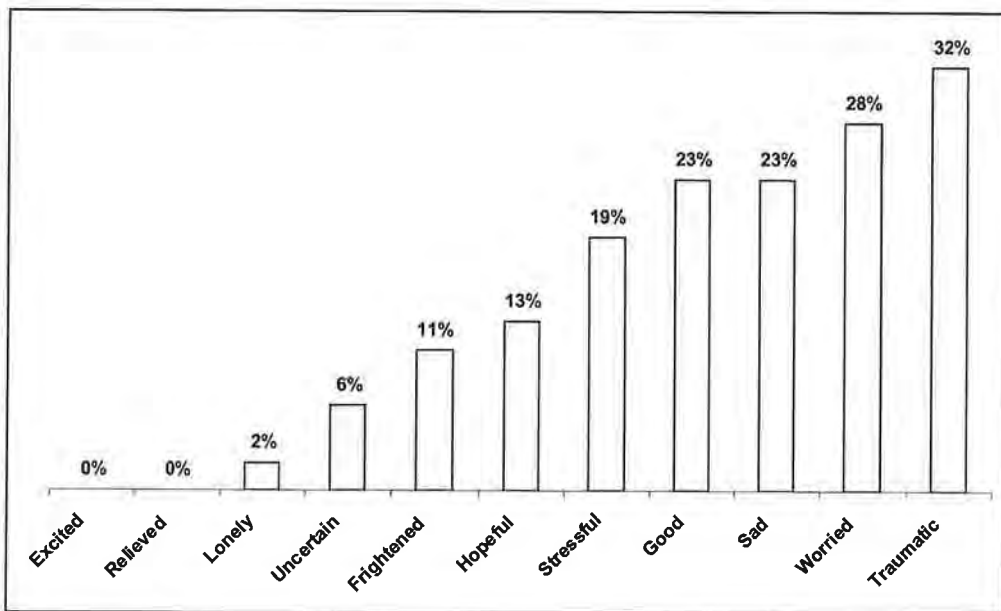
Figure 45Protection visa reapplication word frequency [Total Cohort]
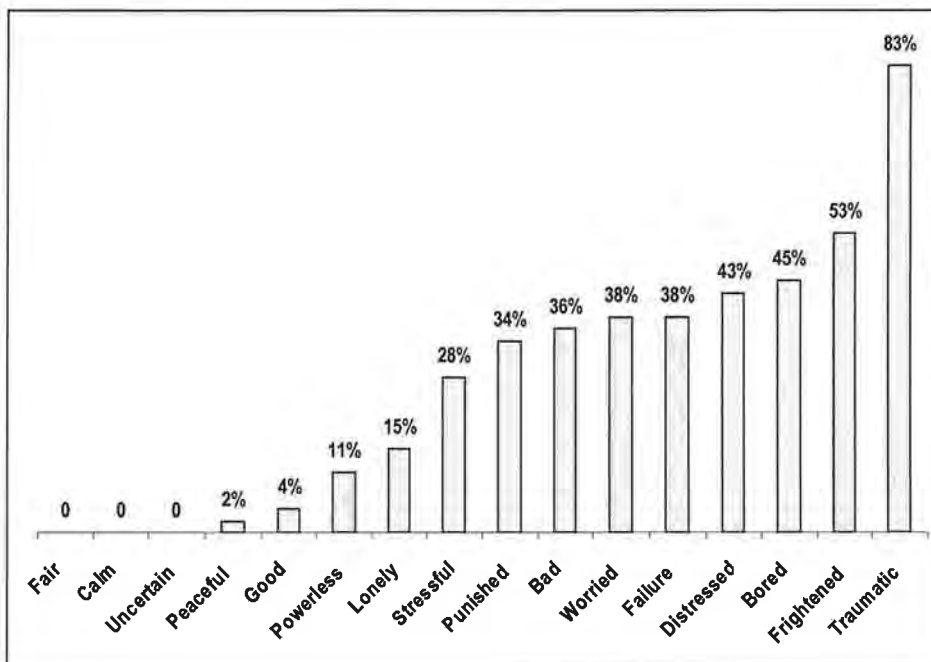
Figure 46: Word frequency: possible offer of voluntary repatriation [Total Cohort]
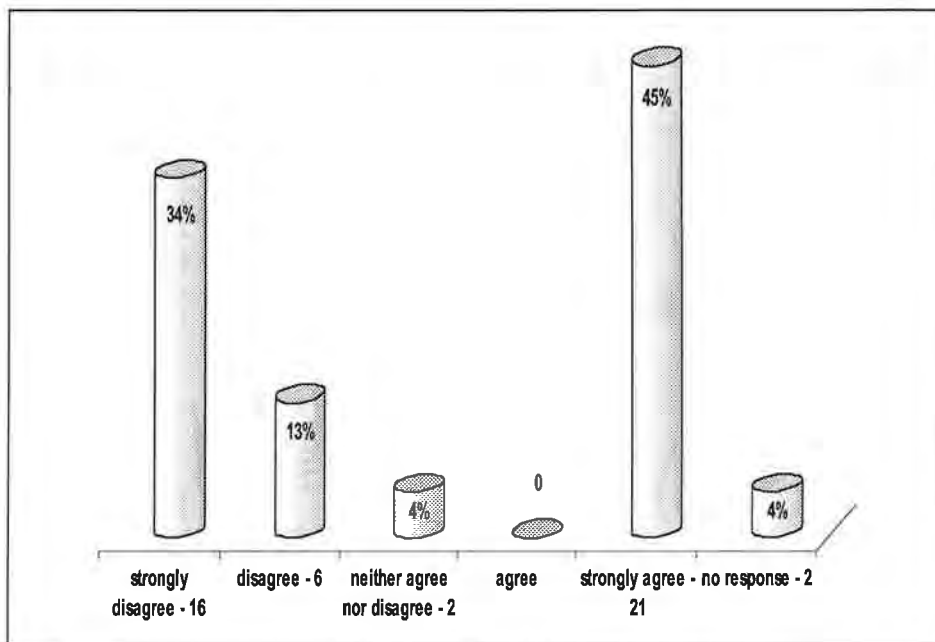
Figure 47: I am worried that voluntary repatriation will remove the choice to stay
[Total Cohort]
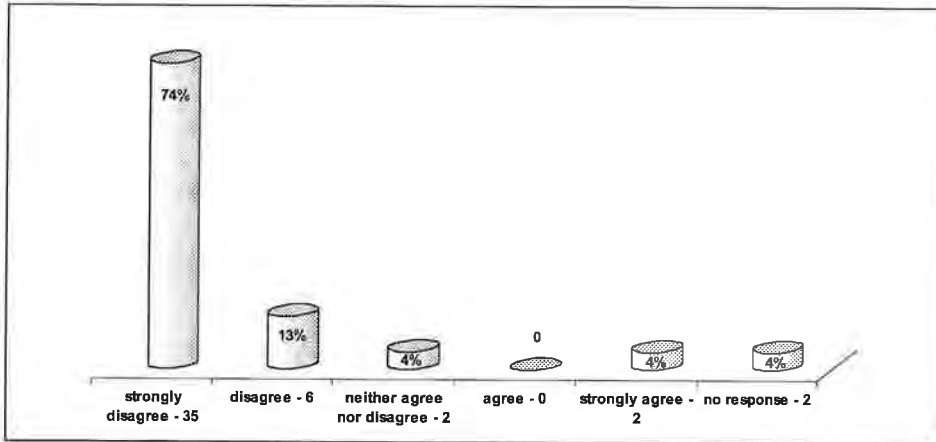
Figure 48: I think Iraq is a safe place at the moment [Total Cohort]
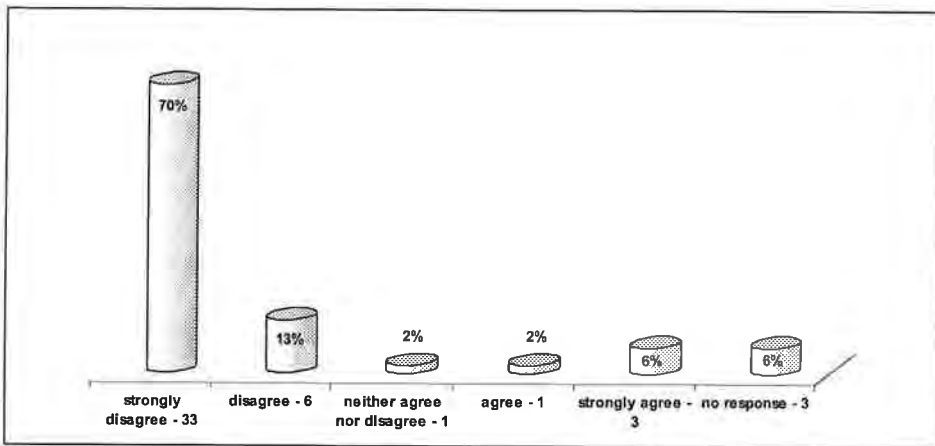
Figure 49: I would feel safe returning to Iraq [Total Cohort]
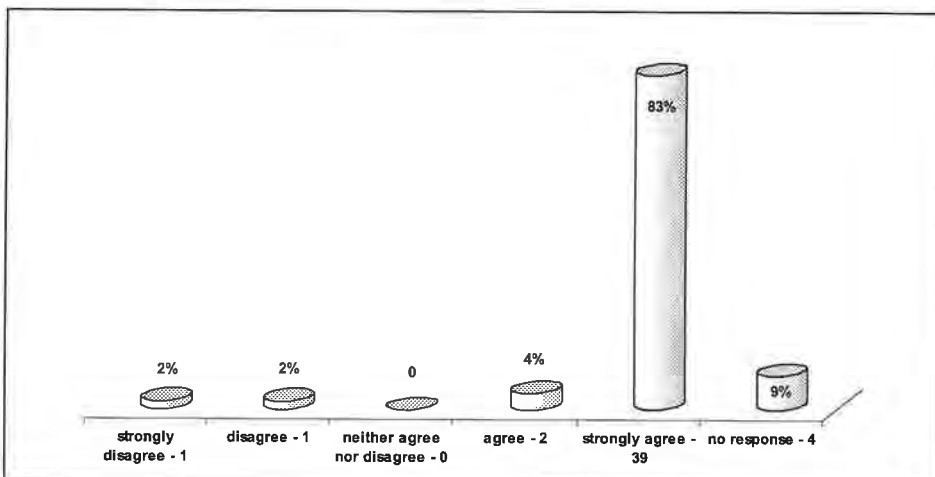
Figure 50 I am anxious about my family in Iraq   [Total Cohort]
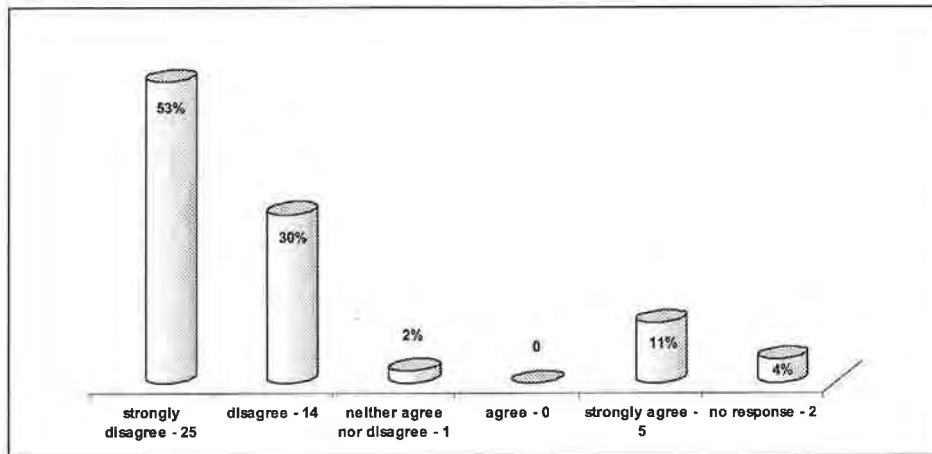
Figure 51: I would prefer to live in Iraq than Australia [Total Cohort]

Practical and emotional aspects of coping

TPV holders in the second phase of research appear to be coping well with the practical aspects of daily existence. The general responses showed that they felt they could communicate with anyone they met, believed they had appropriate housing for themselves and their families, and that they had no trouble accessing the services that they need. While most believed they had enough work to support themselves, there was a mixed response about having enough work to support their families, with roughly half agreeing and half disagreeing. The TPV holders surveyed agreed that they often felt lonely and disagreed that they felt hopeful about the future. The responses indicate that those surveyed feel comfortable in Australia, but also that they are alienated by a sense of loneliness. There were no overall expressions of hope for the future, but there is anxiety about the safety of respondents' families. The overall sense is of feeling hopeless, anxious and lonely. All of the responses to the statements regarding the health, education, safety, and happiness of the respondents' children in Australia indicated a strong agreement from the respondents in both Sydney and Melbourne. The only negative statement was that most agreed that their children worried about whether they would be safe in the future. There was a high rate of non-response in Sydney which probably reflects the fact that many are childless or without their family in Australia. The rating of their perception of their children's wellbeing and emotional adjustment is markedly higher than their own.

Sydney

Responses to this section of the survey in Sydney were mostly positive. Respondents agreed that: they had enough work to support themselves and their families; they are able to communicate with everyone that they meet; they have no trouble accessing services, and they have appropriate housing for themselves and their families. Neutral responses were registered in

response to the statements expressing that: they have no health problems andthey have access to health services .

Melbourne

In Melbourne survey respondents disagreed that they had enough work to support themselves or their families. This is a worrying sign given that many services such as health and language classes necessitate having a wage to access them. The majority of the responses to these questions in Melbourne had mean values indicating neutrality. Neutral values were in response to: having no health problems being able to communicate with anyone they met and having appropriate housing for themselves and their families. Two statements elicited affirmative responses and they were in response to: having access to health services and having trouble accessing the services that I need.

Comparative

The survey participants in Sydney present a picture of coping reasonably well in the areas of communication, employment, housing and access to services. TPV holders in Melbourne generally appeared to be having more difficulties coping than their Sydney counterparts, with the exception of access to health services which rated very highly in Melbourne but received a neutral response in Sydney. Melbourne respondents were less confident that they had appropriate housing for themselves or their families that they had enough work to support themselves and their families, and felt less able to communicate with anyone they met. The responses indicate that while many people are coping reasonably well with their practical survival needs, there are many – particularly in Melbourne – who are struggling.

In both Sydney and Melbourne survey participants agree that they feel safe in Australia. Respondents strongly expressed anxiety for their families' safety and concern about being able to support them. They also indicated that they felt lonely, although TPV holders in Sydney were more likely to respond strongly to this question than those in Melbourne. This correlates with the profile of the Sydney respondents as being more likely to be unmarried, childless, or without their families in Australia.

Two years on (Melbourne only)

Visa and repatriation issues

More than three quarters (76 percent) of respondents' temporary visas had expired. The visas had expired between one and 18 months ago, and 94 percent had applied for a new visa. All those who had applied for a new visa had applied for a permanent one. The length of time taken to process visa applications compounds the uncertainty with which TPV holders have already been living. One woman, who had reapplied six months previously describes the wait as 'devastating'. She comments that:

'It's been four years for us here in Australia … this has had a very negative impact on us. We are worried all the time and we can't find security even in Australia. …it makes me feel so tired.'

Another TPV holder expressed 'frustration and fear' at the wait for a result, making them 'nervous and tense'.

'Waiting is the only option. They haven't provided me with a clear answer. Actually, this is the main problem we suffer from, the ignorance. Being uncertain about our future in general and our refugee application in particular is a real nightmare … I don't know, the problems is: who cares and who hears?'

The ramifications of a temporary visa make one man feel that he is:

'… a burden on society. … For a person to build a long term plan, he/she has to have the tools. Now, if you are restricted from building a family, how are you supposed to participate in building your society? … When a man is unemployed and his future is uncertain, how would you expect him to innovate or be productive? They are also a major part in destroying our personalities.'

One woman sees the temporary nature of her visa as a punishment:

'I arrived in Australia and I expected that Australia will grant me and my son permanent residency, being a special case from the UN and after the drowning accident. But the shock was in my very first day in Australia as they gave me five years temporary visa. I made people ask why we have been given a five-year temporary visa while we are the survivors of that accident and have a case in the human rights committee in the UN. The government's answer was that if they gave us a permanent visa, this would have attracted more people to do the same. I see that as unfair or as a punishment for us, the thing that made me so frustrated and depressed. I really suffered a lot because of that.'

One woman hopes that 'the government might change its mind and understand why we escaped from Iraq and consequently grant us the permanent residency collectively not individually.'

VASS was listed as the most common source of information for visa applications, mentioned by 53 percent of respondents, followed by DIMIA (41 percent. Two people mentioned getting information from a Legal Centre, and one from a Community Centre. A clear difference emerges in the sources of information used by men and women. For the men, five out of the seven indicated that DIMIA is keeping them informed of the progress of their visa application, with two men mentioning a Legal Centre and one each mentioning a Community Centre and VASS. By contrast, eight of the ten women surveyed indicated that VASS was the only organisation which was keeping them informed of their visa application, while the remaining two obtained their information from DIMIA. This would suggest that women feel less comfortable dealing with government agencies than their male counterparts. While it is encouraging that a specialist Arabic-speaking community organisation is able to provide information to these women, it is concerning that the majority did not also consult DIMIA, particularly as it would be the source of the most accurate and current information.

There was a mixture of responses to the question asking how the respondents felt about reapplying for another visa. The most common were replies by were 'stressful' and 'uncertain', with nine responses each (53 percent), but followed closely by 'hopeful' (seven, or 41 percent) then 'traumatic' (six, or 35 percent). 'Good' received four responses (24 percent), while 'worried', 'sad', 'excited' and 'relieved' received three each (18 percent). The predominant reaction to reapplying for a visa is stress and uncertainty, but TPV holders also displayed optimism and hope at the possibility of gaining stability in their lives.

Several TPV holders questioned the apparently high success rate of Iraqi TPV holders in NSW in getting permanent visas, compared to those in Melbourne. One person believed that the rejection rate in Victoria was around 80 percent, while other States enjoyed an acceptance of about 80 percent: '... when we inquired about that with the government authorities, their answer was shocking and very painful. They told us that most of those that have been accepted in NSW are Christians and non-religious (Sabe'ah). This means that the government itself discriminates between us.'

One TPV holder believed that the Department of Immigration is telling Iraqi TPV holders that they will 'wait and see' what happens to the political situation in Iraq and asks: 'What if the war takes three or five more years? Would these refugees remain suspended this way? This is illogical and unrealistic.'

Respondents registered a neutral valued mean in response to the statement asserting that they feel informed about the reapplication process. Four (23 percent) neither agreed nor disagreed, six (35 percent) disagreed and seven (41 percent) agreed.   There was a mixed response to the statement that the reapplication process is straightforward and easy to understand. Ten people (59 percent) disagreed – half of them strongly. 35 percent agreed, but only two of them (12 percent) strongly agreed. Women appeared to find the reapplication process more difficult to understand, with eight of the ten women disagreeing with the statement and only two agreeing. Of the seven men, four agreed that the process was straightforward, two disagreed and one did not respond. The surveys also showed that respondents 'strongly agree' that: they were scared by not knowing where they will be in the near future. Ninety-four percent strongly agreed while 6 percent 'strongly' disagreed that they are happy about the chance for permanent protection, and that they feel they have already proven themselves to be refugees.

When asked about whether the possibility of being placed in detention again made them feel anxious, fifteen respondents answered in the affirmative, and most of these (12) strongly agreed with the statement. One respondent neither agreed nor disagreed and one 'strongly' disagreed.

The TPV holders surveyed indicated that they feel less secure now than they did one year ago. No-one strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel more secure now than I did a year ago'. Three out of the ten who answered agreed that they did feel more secure now than a year ago, while seven out of ten disagreed. There was a high non-response rate to this question (seven out of 17, or 41 percent) which was most likely due to a printing error on the questionnaire. The response to this question is deeply concerning, as it indicates that TPV holders' sense of security is decreasing, rather than improving over time. The impact of such insecurity is described by one woman:

'The feeling of being oppressed didn't come to an end here in Australia; this is something that I really cannot describe. I walk in the streets without enjoying anything. I always love to buy flowers and some accessories for my home but here I lost this desire because of my feeling of instability. What would I do if the government rejects us?'

Most respondents in Melbourne are very concerned that the choice of staying will be taken from them by the recent changes to the TPV protection regime. The overall response to the statement expressing concern about the

recent changes potentially removing the choice to stay in the country was to agree. One woman explained the fear of repatriation:

'Iraqis don't know what stability is. There is no comfort as we always think of the future. Iraqi refugees are afraid of being forced to return to Iraq particularly in this time.'

Another, commenting on the changes to the TPV protection regime felt:

'It is frustrating and painful to know that the government is trying to leave us with lesser options.'

Two thirds of the respondents agreed they were concerned that the recent changes would remove their choice to stay in Australia, and most of those (59 percent) strongly agreed. Twelve percent neither agreed nor disagreed and only 18 percent disagreed. Of the options provided, none of the respondents indicated that they felt 'good', 'fair', 'calm/relaxed' or 'peaceful' about the prospect of voluntary repatriation. Interestingly, none replied that they felt 'uncertain'. The most frequent responses elicited were 'worried' (82 percent), followed by 'stressful' and 'frightening' (65 percent each), and 'traumatic' (59 percent) 'Bad', 'lonely', 'distressing', 'powerless', 'bored', 'punished' and 'failure' were also mentioned.

The statement regarding Iraq being a safe place was answered with a 'strongly disagree'. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents answered with 'strongly disagree' while the remainder (12 percent) disagreed. All respondents responded to the question and not one person agreed that Iraq was a safe place or remained neutral. One hundred percent of respondents answered that they would not feel safe returning to Iraq at the current time. All respondents answered that they 'strongly' disagreed with feeling safe about returning to Iraq.

Although many TPV holders fled Iraq when it was under the control of Saddam Hussein, the change in government offers little hope of a safe return since, as many pointed out, 'the real war has just started. It's a war of doctrines':

'My sister told me that she is afraid to send her son to school because his name is Ali, which is a Shiite name. She is also afraid to send her daughters to school so that they don't get harmed on their way there. Her kids now are prevented from going out and forced to stay at home. She says that Sunnis kill Shiite shop owners or burn their shops in Baghdad. She also says that she never feels confident that her husband is going to come back when he leaves in the morning.'

Others spoke of the general decay in law and order, describing the deteriorating situation where:

'…kidnapping, rapes, robberies and disrespect of a human being as a human being have become almost a daily routine. Murder has become something taken for granted in Iraq now. The human being is the cheapest thing there.'

Several questioned the insistence of Australia and other Western countries that it might be possible for Iraqi refugees to return:

'If it was true that Iraq is safe and the situation there is getting better, why wouldn't the Americans leave?'

Another referred to a recent interview with an Australian soldier who described Iraq as the most dangerous place in the world:

'What else are they waiting for?' she asks. 'Even the American soldiers can't protect themselves with all their weapons and training. What are they expecting from unarmed civilians like us?'

The deterioration of law and order makes Iraq dangerous for everyone, but for those who have been living outside Iraq the situation is even more complicated. One woman described the reactions of her sister's neighbours: 'When they found out that I live in Australia, they told her 'Your sister is a traitor.' Believe me they said that! They told my sister 'We know that Australians pay for their army to kill Iraqis' ... Eventually, I told my sister not to tell anyone that I live in Australia.'

Ninety-four percent of respondents revealed that they feel anxious about family in Iraq. Of these, 88 percent strongly agreed and one agreed that they felt anxious about their family. One woman explained:

'When we speak to our families in Iraq, they say that they leave their homes without knowing if they will be back safe or not. Is there anything more than that to say?'

One respondent disagreed with feeling anxious about family in Iraq, while one woman explained the basis of the fears she has for her family:

'My brothers and relatives have spent most of their lives serving in the Iraqi army during the Iran war and the Gulf war. They don't have any qualification and they couldn't save any money. Therefore, they had to work in the Iraqi police. It was a surprise for me to know that two of my brothers work in the police. Our neighbours and friends advised them to leave because they are viewed as traitors for helping the coalition forces and working with the Americans. However, my brothers said that they don't work for Americans, they serve Iraq. Additionally, that was the only income my brothers can have, they don't have any financial income other than that. They haven't got a taxi or a career to depend on, and now everyone knows that getting a job in Iraq is very difficult. Economic recession is very strong there.'

The large majority of respondents claimed that they would not prefer to be in Iraq than Australia. Only one respondent strongly agreed that s/he would prefer to be in Iraq than Australia, while 16 respondents (94 percent) stated clearly that they would prefer to be in Australia; 13 (76 percent) 'strongly' disagreed that they preferred to be in Iraq than Australia and three (18 percent) disagreed. The response to these statements regarding repatriation and safety in Iraq strongly communicate the belief that Iraq is not a safe place at the moment either in terms of return or in terms of safety for those currently living there. There is a high level of anxiety felt for the safety of family members still living in Iraq, and for the thought of returning to Iraq. The overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they would prefer to be in Australia than Iraq at this point in time.
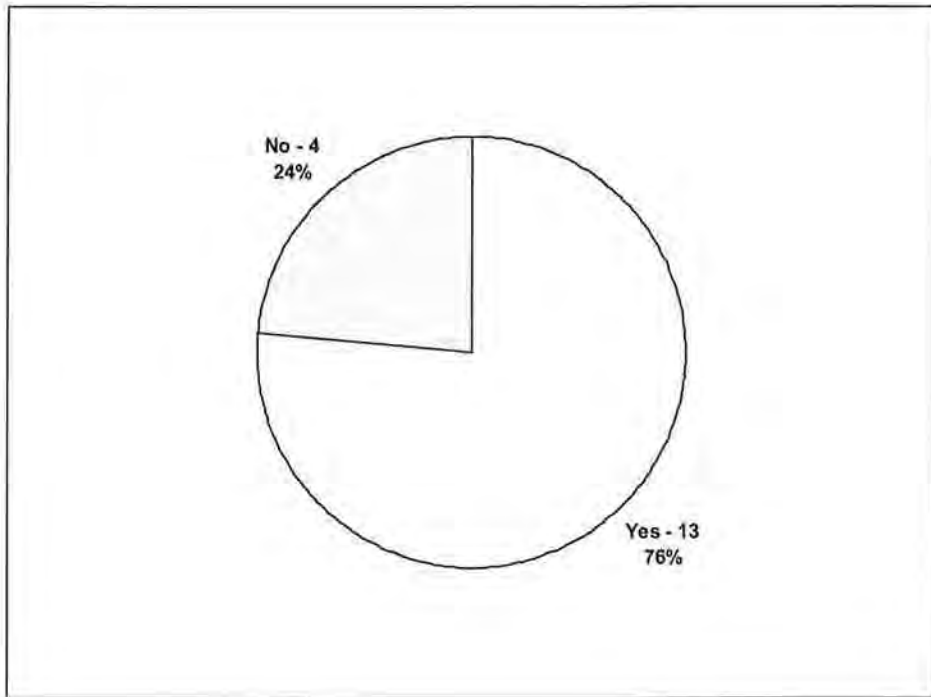
Figure 52Has your TPV expired?
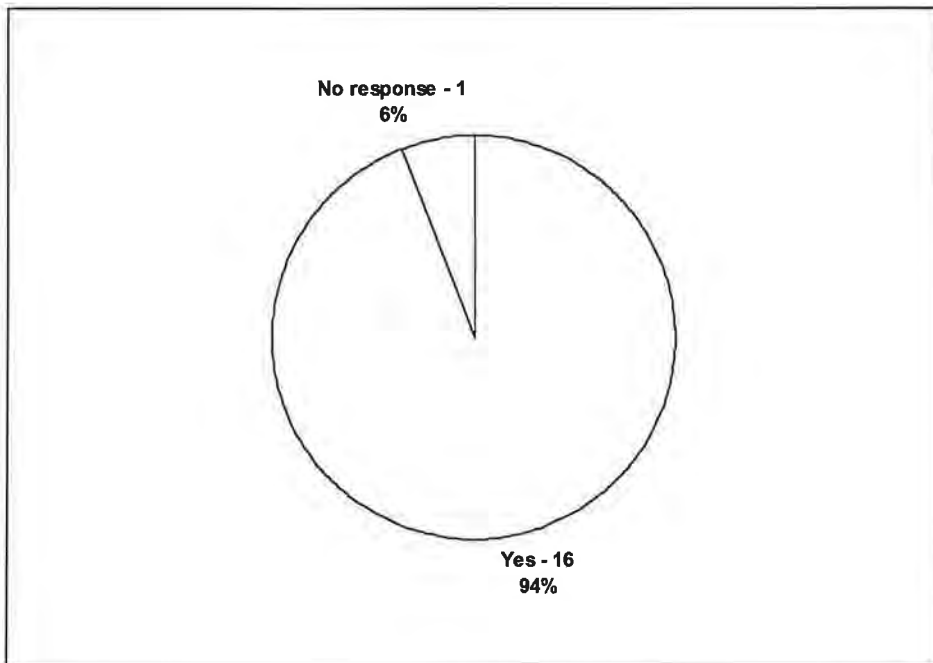
Figure 53: Have you applied for a PPV?
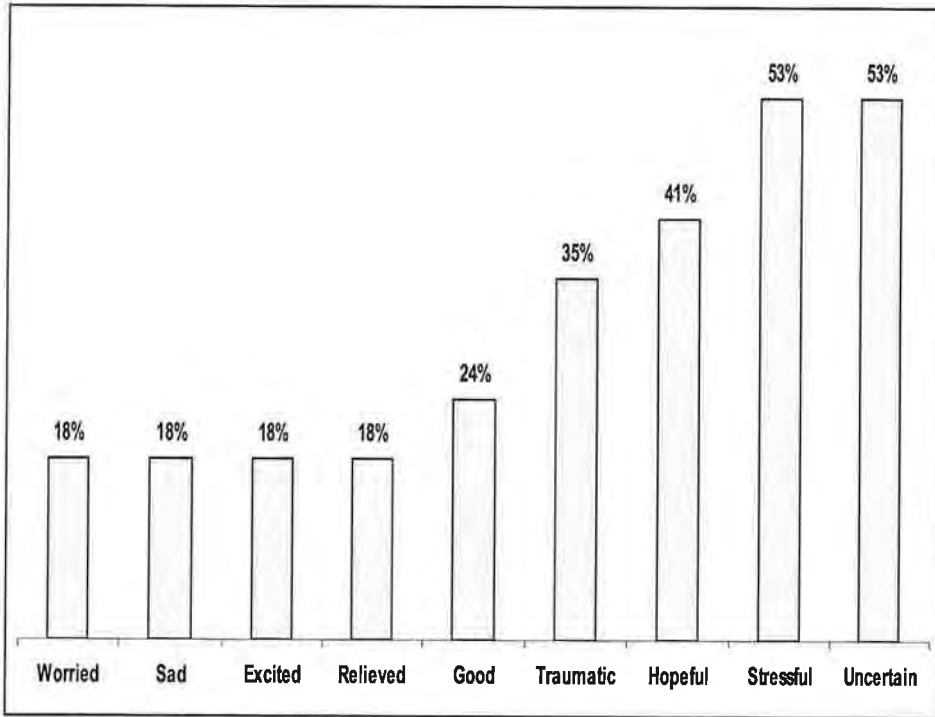
Figure 54: Word Frequency - Protection Reapplication
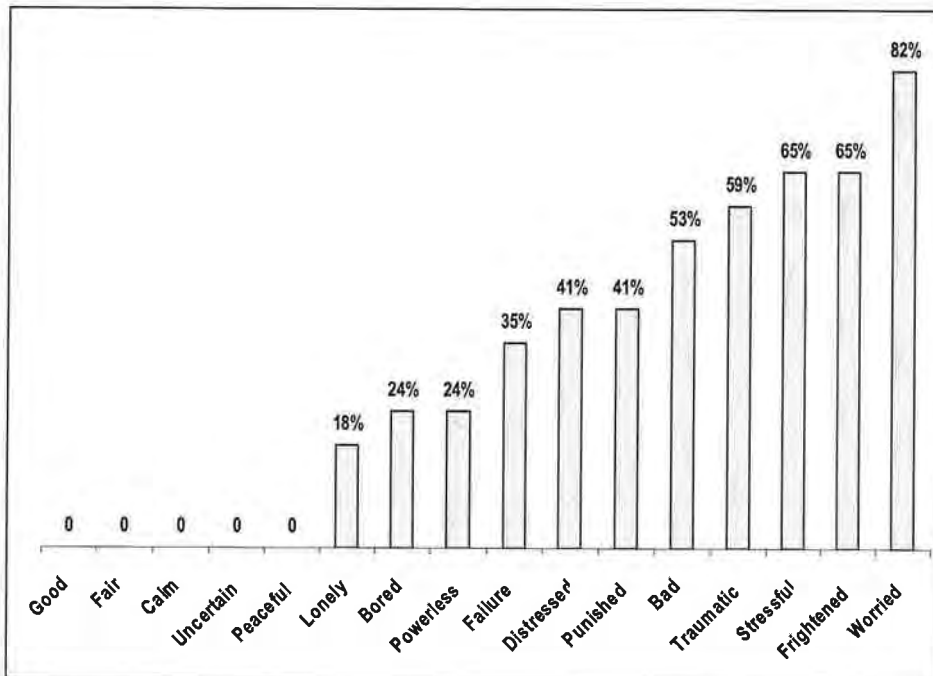
Figure 55 Word Frequency - Possible offer of voluntary repatriation makes me feel
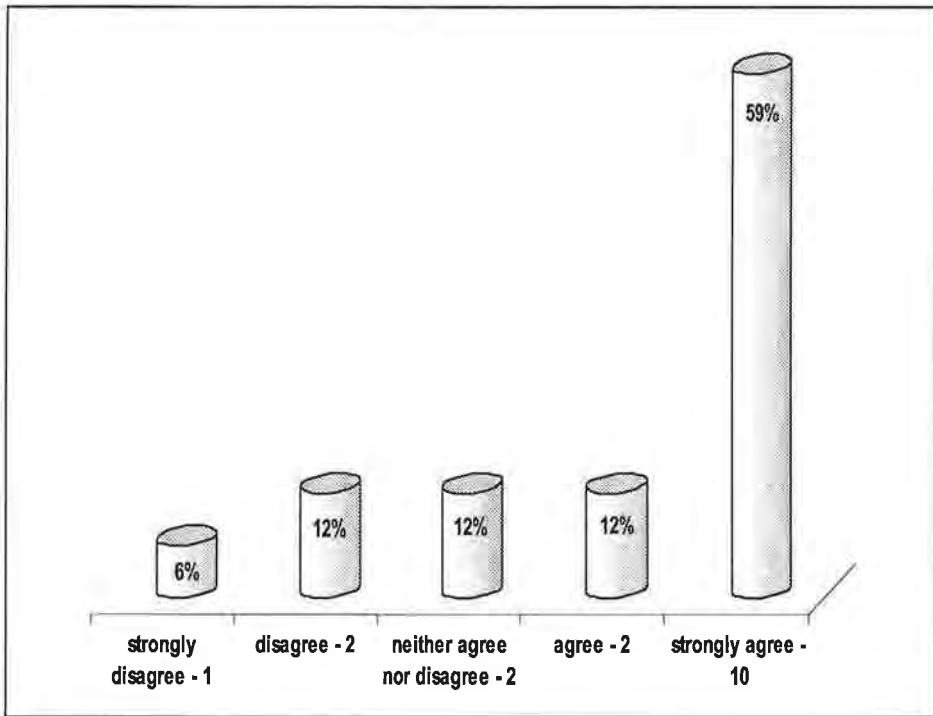
Figure 56: I am worried that the new changes will remove the choice to stay in Australia
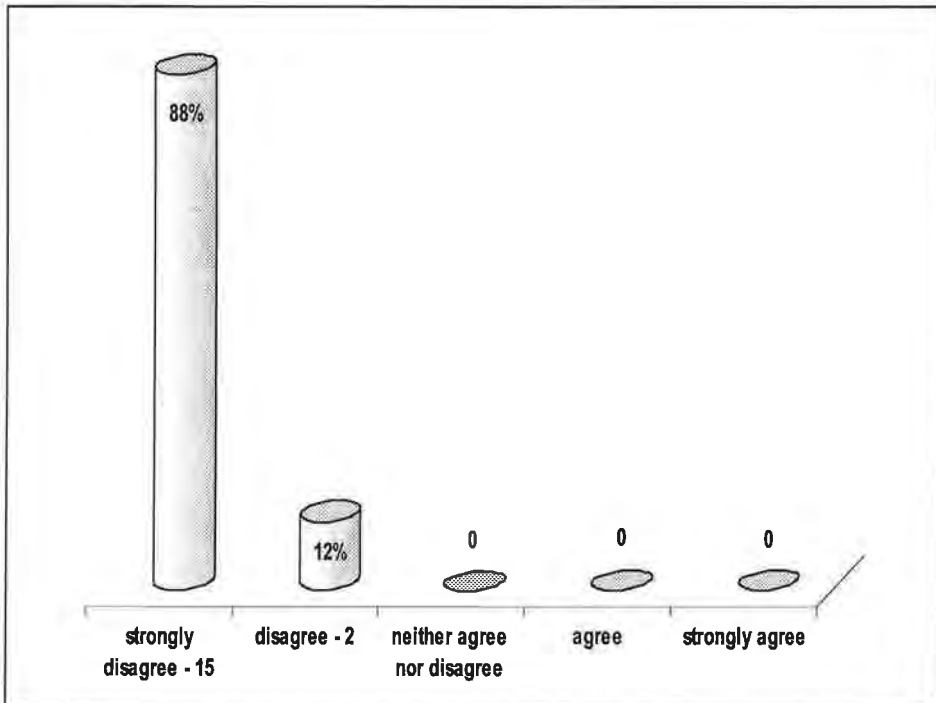
Figure 57: I think Iraq is a safe place at the moment
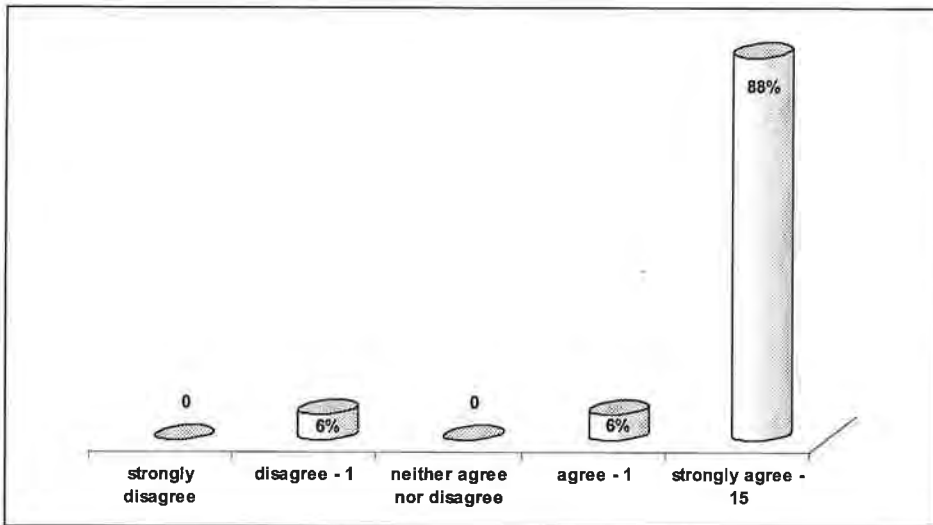
Figure 58: I am anxious about my family in Iraq [Melbourne]
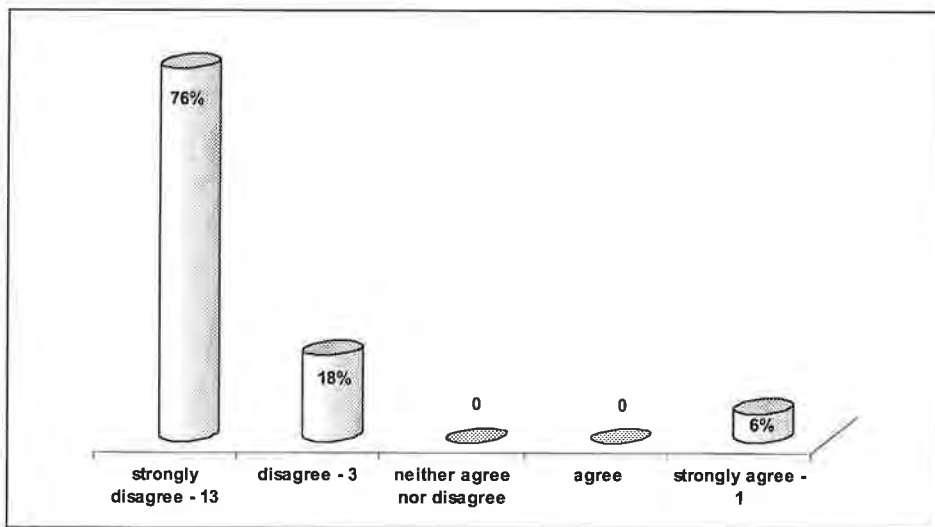
Figure 59: I would prefer to be in Iraq than Australia

Practical and emotional aspects of coping

Positive responses were given to the statements 'I have appropriate housing for myself and my family' (65 percent agreeing) and 'I have access to health services' (88 percent agreeing) However, a mixed response was given to self-assessed health status. Relatively even numbers agreed and disagreed with the statement 'I have no health problems.' Forty-one percent agreed that they had no health problems, 12 percent neither agreed nor disagreed and 47 percent (8 people) disagreed. Interestingly, of those who disagreed, six 'strongly' disagreed while only two disagreed, indicating that most those who

are unhappy with their health are very unhappy. It is fortunate that although people do not assess their health as particularly good, they feel more confident about being able to access the services they need. Mixed responses were also given to the statements about having enough work to support themselves and their families, and about the ability to communicate with anyone they met. 18 percent neither agreed nor disagreed that they had enough work to support themselves and their family. The remainder were equally split between agreeing and disagreeing (seven out of 17, or 41 percent). However, only one out of seven who agreed, strongly agreed, while of those who disagreed, four out of the seven 'strongly' disagreed. This means that over 40 percent of TPV holders are struggling to support themselves financially, and only one respondent was emphatic about having sufficient work to be financially secure. Two people neither agreed nor disagreed that they were able to communicate with anyone, while the rest were roughly divided between agreeing and disagreeing. The only negative response given was to the statement 'I have no trouble accessing services'. Ten people disagreed (59 percent), indicating that the majority of people find it difficult to access services they need. This contrasts with the positive response given to the availability of health services.

Overall, the responses to the statements about emotional wellbeing demonstrated a disturbing level of stress, anxiety and hopelessness. People responded that they felt lonely and/or anxious about their family's safety, and are worried about being able to support them. They responded that they did not feel hopeful about the future, and that they felt less hopeful about the future than they did one year ago. The responses were emphatic, with over 75 percent of respondents expressing such feelings. The only positive emotional response was to the statement 'I feel safe in Australia', which received a strong positive response (82 percent of the people surveyed agreed). While it is a good sign that people enjoy a feeling of safety in Australia, this is not necessarily a consolation if they are simultaneously living with the fear of having to leave. There was a high response rate to the questions about coping emotionally, with all respondents answering all questions but one. The low response rate for this question was most likely due to a misprint in the survey.

All of the responses to the statements regarding the health, education, safety, happiness and safe future of the respondents' children in Australia indicated a strong agreement. Only 14 people responded as having children, and some of those children were too young to adequately answer some questions. The number of respondents in this category, therefore, is 14 or less. All of the TPV holders with children agreed that their children felt safe in Australia and are happy in the Australian community, that their children's health is good, and that they are receiving adequate education. Twelve out of 13 respondents (92 percent) agreed that their children have friends to play with, with one respondent neither agreeing nor disagreeing. However, 11 out of 13 (85 percent) believed their children worry about whether they will be safe in the future, with one person neither agreeing nor disagreeing and one person disagreeing.

The lack of stability in their children's lives, however, was a matter of concern for at least one person:

'They don't know what homeland is and are an object for migration at any moment. Threatened in their countries, migrant after that, it is not an easy thing for children.'

4. Section Two: Efficacy of TPV Service Provision / Advocacy and its Impact on NGOs and Volunteers

Previous research (Mann, 2001; Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002; Barnes, 2003; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003) has indicated that NGOs and volunteers have experienced difficulties in effectively and adequately bridging the gap between the complex settlement needs of acculturating TPV refugees and the meagre services which the Federal Government has deemed them eligible. While the needs of settlement are complex and interdependent, and not easily contained by one set of services (Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 19), TPV service provision by non-DIMIA funded organisations has been described as 'a stop-gap arrangement with no overarching quality control' (Barnes, 2003: 17). The absence of DIMIA funding and coordination, a reliance on the use of volunteers and/or unpaid overtime (due mostly to a funding shortfall) (Mann, 2001: 26; Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 62- 65; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 21), and the need to deal with language barriers and other issues that are outside the expertise or resource base of the organisation or volunteer (Mansouri and Bagdas, 2002: 71), have been some of the key challenges. The foremost challenge identified, however, has been the temporary nature of the visa which has a pejorative impact on all aspects of the TPV holders' lives.

While the first section of this report explored how the establishment of the Temporary Protection Visa created a second class of refugee (that is, the TPV holder who is denied a permanent visa as well as the right to return travel, family reunion and most settlement services provided to other Convention refugees), this second section looks at the experiences of those who have sought to reduce the gap in rights for, and services to, TPV refugees – paid and unpaid workers in non-government organisations (NGOs).

In order to understand the various aspects and challenges of TPV service provision and advocacy, the findings in this second section are based on three separate research projects. The first provides a broad snapshot of the role of TPV service provision through questionnaires which gauge the attitudes of 29 representatives from primarily 'service provision' organisations in the States of Queensland and Victoria in relation to: the types of services provided to TPV and non-TPV clients; the manner and ease with which TPV holders' needs are met (including whether they are met through TPV specific or mainstream programs and whether these are adequately funded); and, the overall effect on the organisation on providing services to TPV holders (whether this has effected workload and generally produced positive or negative outcomes for the organisation). Through a mixture of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, the second research project narrows the focus to provide a more in-depth or personal view of the challenges of meeting TPV holders' needs from the perspective of a broad range of representatives from three NGOs engaged in service based and advocacy organisations. Paid workers from various levels of the organisational hierarchy as well as unpaid

workers are interviewed or surveyed. Workers give their views on the relationship between advocacy and service provision, as well as the practical challenges of their roles and overall effect of the organisation of dealing with TPV clients. The final research project narrows the focus further still, by exploring the effect of the TPV policy on one organisation – Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS). This study examined the factors contributing to, or limiting, effective service delivery to establish the respective roles of government and non-government organisations in providing services to TPV holders. In-depth interviews were conducted with all levels of management and workers.

4.1 The Experiences of Service Providers in Queensland and Victoria – A Broad Overview

The first component of this section on NGOs explores the perspectives of service providers in organisations whose usual function is the provision of services to asylum seekers and refugees, and who are recipients of Local, State or Federal Government funding for this purpose. From the perspective of 29 paid service providers across Queensland and Victoria, the research explores the extent to which service providers feel that TPV holders have been included within the framework of their organisations and the effectiveness of this inclusion for meeting the complexity of TPV holders' needs and organisational goals.

The findings of this research are based on surveys with 16 service providers in Queensland and 13 service providers in Victoria. The surveys are intended to reflect the quality rather than the quantity of services available to TPV holders. The number of organisations sampled therefore does not reflect the total number of service providers within each State. The organisations sampled are involved in a diverse range of service provision, in areas such as: health, education, language tuition, employment, housing, material aid and legal support.

Of the 29 organisations surveyed, only four (all in Queensland) indicated that 100 percent of their client base was made up of TPV holders (these were the Multicultural Centre for Mental Health and Well Being – Harmony Place, the Red Hill Paddington Refugee Support Centre, the Logan City Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre, and the Queensland Trans-cultural Mental Health Centre). The percentage of TPV holders in the service providers' client base was consistently low in both States.

Services provided
The service providers offered a range of services to TPV holders and the types of services provided were similar in Victoria and Queensland, however the frequency of the particular services offered varied between the two States. The services most frequently offered in Victoria were: health (21 percent), language (14 percent), employment (14 percent) and housing (14 percent). The most frequently offered services in Queensland were education (20 percent), language (17 percent) and health (17 percent). Overall, the most common types of services provided were in the areas of health (19 percent), language (16 percent) and education (15 percent). The services least

provided overall were in the area of income (4 percent) and material aid (5 percent).

The clearest differences between the States, in terms of services provided, were in relation to education and employment. While education was rated as the most commonly provided service in Queensland (20 percent), it received a significantly low rating in Victoria (10 percent). Similarly, employment was ranked as one of the most commonly provided services in Victoria (14 percent) yet it was one of the services least offered by Queensland service providers (7 percent).
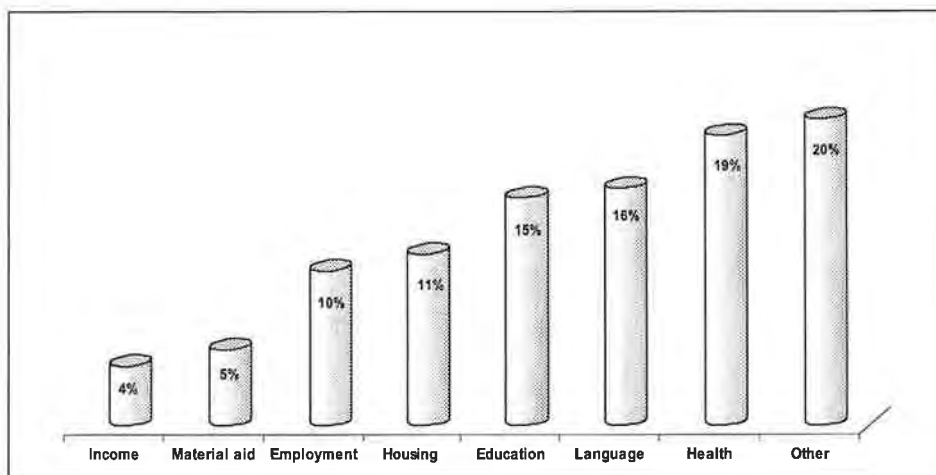
Figure 60: Rating of Type of Service Provided [Total Cohort]

Concerns for TPV holders

Service providers were asked to identify which issues they considered to be the most pressing for TPV holders. The nine major issues identified were: future concerns (worries regarding their lack of permanent residence); family issues (such as loss of contact with family and processes of separation or reunion); visa processes (visa applications and reapplications); access to services in the areas of health (physical and mental health); housing (from emergency to long-term accommodation); employment; education; income; and language skills. These nine categories represent the primary areas of concern for TPV holders (as seen by service providers).

Out of the nine most pressing issues identified by service providers, the issue rating most highly overall was employment (20 percent). This was closely followed by concerns for the future (18 percent). Following these, the top combined responses were: health (13 percent), housing (12 percent), family (12 percent) and visa processes (12 percent).

While service providers from both States felt that employment and future concerns (visa status) were of utmost importance to TPV holders, the frequency of responses to other categories showed significant variation across the two States. Housing was considered a pressing concern in Victoria for 18 percent of respondents, yet was given far less prominence in

Queensland (7 percent). While health issues were considered far more significant in Queensland (17 percent) than they were in Victoria (10 percent).

A majority of service providers in Victoria (54 percent) and Queensland (87 percent) indicated that they felt TPV holders' main concerns were not adequately being met.

Are the concerns of TPV holders being met?

When asked whether the concerns of TPV holders were mostly being met, the response of the majority of service providers in each region surveyed was negative. That is, 71 percent felt that the concerns of TPV holders were not being met. Those who felt that TPV holders' needs were being met comprised almost 20 percent of the service providers. Over 10 percent did not respond to the question.

In each State, a majority of service providers felt that TPV holders' needs were not being met. Yet in Victoria, the negative response was recorded by just over half the respondents (54 percent) while the Queensland respondents registered a far stronger majority (87 percent). Almost 40 percent of Victorian service providers felt that the concerns of TPV holders were being met. Given that the State government policies in both states are similar and in fact a more generous approach is adopted in Queensland, it is possible that these responses reflect the higher level of community and non-government involvement in Victoria's capacity to support TPV holders.

The four main services which service providers felt TPV holders had difficulty accessing (to an adequate level) were education, health, and government and social services (which included housing, employment, advocacy, and community groups). Legal support was included as a fifth service lacking in the Queensland response. The combined response of service providers from both States indicates that the services most difficult for TPV holders to access were social services (41 percent), and education (32 percent). The services least difficult were the legal (2 percent) and health (9 percent) services.
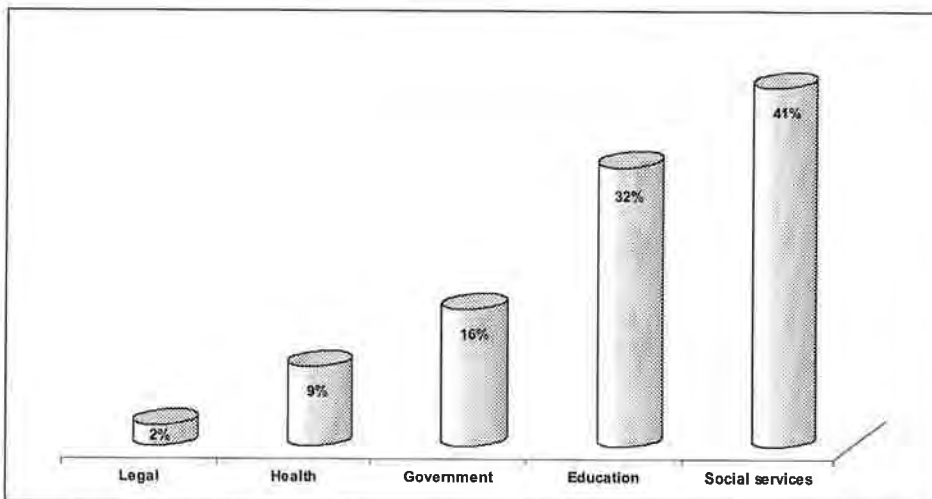
Figure 61: Services that are difficult to access for TPV holders [Total Cohort]

The strongest divergence on this question between service providers arose in relation to the perception of access to government services. Victorian service providers rated government services as one of the most difficult services for TPV holders to access (33 percent), while the Queensland service providers rated it as one of the least difficult services for the TPV holders to access (10 percent).

Difficulties for service providers

In Victoria (69 percent) and Queensland (62 percent) the majority of service providers indicated that they have difficulties in responding to TPV holders' needs. Almost two thirds (66 percent) of all the respondents surveyed indicated that meeting the needs of TPV holders was a difficult process. Over one third (34 percent) indicated that they had no difficulty responding to TPV holders needs.

Overall, the most prevalent difficulties in responding to TPV holders' needs were related to resources (46 percent), workload (24 percent), and actual service delivery (16 percent).
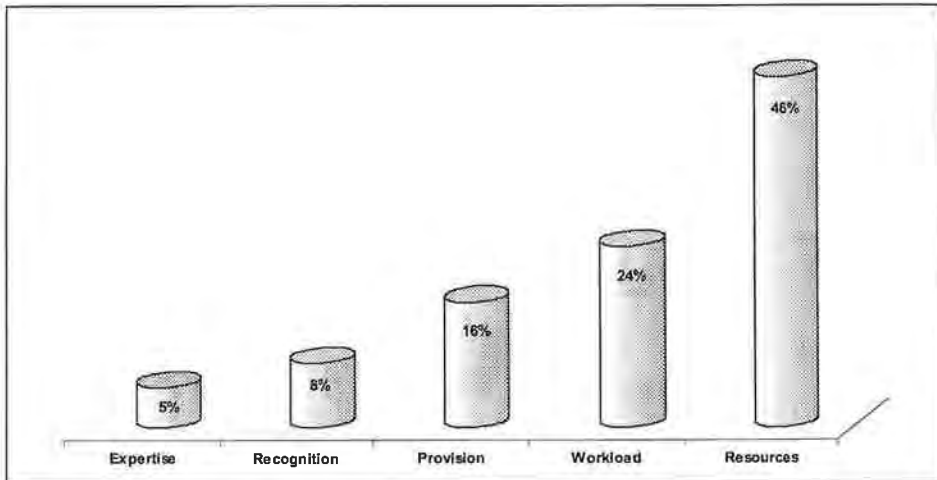
Figure 62: Any difficulties related to... [Total Cohort]

The difficulties experienced by the service providers in Victoria were related to three main categories: provision, workload and resources. In Queensland, the difficulties experienced were related to all five categories listed on the survey: workload, resources, expertise, recognition, and service provision.
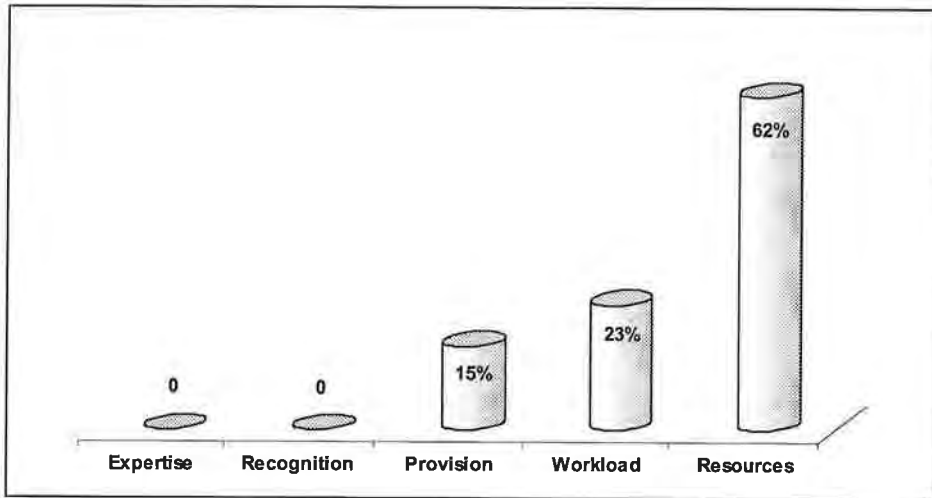
Figure 63: Any difficulties related to... [Victoria]

Victorian service providers indicated that service provision (15 percent), recognition (0 percent), and expertise (0 percent) were the least significant factors in considering barriers to service provision. Queensland also recorded the area of expertise as the category that least detracted from their capacity to respond to TPV holders' needs (10 percent). Service providers in Victoria and Queensland thus feel that they have difficulty in meeting the needs of TPV holders, but feel that they have adequate expertise to deal with their needs.

Coordination of services for TPV holders

Overall 53 percent of service providers indicated that there is coordination in the provision of services to TPV holders, while 47 percent felt that TPV service provision was not coordinated.
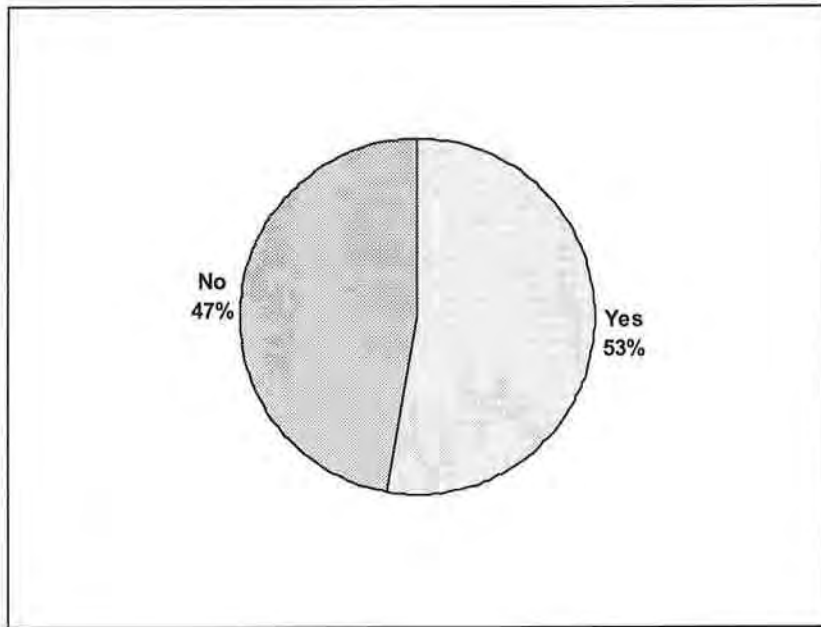
Figure 64: Coordination of service provision to TPV holders [Total Cohort]

The break down by state shows that just over half of the service providers surveyed in Victoria (54 percent) felt that the provision of services to TPV holders is not coordinated, while the majority of service providers surveyed in Queensland (69 percent) indicated that there is coordination in the provision of services to TPV holders. Again, this may be an indication of the high level of non-government involvement in the Victorian situation.

Funding

The majority of service providers surveyed indicated that they received funding from one or more government bodies to meet the needs of TPV holders. Of the three government bodies (Federal, State, and Local), the Federal Government was the body least frequently providing service providers with funding for TPV needs. The majority of service providers received their funding for TPV needs from the State (46 percent) and Local Governments (42 percent).
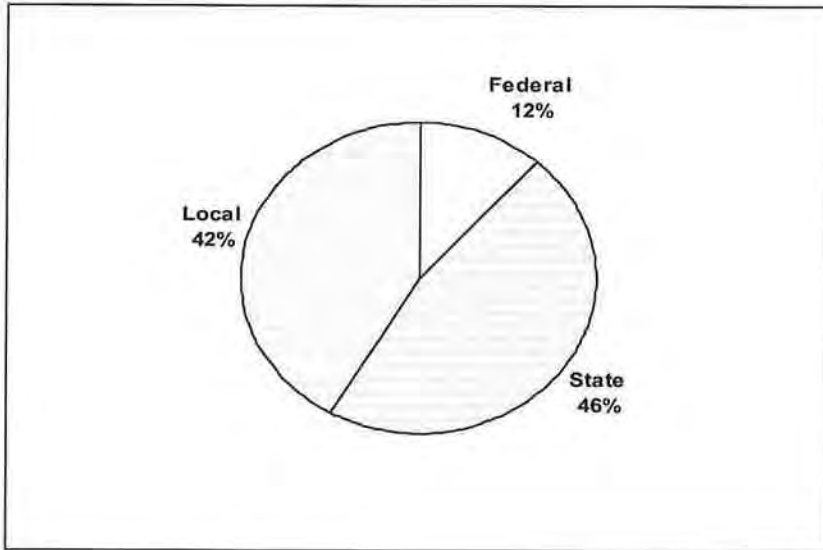
Figure 65: Government funding received for TPV needs [Total Cohort]

The funding most frequently offered by particular government bodies varied for Queensland and Victoria. In Victoria, the Local Government most frequently provided the funding to the service providers to meet TPV needs (55 percent), while in Queensland Local Governments only provided 29 percent of the government funding for TPV needs. In Queensland, the State Government most frequently gave the service providers funding to meet the needs of TPV holders (57 percent), while in Victoria only the Local Government gave funding for TPV needs (36 percent).
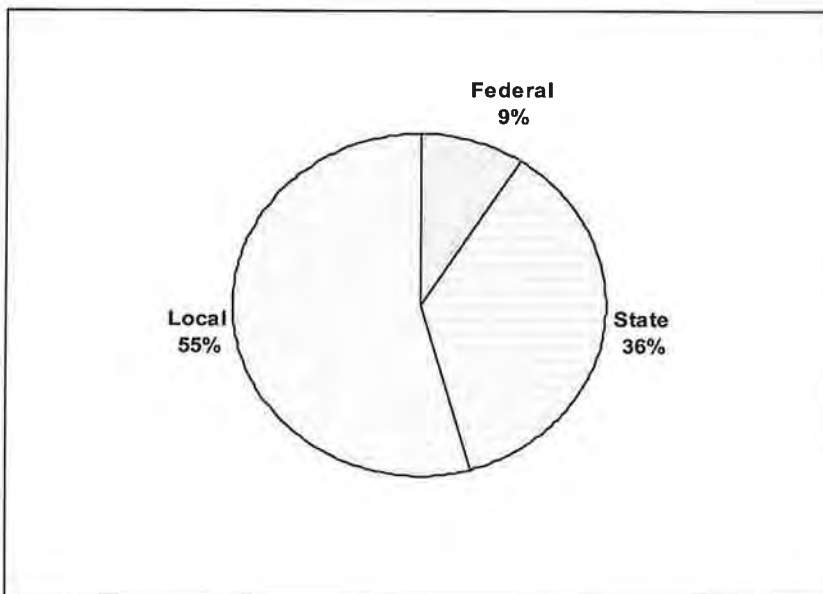
Figure 66: Government funding received for TPV holders' needs [Victoria]
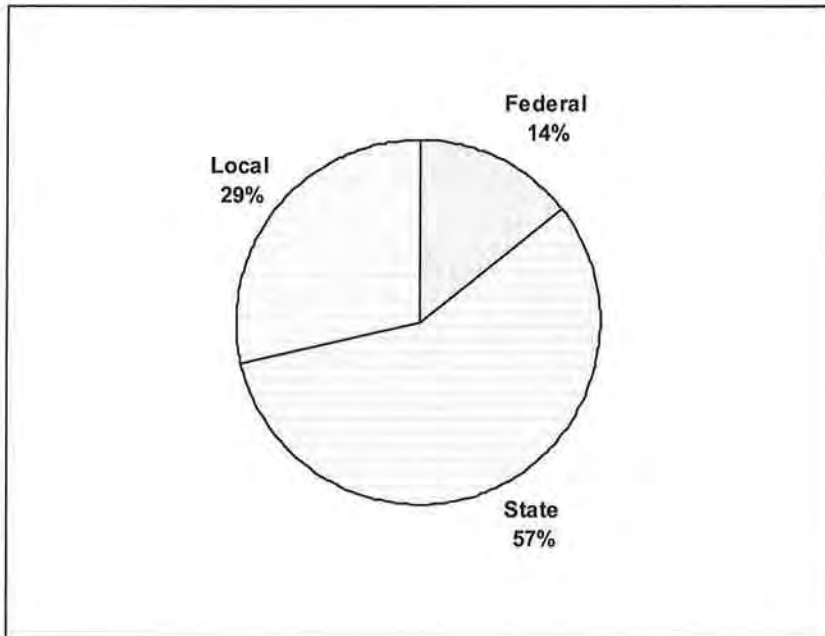
Figure 67: Government funding received for TPV holders' needs [Queensland]

Has demand increased with the establishment of the TPV?

The majority of service providers surveyed in Victoria (92 percent) and Queensland (75 percent) indicated that they had experienced an increase in demand for their services since the introduction of the TPV, and this has not been compensated through additional government funding.

Overall, a majority of service providers (63 percent – made up from 69 percent in Victoria and 56 percent in Queensland) indicated that the government has not provided additional resources to meet the increase in demand for their services since the introduction of the TPV. Just over one quarter of respondents (28 percent) indicated that there has been an increase in resources provided by the government, and of this 28 percent only 7 percent found that the increased funding from the government was sufficient to meet the increased demand on their services since the introduction of the Temporary Protection Visa.

Of those who indicated that they had received an increase in government funding for additional resources (25 percent in Queensland and 39 percent in Victoria), 100 percent of Victorian service providers received their funding from the State Government and in Queensland 33 percent of funds came from this source. Overall, this increased funding was considered insufficient to meet the increased demand on their services since the introduction of the TPV. In Victoria only 8 percent, and in Queensland only 6 percent, found that the increased government funding was sufficient to meet the increased demand on their services. There was a low response rate to the question 'has the increase in government funding met the additional demand on services?': 69 percent in Victoria and 75 percent in Queensland.

Volunteers in service provider agencies

Overall, the majority of service providers (64 percent – 54 percent in Victoria and 75 percent in Queensland) employed unpaid volunteers to fulfil their service commitments to TPV holders. Over three quarters of service providers (77 percent) who registered that they employed volunteers in their agency, had less than 20 volunteers actively working in the agency.

Figure 6BNumber of volunteers actively working with TPV holders **[Total Cohort]**

Volunteer frequency	No. of Service Providers	percent	valid percent
0	4	13.79	23.53
5	4	13.79	23.53
10	1	3.45	5.88
15	3	10.35	17.76
20	1	3.45	5.88
30	0	0.00	0.00
40	2	6.90	11.76
50	2	6.90	11.76
Total	17	58.63	100.00
missing	12	41.37	

n=29

75 percent of Queensland service providers employ a larger number of volunteers in their agencies than Victorian service providers (54 percent). The number of volunteers actively working with TPV holders under these agencies is also considerably lower in Victoria than in Queensland. The maximum number of volunteers actively employed by any service provider in Victoria to work with TPV holders is 15 people (recorded in one Victorian agency). In Queensland, the maximum number of volunteers actively employed by any service provider agency to work with TPV holders is 50 people (recorded in one Queensland agency).

From the 54 percent of service providers who employed volunteers in Victoria, two service providers (29 percent) registered that they had no volunteers actively working in their agency. From the 75 percent of service providers in Queensland who employed volunteers in their agencies, two (20 percent) registered that they had no volunteers actively working in their agency.

Effect of TPV on the organisation

Overall, a majority of service providers (59 percent) 'strongly disagreed' with the statement that 'TPV policy has had a positive effect on the organisation'. Almost 70 percent of responses in both States (69 percent in Victoria and 69 percent in Queensland) registered an overall negative response. Very few

service providers registered a low positive response to this statement, in either Victoria (15 percent) or Queensland (6 percent), with higher numbers not recording any response or answering 'don't know' to this statement, Victoria (15 percent) and Queensland (25 percent). This suggests that the majority of service providers have experienced negative effects due to the TPV policy. Only 11 percent of service providers in the regions surveyed registered a low positive response of 'agree' to this statement.
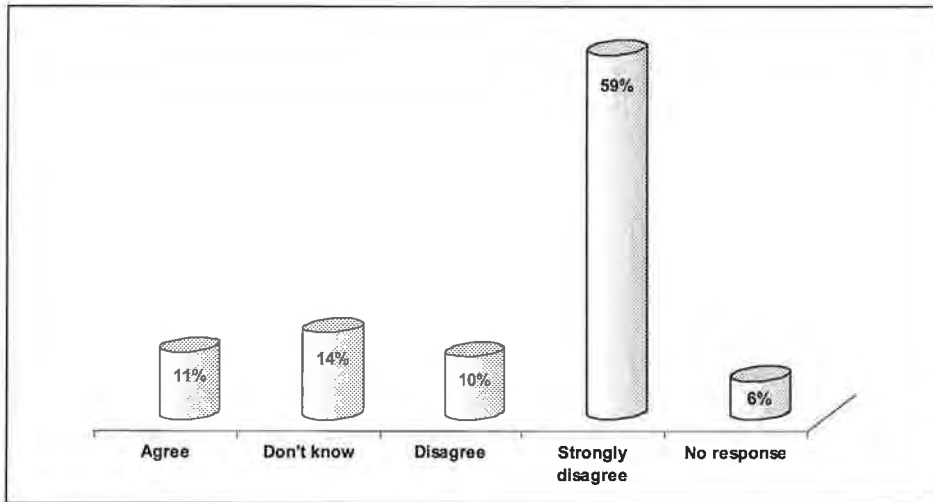
Figure 69Response   to the statement...

'The TPV policy has had a positive effect on the organisation' [Total Cohort]

4.2   Service Provision and Advocacy Organisations in Victoria – A More Intimate Perspective

Three organisations working with TPV holders were consulted for this research: the Red Cross (Refugee and Asylum Seeker Services), the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Thornbury Branch) and the Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN). The first part of this section focuses on the findings from in-depth interviews with the manager, coordinator or director of the service in order to gain a broader contextual understanding of the effect of the TPV policy on organisational capacity – such as how different variables such as funding structure, resource allocation and use of paid and unpaid workers may impact on service provision. The second part of this section focuses on the perspectives of 31 volunteers from these same organisations, looking at the degree and effect of volunteer involvement in providing services for refugees holding a TPV. This research outlines the types of work performed by volunteers, the factors that assist or hinder them in performing their work and their motivations for undertaking the work and conceptualisation of the work they are performing.

The agencies surveyed provided a range of services to people on a TPV, including material aid, a food bank, English language tuition, education, employment services, health, computer classes, counselling, casework, play group, housing, a community garden, community lunches, excursions and legal assistance. Where services were not provided directly, the organisations often would either provide a referral to another agency that could provide the service, or facilitate access by making phone calls to arrange appointments or, for example, taking people to the doctor.

The idea of providing services was interpreted quite broadly – reflecting the ethos of service provision as a holistic enterprise. For example, the one organisation that had directly provided housing services does not normally do so, but was compelled by extraordinary circumstances on one occasion to make an exception. This involved negotiation with senior levels of government to make arrangements for one particular group of refugees. Typically, NGOs see their work in a wider context than simply providing contracted services. While the stated service may be to provide, for instance, employment services or English language tuition, most believed they provided a wider service to their clients, such as outreach and orientation, information and advice, daily living support, referral, transport, friendship, facilitating access to other services, assistance navigating the Australian system, information, casework, general settlement services, and informal support and counselling. One saw their work in terms of a community development process and described their core business as 'building community'. She saw the role of their organisation as building bridges between the users of their service and the wider Australian community.

4.2.1 The Perspectives of Paid Workers

The effect of funding on organisational capacity

Provision of services within non-government organisations is typically a combination of planned and funded service delivery, and response to needs as they arise. For example, one organisation provides material aid in the form of household goods on an ongoing sustainable basis, but does not supply cash or vouchers. Another organisation provides a cash voucher each week for asylum seekers starting off, which is a response to immediate need, but is only possible because of the relatively small numbers at the moment.

The funding sources varied significantly across the three organisations. Only one organisation received funding from the Federal Government (from DIMIA). The DIMIA funding comprised about a quarter of the running costs of that particular program, with the rest being provided by the parent organisation with funds generated through community donations, fundraisers and other income generating activities. Another organisation received about half its funding from the State Government, with the remainder coming from Local Government, philanthropic trusts and fundraising. One organisation received only about 5 percent of its revenue from government sources – in this case the State Government – and the rest from private trusts. Representatives from all three organisations indicated that they were cautious about the sources of funding they sought. Potential funding sources were assessed in relation to their willingness or capacity to fund the NGO and its programs or the conditions they placed on providing funding.

In each organisation, funding was tied to specific programs, projects or services and had some form of contractual obligations attached (such as delivery of hours, set targets and accountability mechanisms). Funded services included casework service, material aid provision, and specific projects such as volunteer coordinator, counsellor, or researcher. Fundraising or other donations were the only form of finances that did not bring contractual conditions.

Recurrent funding was identified as a major problem for the representatives of organisations interviewed. Much of the funding received is project funding which, by nature, is short term with no guarantee of renewal. Organisations rely on recurrent funding to plan ahead and without such security they can find it difficult to guarantee service provision. These circumstances put enormous pressure on organisations to raise funds to maintain projects which are already underway, and find themselves spending vast amounts of time writing funding applications or fundraising. Often, this effort is disproportionate to the money raised by such means.

In one organisation, funding on a number of projects was to cease at the end of the year and new funding for the following year had not yet been secured. One worker within the organisation had dedicated his/her last six months in the attempt to raise funds from other sources such as government departments and philanthropic bodies and business organisations. These attempts were unsuccessful. The stress produced by the funding structures in place clearly had a detrimental effect on both the ability of organisations to function effectively and on the staff who are charged with implementing the necessary bureaucratic manoeuvres:

'At the moment I just feel like chucking the towel in, I'm really worn out. I don't know how much longer I can keep doing it – trying to magic money out of nothing. The thing is, when you're really tired, you don't have decent brain capacity to actually be able to think laterally or productively, you're just going from one thing to the next. I need to have time out to just have some quality of thought so that I can figure out where do we go next, where do we try to get the next lot of money from.'

A great deal of time, energy and money needs to be expended by workers in NGOs to chase funding opportunities. This puts a strain on already stretched resources, but without these resources, they would not be able to maintain their levels of service.

The difficulties of maintaining a service providing organisation do not end with the securing of funding sources. Funding that is tied to particular projects places an onus on NGOs to be accountable to the funding bodies for the way the money is spent. While it is reasonable to expect funded organisations to be accountable for the funds received, reporting requirements can be onerous and disproportionate to the funding provided. As noted by one interviewee, this can lead NGO workers to feel exhausted and to develop an overall sense that their efforts do not pay-off:

'I'm just feeling totally shredded as an individual. I feel I've got 30 juggling balls in the air and they're just all splatting all around me. And I've felt like that basically for the whole year.'

The receipt of accredited funding, in particular, requires a significant commitment in terms of time and resources by NGO workers. To receive accredited funding, the entire NGO must be audited (rather than a simple audit of the program[s] to be funded); taking into account governance structures, finances, policies, procedures, staff qualifications, and level of community consultation. Despite the obvious drawbacks, a manager from one organisation felt that this process also brought particular benefits:

'I actually think in some ways it tightens up the whole organisation. It means that you operate at a much more professional level rather than an ad hoc level.'

She estimated, however, that about 10 percent of the organisation's time was spent on compliance with such procedures. There is obviously a fine line to be walked between necessary transparency and accountability on the one hand and bureaucratic over zealousness on the other.

Funding for TPV services?

Two of the organisations reported receiving funding specifically to work with TPV holders. This included a significant sum from the State Government to one NGO for a research project to look specifically at the needs of TPV holders. Two of the NGOs received money from Local Government for small projects or for workers, and one agency received private trust money specifically to work with TPV holders, including a play therapy program for children released from detention and two other small projects. The agency that did not receive funding specifically to provide services to TPV holders provided services on a needs basis to people irrespective of visa status. It is funded through

organisational funds raised from donations, fundraising and other income generating activities. Only one surveyed organisation received Federal Government funding. This was specifically to provide services for people on Bridging Visa E, and therefore by default excluded TPV holders and others.

Much of the funding for services to TPV holders is reactive. In most cases, refugees holding a TPV presented at the agency which then attempted to provide them with services through their existing program structure. When demand reached a critical point, the organisations attempted with varying degrees of success to secure funding specifically for the new services or extra client load with which they were faced. FLN provides a salient example. In one year, the State Government funded FLN for 9,571 student contact hours[30] yet the total student contact hours actually provided by FLN was 50,558 (Humpage, 2004: 28). Although there has been some extra funding to cover the extra demand created by TPV holders, funding specifically for this visa group has not been sufficient to compensate for the increase in workload.

Ability to cope with TPV holders and other clients

All of the surveyed agencies worked with refugees holding a TPV in addition to other clients. The proportion of TPV holder clients to non-TPV holder clients varied dramatically. At the time the research was conducted, one organisation worked almost exclusively with TPV holders, claiming that about 90-95 percent of its clients consisted of TPV refugees. Another organisation had a TPV client base of around 30-40 percent. While these percentages formed a relatively consistent TPV client base in these two organisations, representatives from the final organisation claimed that their TPV client numbers varied significantly in line with particular events. At the time the research was conducted, TPV holders made up around 20 percent of the latter's client group whereas it reaches around 60 percent during their peak TPV provision periods.

TPV holders as a client group have a very specific set of needs which are often distinct from those of other clients. Two of the three agencies identified 'permanency' as one of the most pressing concerns of their TPV clients. While 'impermanence' may not appear to be directly related to service provision, a temporary status has important ramifications for service provision including difficulties relating to housing and accommodation and the psychological repercussions of living with uncertainty and separation from one's family. Representatives from all three organisations mentioned the need for settlement support services, particularly housing, financial assistance, and family support. While migrants and refugees with other visa categories have these everyday settlement requirements in common, these become a significant focus in the lives of TPV refugees as a result of their ineligibility for most government-funded settlement support services. As noted by one NGO worker, TPV holder clients are required to exert a far greater effort in order to meet their settlement needs than humanitarian visa holders.

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[30] Humpage (2004) notes that FLN's educational funding from bodies such as the Adult Community and Further Education board is based solely on 'student contact hours'.

Representatives from all organisations were concerned that TPV refugees were not having their needs met, particularly settlement needs such as transitional or short term housing and general orientation. One manager felt that the disadvantage was less with longer term needs, although she felt that the temporary nature of the visa had far-reaching negative effects. A temporary status had negative impacts on the capacity of TPV holders to access the private rental market (particularly due to their lack of references) and to pay rent (linked to employment status).

All of the agencies indicated that they faced difficulties in responding to the needs of TPV refugees. Workload was cited as one of the major hurdles to providing an adequate service. 'We could provide a lot of services, but we don't have enough people to!' was a typical comment. A lack of resources and expertise also made service provision more difficult. Counsellors are either unavailable or overworked and none of the organisations had a budget for interpreters. The psychological ill-health of TPV refugees presented a particular hurdle to the organisations, particularly since the assistance they provide is mostly limited to practical assistance. While the service providers tried to compensate for the shortfall in services and funding available for TPV holders, they felt their responses were often inadequate:

'[T]hose who come out of detention are traumatised by degrees, that's really obvious. I've been on a vertical learning line about what you're able to assist them with. And I think those who are by themselves struggle the most. What I do know about family structures is that in difficult times or crises it remains within the family, you talk to elders. When you don't have that around you things can get pretty scary. '

'I've had a couple who've become suicidal. So, fortunately they came to me, and our only response is to take them to see a good doctor – who medicates them. And I don't think that's a very good response, but that's what they want. They just don't want to feel terrible. So that's kind of OK for them. The single men want to get a job, and get some money and send it back to their family. That's all they want. They're not familiar with our notion of the 'talking cure' and even if they might consider it, if you don't get the right person at the right time, they'll never go back. So that's a constant difficulty for me since you can offer loads of practical assistance – and that's really beneficial when you can offer support in a very informal, constant way, to make people as comfortable as possible – but you do see people really suffering …'

Although they were largely forced into reactive policy responses, community agencies demonstrated the capacity to creatively respond to the needs of TPV holders. Two of the three agencies had a well developed drop-in culture that welcomed TPV holders to the centres and encouraged the development of social or friendship networks. 'Moral support' was often considered to be as important as practical support. Agency members appeared to be sensitive to the various social and emotional needs of their TPV clients. One organisation, for example, instituted a woodworking program for men which they felt would counteract the low levels of confidence that could arise from being unemployed or from lacking meaningful activity.

The impact of TPV service provision

From interviewees' responses, there was no clear indication that the introduction of the TPV had impacted on community organisations in an entirely negative or an entirely positive manner. One manager pointed out the difficulty of gauging the impact of the TPV policy on demand for services, and on the capacity of the organisation to cope with this. She referred to the impact of TPV service provision as a 'Catch 22' situation. That is, she suggested it is difficult to speak of the impact of an increase in demand when the service itself exists as a response to the creation of that new demand. However, this is only applicable to services or programs that have received specific funding. As outlined earlier, there are many instances where the demand has been absorbed into existing program structures which are under-funded. Another interviewee described the impact to TPV service provision as a 'double edged sword'. The introduction of the TPV had altered the overall nature of the organisation, the manager indicated, in both positive and negative ways.

On the negative side of TPV service provision, interviewees noted that resources have to be stretched further than usual. Interviewees noted that the addition of TPV holders to their client base meant a significant increase in demand for services, particularly where these services were already popular with other client groups. One service – which provided free English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to a wide range of people including TPV refugees – reported having 300 people through its doors in a nine-month period. While this was already a popular service, the inclusion of TPV refugees within the service led to the introduction of new services on the basis of the workers' awareness of the other vast needs of this client group. Since TPV refugees are ineligible for many government-funded services, the organisation felt a certain obligation or commitment to try to help. As such they instituted new programs for assisting TPV holders with résumé preparation. None of the organisations surveyed experienced a comparable compensatory increase in resources provided by the government in response to the changed demand on their services.

Occupational health and safety issues have also become a notable problem. In addition to the phenomenon of being overworked, the work environment and role of assisting with traumatised groups such as TPV holders commonly produces 'burn out' and vicarious traumatisation. Because TPV holders face ongoing trauma due to the temporary and restrictive nature of the visa, the work of those assisting TPV refugees is particularly difficult:

> 'Its been very time consuming, its made us have to do a job we never imagined we'd have to do, which is supporting people who have no idea what the future is going to be, people [for whom] … the future is on hold, people who are permanently separated from their families for many, many years. It means that for a lot of us, instead of delivering what jobs we would normally do … we've all had to go into supporting people through the worst part of their lives.'

The impact on workers in this situation is perhaps predictable. One manager describes the effect of 'worrying about people and not being able to switch off':

'I had in 2002 almost a breakdown, I lost my sense of taste I was so distressed. In 2001 I lost a massive amount of weight, but working so many hours you're not sleeping at night, and having this strain on you all the time.'

On the positive side of TPV service provision, interviewees felt that working with this group had raised the profile and level of community sympathy and support for the organisation – thus validating its work. Furthermore, on a personal level, workers noted that they had made new friends and developed many new skills. Working with people facing such hardship gave many a fresh perspective on their own lives: 'It's made a lot of us rethink our whole lives, about what's important and what's not important.' It also resulted in a greater level of activism and commitment to social justice within the organisations – as one interviewee noted: 'We actually actively do things with refugees rather than just mouth the words'.

As a result of responding to TPV holder needs, community organisations devebped strong and comprehensive networks with other organisations and within the community. The lack of adequate funding and resources, for example, meant that most of the organisations relied to some extent on volunteer labour. Because organisations had gained voluntary support from the community, this was seen to reflect a level of goodwill and willingness for active citizenship within the community:

> 'In the past, people supported refugees and they'd give them money, but they wouldn't do much else, they wouldn't have them into their houses, they wouldn't actively do things. Whereas nationally, with the RAR [Rural Australians for Refugees] and the city stuff that's been going on, people step either side of the fence and the fence is where you actually do something.'

Tangible outcomes of this community goodwill can include passive measures of citizenship such as an increase in donations, but are more frequently manifested through direct involvement by community members. One organisation was described as a bridge to a better community. This bridging role led its members to run regular social events where clients, supporters and the local community could gather in an informal way with the aim of fostering greater understanding. Through these gatherings, the local community had an opportunity to engage with refugees and to understand their experiences and the refugees could gain an insight into Australian society and culture.

While acknowledging that the provision of services to TPV holders had brought some positive experiences for the organisations involved as well as a broader strengthening of social capital, all the managers interviewed for this research were careful to point out that the policy did not bring benefits for holders of the visa and thus any positive effects on the organisation or community should not be equated with an endorsement of the policy itself. That is, any benefit to community organisations or communities was largely at the cost of the TPV holders affected: 'From the point of view of the person on the TPV, it's been the worst thing that anybody could ever do to them – the very, very worst!' One manager did notice an unforeseen consequence of the TPV policy on the refugees themselves holding a TPV:

> 'It's interesting, if you look at social capital, and you look at social capital at the highest level, which is having friends with power and influence – you know, decision makers – none of my previous refugees ever had to worry

about that, they just got on with their lives, whereas this group have had to do a lot of advocacy, a lot of public talking. So instead of being refugees, they're actually people now who associate with people of power and influence. We took them to Canberra, they met the politicians, they can speak to people - it's a whole different position. So when they get permanent protection, they are in a much different position to other people.'

A consequence of the increased activism around refugee issues has also meant that there are a lot more ordinary citizens who are active refugee supporters. This can make the process of settlement easier:

'What's actually happening now is that the TPVs, especially the ones in rural Australia, have been included into the community, they've been welcomed into the community. Whereas in the past they were just there, they could be tolerated.'

The needs of existing clients are changing and the services will need to change to adapt. While it is arguable that in initial settlement needs have mostly been met, other needs are becoming apparent. English language is still a high need, and childcare and housing are ongoing concerns:

'Two families arrived from Nauru – one had two very young children, the other had five teenage girls. They'd never been in a lift before. They ended up in the 8th and 9th floors of the [housing commission flats]. The parents of the teenage girls were illiterate in their own language and don't recognise numbers. They got stuck in the lift, the mother went up and down, up and down, up and down because she didn't know where to get out. That's appalling. It was a huge stress. The little children were going crazy. I couldn't get childcare for them, the mother couldn't come to English and the father was already struggling with his own mental health. We moved them about three months ago [to a distant suburb] – they were so happy. They don't really want to move, but they have a good house, on the ground. Its kind of insane to allow people into the country, offer them accommodation which is so counter to what they're used to that it actually has a serious impact ... And those units have a lot of social problems around them. The drug use is really apparent and it freaks them out, it frightens them. So they're sent to live in a place that frightens them, its completely alien to what they know.'

There is also the added demand for services to provide support for the emotional and psychological stress of both the adults and children. One worker believes that the children are displaying signs of emotional trauma such as bedwetting and clinging to their parents, and that therapy is needed for them to prevent long term psychological damage.

NGOs working with TPV holders often respond to situations as they arise. As such, demand can fluctuate and resources are often unavailable to cover these fluctuations, thus undermining organisational capacity. It can be difficult to predict in advance what new challenges will arise or who the next group of arrivals will be. The influx of refugees arriving from the detention centre in Nauru was one such occasion:

'When those people arrived, I couldn't do any of my normal work. I couldn't even think – we were working you know 14, 15 hour days with all these new

arrivals, trying to house them ... it was just a hard slog getting all these various things done along the way.'

One consequence of the denial of family reunion on the TPV has meant that many families have been separated for a number of years. Eventually, families will begin to arrive in Australia, either as asylum seekers themselves, or through family reunion visas if refugees on a TPV are granted permanent status. She predicts that this phase will be problematic for the families and require intensive support from agencies:

'I think what will happen then is that there's going to be a lot of marital problems, 'cause we've seen this before when there's been separation for a long time. So you've got the men who've become very Australian, made Australian friends, have become very Westernised, and the women who've been living in traumatic situations in refugee settings for the last five years without their husband, so its going to be very, very hard.'

When asked if her agency will be providing support for those people when they arrive, her answer was typical of the attitude taken to TPV holders' complex needs: 'Absolutely, how could you not? We've been waiting to meet these people for so many years!'

Solutions

Representatives from all the agencies interviewed agreed that service accessibility to TPV refugees could be improved with more funding and resources. There was some agreement also that more coordination between service providers and between government and non-government agencies could be beneficial. A coordinated referral point or casework service similar to that available for permanent visa holders was suggested for initial settlement assistance, although it was agreed that this would probably have to be driven by the government, possibly even DIMIA, for it to be effective and comprehensive. One manager was of the firm belief that the government should take responsibility for coordinating appropriate services and ensuring that people can find and access them when they are first released. He described the current system as inadequate where, after being released from detention, TPV holders are taken to a major city, given access to Medicare, Centrelink and a bank account, and essentially left to their own devices:

'They've got to find their own accommodation. When they first came out there were no networks. They were just literally walking the streets. XX tells the story of just walking. He had no idea where to even find accommodation. He ended up at the Marriott Hotel. Somebody was kind enough to take him to the backpackers. '

Service provision is currently piecemeal, with different services for different needs but no coordination across the services. While there are enough organisations with the experience and capacity to provide the services, a coordinated system of TPV service delivery would require proper funding to be effective. Coordination would also require a re-evaluation of the relationship between organisations, their workers and their clients. It is important that the services are provided by the organisations with the experience and capacity to provide appropriate services. Interviewees have noted, for example, that it is important for TPV holders to develop a sense of trust in their service providers

– a process which is established over a length of time and with a certain commitment to giving quality attention:

> '[You] have to make a huge effort to engage them in a manner so that they eventually trust you. Otherwise, they're not going to come to you – why would they? They have what I imagine is a bizarre experience of being treated with no compassion, and at times to be treated brutally, to be locked up, often intimidated, interrogated, abused – some of the stories we hear are horrific – and then, they arrive [and] … there's people wanting to hug and kiss them, and I just think that must be a bizarre experience for them. And partially they're institutionalised, or anyway they're definitely traumatised, and trust builds up over a period of time. You see them struggling. And sometimes they've got no choice but to trust you. But, there are definitely moments when it becomes a genuine relationship. And that's what you've got to work towards. It's not a government bureaucracy where your clients have got file numbers. And that's the best thing about it. You form genuine relationships with people. And that's the only way that's going to achieve any change for them – that they will trust you, and that they might consider you, if not a friend, then at least someone who will be able to assist them.'

Since the goal of central coordination is currently not in place, NGOs providing services to TPV holders need to explore ways of working more effectively within the current framework. One strategy is to provide appropriate support for staff. One organisation learnt the importance of this the hard way, after one of their workers needed to take time off work and reduce her hours as a result of severe stress. They have now allocated a portion of their budget - albeit small – for occupational health and safety at work, including emergency debriefing, access to professional supervision and massages for staff and volunteers.

Relationship between service provision and advocacy

Within the literature, the TPV is seen to warrant a service provision role as well as an advocacy role by NGOs. The former is necessitated primarily by the Federal Government's decision to drastically reduce the range of settlement services available to TPV holders, while the latter is based on the recognition that the lives of onshore refugees will only be dramatically improved with the abolition of temporary protection (Barnes, 2003: 3; Pickering, Gard and Richardson, 2003: 32). Of the three organisations represented in this research, however, only one organisation was seen to have a significant advocacy role. Of the remaining two: one had a policy of political neutrality and was thus was entirely involved with service provision; direct service provision was seen to make up around 95 percent of the other.

The organisation that was involved with significant advocacy work undertook such activities as: presenting talks at schools; providing stories to the media; and assisting asylum seekers who made trips to Canberra to lobby policy-makers. The manager also indicated that she had been involved in individual advocacy, giving the example of accompanying an elderly couple from Afghanistan to their hearing for permanent protection at the Refugee Review Tribunal. When it appeared that the couple's case would fail, as the decision maker thought it would be safe for them to return, she contacted an

Australian Afghan expert in Canberra to write an opinion piece on the situation in Afghanistan which they could use in their hearing. Since the manager's role is to ensure the effective running of the organisation, she sees it as inevitable that this will include, among other things, the kind of work necessary to advocate for the needs of the client group.

Interviewees' estimations of the advocacy level of their organisations are, of course, influenced by their particular understandings of the word 'advocacy'. When asked directly, most people suggested that advocacy was an overtly political act. It was based on such an interpretation that representatives from two organisations rated the amount of time spent in advocacy as very low. However based on a more inclusive definition – which also covers activities such as facilitating meetings between Centrelink and their clients or publicly documenting their clients' stories – many would give their organisations a higher advocacy rating. One worker gave the example of spending 25 hours in one week 'wrestling with Centrelink' to help a woman get day-care for her two small children so she could attend English classes. This could clearly be described as advocacy. The concept of advocacy was commonly associated with agitation for systemic change and elicited a negative response.

None of the organisation with whom we spoke were directly prevented from engaging in advocacy through their funding arrangements. However, the type of funding received at least partially dictates the activities associated with it and, conversely, the type of work in which the organisations engage or wish to engage will restrict the potential sources of funds.

The reality is that funding is tied to specific programs or services, and few bodies are prepared to fund work specifically with refugees on a TPV. None of the organisations surveyed have received federal funding to work with refugees on a TPV and only one has received money specifically for that purpose from the State Government. There appears to be a greater chance of success with Local Government and philanthropic trusts. Mostly the work with TPV refugees is financed through fundraising or absorbed into other programs.

Most of the workers expressed frustration with resource shortages including staff, training, and most importantly, funding. The only thing they had in abundance was volunteers. On a practical level, this translates as workers struggling to complete daily tasks, leaving little time for capacity building activities. One worker rued the lack of time available to do any more than 'hands on' work. While realising that the reality of the job necessitated this, she believed more advocacy had to happen. She expressed her frustration at having recently attended a meeting with another agency where she sat through an hour or so of unrelated matters before having the opportunity to explain the difficulties her clients experienced engaging their services, and the need for the agency to take these clients into account. The time constraints mean that attending such meetings requires careful evaluation of the possible benefits of attending, and whether it would have an impact. Such work is not only vital to the interests of the clients but when done successfully also reduces the workers' load in the long-term as clients' needs are being met more effectively.

Advocating for client's interests cannot be separated from the provision of direct services. One worker comments:

'I like being able to beat bureaucracy, because it's impossible for our clients to undertake it. You have to be really assertive with your rights and your clients' rights to access that service, otherwise they walk all over you.'

For managers particularly, the need to advocate for change in funding structures or even policy is an integral part of a long-term organisational sustainability.

Organisational perspective on the use of volunteer labour

In all three organisations interviewed the number of volunteers significantly outnumbered the paid workers. No organisation had more than a dozen paid workers and most of the paid workers were part-time. In many cases, the paid workers were either former volunteers themselves, volunteered part-time, or put in many more hours than those for which they are paid. Each organisation utilised a very high number of volunteers, ranging from 30 to around 500. The majority of volunteers worked with TPV holders, although not necessarily exclusively. 'Our whole system was built on donations and volunteers, because the government does not fund services to work with refugees/asylum seekers' explained one manager.

Given that the volunteers vastly outnumbered the paid workers, it is perhaps unsurprising that the former were involved in most tasks undertaken within the NGOs. They were involved with such tasks as: general administration; the management of a food bank; case work; English and computer tuition; facilitating access to mainstream services such as health care and Centrelink; settlement support including outreach and orientation; and assisting new arrivals with such everyday necessities as the use of public transport and shopping facilities. Volunteers were typically given specific roles to perform within the agencies – that were allocated on the basis of skill matching.

One worker rightly noted the importance of undertaking a careful utilisation of voluntary labour. It was essential, for example, that the skills of volunteers were matched with the complex requirements of the role in question. One organisation instituted a Play Therapy Program for traumatised children. Although the program was initially run by volunteers, representatives from the organisation soon realised that the role entailed specific skills. Fortunately, the organisation successfully applied for funding to employ a suitably qualified worker. This is not to imply that work performed by volunteers is only unskilled or manual labour, or that there is a large gulf between the work performed by paid workers and volunteers. Volunteers are often highly qualified, and utilise their training in a voluntary capacity. One organisation had a bank of volunteers that included teams of doctors, lawyers and ESL teachers.

Few of the volunteers were bilingual, and of those who spoke another language, they generally did not speak the clients' language. This, however, was also true of most of the paid workers. One agency lamented that it was difficult to get Arabic-speaking volunteers but noted that the volunteers coped reasonably well with the language difficulties – the clients' level of English is generally good enough to communicate and interpreters were used whenever possible, even though in many situations it was neither practical nor possible, for instance, when out on public transport or doing deliveries.

All the agencies relied heavily on the contribution of volunteers. As one manager put it: 'we'd have a very small organisation … without the volunteers I reckon that the organisation would virtually be on its knees.' One agency claimed that the volunteers performed about 80 percent of the work on one particular project with TPV holders. Having the volunteers allowed the agency to offer many more services than they could otherwise offer, particularly around settlement work with asylum seekers. Without such a contribution, the services provided would most likely be reduced to a few core activities that could attract funding.

While the amount of time contributed by volunteers was significant, paid workers identified the most valuable contribution of volunteers as their level of commitment. One manager attributed the success of that organisation entirely to the volunteers: 'It is the volunteers that run it. I don't need to come in. It is a positive, happy place and that makes people [the clients] want to come.' This may be partly attributable to the fact that the organisation began as an entirely volunteer-based service and had only recently secured funding for paid workers through private trusts. It began through a community effort to support refugees newly released from detention on a TPV, run largely on the commitment of people who were unhappy with the 'official' Australian response to asylum seekers. It ran for several years before being able to employ paid staff.

The community momentum towards supporting asylum seekers meant that many of the agencies surveyed had a large number of people offering to volunteer with them, and most had to change their work practices to accommodate this influx.

One organisation which had formerly used volunteers on a 'fairly ad hoc' basis was compelled to formalise the process of recruitment and training when they found they had 50 people registered on a volunteer waiting list. The formal application procedure entailed a process where potential volunteers were required to submit an application form and vetted in phone interviews before attending an induction session and training. While this process arose as a pragmatic response to the increased volunteer numbers, it was seen to be essential for ensuring a particular standard of service to the vulnerable TPV holder client base:

> 'Any organisation with a volunteer program needs to be quite stringent in how they go about it. We have a very vulnerable group of people we're involved with, who need to be part of the wider community, but we have to be careful how we do that. We need to be responsible.'

All organisations required volunteers to undergo police checks. One agency provided its volunteers with cross-cultural training to enable a better understanding between workers and the clients. They also provided volunteers with debriefing from specialised counselling services in acknowledgement of the stresses of the work.

4.2.2 *The Perspectives of Volunteers*

Given that TPV service providers are heavily reliant on voluntary labour, and that a strong reliance on unpaid labour may influence the overall functioning

and service delivery of the NGOs, it is important to understand the experience of TPV service provision from the perspective of volunteers.

A total of 31 volunteers[31] participated in the surveys. They were contacted through the three organisations surveyed, although it was made clear to the participants that the researchers were canvassing their experiences of volunteering as individuals and not as representatives of the agencies for which they work.

Work by volunteers

As noted in the previous section, the roles undertaken by volunteers are multifarious. They range from participation in management committees, to program coordination, research, administration tasks, practical support, and social interaction with asylum seekers. The work itself varied from driving (to medical appointments, collecting donations, delivering food, picking up asylum seekers), food or material aid packing and distribution, running playgroups, teaching English, teaching computer skills, employment assistance, support and training, general handyman/gardener, general administration or helping with the day to day running of the organisation (such as kitchen duty), helping with 'special occasions' such as parties, community lunches or camps, and personal support. Most volunteers had a specific role allocated, but indicated that they performed two or more types of activities and often did 'any odd job required'.

A number of people noted that social interaction was an important aspect of their work, and sometimes described their work as 'friendship worker', 'personal support' or 'informal counselling or casework'.

As one respondent commented, the job is as much about emotional support as it is about providing a service:

> 'The longer I'm doing it the more I realise that the actual process – sitting down with somebody, being able to talk – in some cases about something that has nothing to do with employment – is almost as helpful as finding a job.'

The length of time people had been volunteering with the particular organisation ranged from five weeks to 11 years, with an average of just over a year and a half. Over a third of the respondents (11 people) had been volunteering with the organisation for between six months and one year, while a further ten people (nearly one third) had been volunteering for that organisation for between one and two years. One person who had been volunteering for less than six months commented that she had previously been volunteering at another organisation in a similar role for ten years but left after a change in policy. The survey did not examine previous volunteer activity for the respondents, and it is not possible to determine whether this has been their first experience of volunteering.

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[31] One individual was engaged in paid as well as unpaid work.

Sustainability of volunteer work

Many people gave an open-ended response when asked how long they thought they would be able to continue with volunteer work, and how long they are interested in doing so. Typical responses included 'indefinitely', 'while there is a need', and 'as long as asylum seekers need help'.

The limits envisaged by people in terms of their availability were mostly restricted by practical considerations, such as age and health: '80 years old but good for a few years yet', and the competing demands of paid work or family commitments, such as: 'until I can't get childcare'. One volunteer with older children was 'unsure' whether it would be possible to continue working during the school holidays.

Many wanted to continue volunteering as long as possible because they gained a good deal of personal satisfaction from the work. For some, it was the work itself: 'as long as I'm fit enough, as I find it very rewarding'. One commented that the work fits with their interest and ideals and they found the atmosphere friendly and congenial. For others it was the personal interaction they enjoyed:

> 'I like working outdoors and maintaining the courtyard for the enjoyment of those who use the centre. Also it provides a relaxed and informal place to chat [and] work alongside some of the many visitors to the centre.'

This has developed into personal friendships for some people, and one volunteer spoke of how they had been cared for by an Iraqi family with whom they had become friends after a recent hospital stay. Others found it a way of utilizing their professional skills, particularly if they had left the workforce through retirement, unemployment or child-rearing.

Volunteers shared a sense that the work itself was necessary, and felt they would continue to volunteer as long as the need existed. One respondent believed that by working as a volunteer they were 'making a small contribution'.

For many, this perceived need was directly connected to the Federal Government's refugee policies and they explicitly linked their ongoing involvement with the organisation to the continuation of the TPV policy. This was reflected in comments like: 'until the need for assistance to asylum seekers ceases or until I die, whichever happens first'; 'until government policy changes to reflect a humanitarian approach to people in desperate need of safe haven!', and 'until TPVs and Bridging Visa holders are made permanent'.

The decision to volunteer and the length of time which individuals are prepared to commit to volunteering depends on a complex combination of factors. While the specific needs of refugees on temporary visas was the factor most frequently mentioned by respondents, most were influenced by several issues including the need for paid work, health, personal satisfaction and practical considerations.

Motivations for volunteering

A small number of the respondents had been interested in volunteering but did not have an interest in working with a specific organisation or client group.

One respondent was presented with several possibilities through assistance by Volunteering Victoria. Another respondent chose their organisation on the basis that it was close to her/his home. Both were motivated by a general desire to contribute their time and skills to the community. Two other volunteers were asked by a friend to work for the organisation or had heard of the job through word of mouth.

The overwhelming majority (72 percent) of volunteers surveyed, however, were motivated to undertake such activity on the basis of political reasons. That is, they felt it was a necessary response to counteract the harsh treatment of asylum seekers in Australia. One stated bluntly that it was 'because of the Howard Government policy on refugees'. The responses were often very emotive and framed as a need to react against a policy that they felt did not represent their beliefs or ideals. However, like those volunteers who were not drawn to a particular organisation or client group, those interested in working with refugees were similarly interested in making a contribution to the community or in actively and positively responding to what they saw as a negative situation.

The volunteers reported that their feelings of outrage and shame, as citizens over the government's treatment of asylum seekers was a significant motivator. Respondents expressed strong feelings about their belief that the policy is harsh and discriminatory. Words used to describe their feelings included 'dismayed', 'horrified', 'angry', 'embarrassed' and 'total disgust'. The government's perceived treatment of asylum seekers, and the TPV policy itself, were variously referred to as 'immoral', 'inhumane', 'an abomination', 'a disgrace', 'shameful', 'horrific', 'appalling', 'racist', 'degrading', 'cruel', 'depressing', 'iniquitous', 'heartless', 'utterly disgusting', 'shabby', and 'abhorrent'. It is clear that there is a very strong emotional investment by volunteers in the particular client group with whom they are working.

Consequent to this was the desire to take direct action to mitigate the sense of powerlessness and frustration people felt in the face of official immigration policy and to 'offer a personal welcome to refugees'. Many reported feeling politically powerless to change government policy and needed to 'do something positive as my protest'. One respondent mentioned feeling frustrated by signing petitions and attending rallies that appeared to be 'ignored'. Working directly with refugees can be a powerful 'hands-on' way to mitigate feelings of disenfranchisement with political processes.

For some, the reputation, values or work record of the organisation itself dictated their choice in volunteering. Volunteers also spoke highly of 'the level of enthusiasm and ability to provide satisfactory outcomes for their clients' and the 'great, passionate people' who ran the service. For others, the desire was as simple as being able to support or 'help people in need' as a basic right to dignity.

Work satisfaction

Overall, volunteers working with TPV holders expressed a high level of satisfaction with the work they were performing. Most people (80 percent) felt 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their volunteer work. 16 percent felt neither 'satisfied' nor 'unsatisfied', while only one person indicated that s/he was

'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with the experience of volunteer work. Several people qualified their response by stating that although they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their work, they felt it should be unnecessary, or that the service should not need to exist.
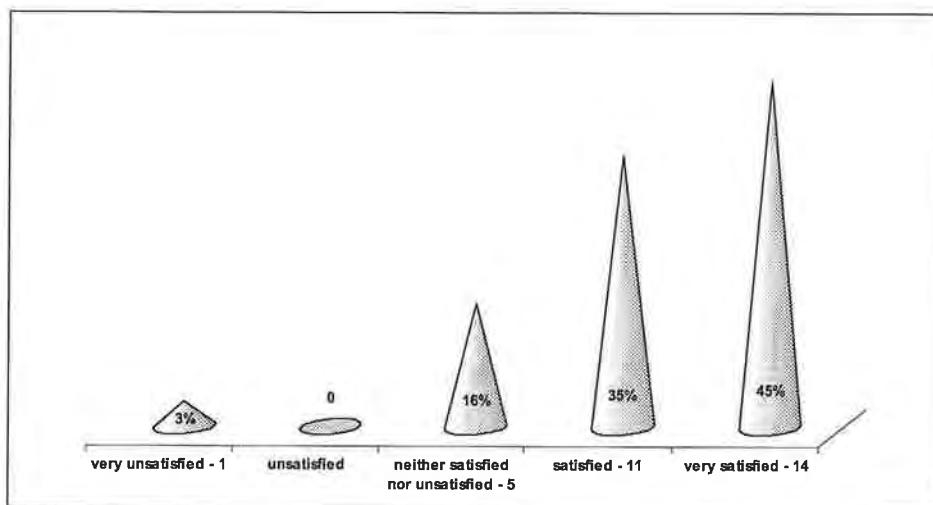
Figure 70: How satisfied are you with your work here?

When asked about the most satisfying aspect of their work, the most common response was in reference to the human interaction involved, primarily with clients, but also with co-workers and the wider community. In referring to aspects of voluntary work from which satisfaction was derived, typical comments included:

- 'playing with the children and seeing the smiles on their faces'

- 'meeting people you've never met before'

- 'seeing local people bring in donations'

- 'working face-to-face with asylum seekers and their families'

- 'people who work with me [fellow workers] are fantastic'

- 'the courage and composure of the asylum-seekers, especially the women'

- 'seeing children and parents (mostly mothers) enjoying themselves, socializing and children gaining experience and confidence with play experiences'

- 'the sense of joy in the asylum seekers'

In light of the fact that the treatment of asylum seekers was the most frequently stated motivation for volunteering, it is perhaps unsurprising that acts which affirm the value of their work to the refugees themselves, or that attest to the generosity of other people in their dealings with refugees, contribute greatly to the satisfaction gained from such work.

The work itself was also seen as important, particularly since they were providing a service that was needed by their clients. Volunteers gained a

sense of satisfaction from successfully helping new arrivals to 'find their feet in a new community and culture.'

The satisfaction gained from the personal interactions was heightened for many by a sense that the people they worked with are disenfranchised from the broader Australian community, and that the work they do helps to bridge the divide. One volunteer expressed satisfaction at providing a counterpoint to the official experience many refugees would have by 'providing a welcome and positive experience for people whose experience of Australian officialdom would previously have been only negative.'

Several volunteers also indicated a sense of personal civic responsibility which acts as a bridge between the new arrivals and wider society:

- seeing families grow in confidence that enables them to partake in the mainstream society

- seeing the human faces of a group which the government has worked so hard at dehumanizing

- feeling you are making people feel welcome; empowering asylum seekers; providing for basic needs; friendship with refugees

- trying to make a difference in government policy

Many pointed out that they gained personally from the interaction, either through learning other people's stories and about their cultures, or a sense of 'being appreciated'. Their own understanding has been enriched by discovering other people's lives, experiences and cultural differences, and hearing individual stories of their journey to Australia. One volunteer mentioned the effect of working in the communal garden on some of the men and the pleasure it gave them to see it rekindle old memories of their homeland.

Volunteers' responses to this question illustrate the inherent rewards of altruism and the effect of helping others on self-validation. Put simply by one: 'I feel good about myself in this role'. It makes people feel good to know they are 'helping human beings' or 'helping people who desperately need assistance'. Volunteers spoke of watching the confidence of their clients grow, particularly those who were shy or who had limited English language skills. They felt a sense of satisfaction in being able to give people hope and witnessing the transformations in their lives.

Volunteers were self-conscious or uncomfortable however with the paternalism that was evident in the concept or act of 'helping' and the capacity for personal gain. The reciprocity inherent in the experience of volunteering was described by one volunteer, somewhat apologetically, as 'selfish'.

The aspects of their work that were identified as most unsatisfying can be classified in two broad themes: the practical issues that affected them on a daily basis, and broader systemic issues. A number of respondents were unable to think of any aspect of their work they found unsatisfying.

In terms of factors that negatively impacted on their day-to-day work, volunteers commonly complained about having insufficient resources to perform their work in a satisfying manner. The resources they felt they lacked included: time, goods to distribute, money, facilities for storage, play areas, computer accessibility, and debriefing opportunities for workers. A few people

cited disorganisation of work space as frustrating. The attempt to provide a service without adequate resources frustrated volunteers by hindering the effective fulfilment of their roles or undermining the quality of the service they were meant to provide. One respondent described getting upset by the failure of their computer systems, knowing the trouble a client may have gone to simply to attend their meeting. The effort required to match resources to needs can be tiring. One volunteer simply responded 'Exhaustion!'

Many people felt a sense of frustration that they were unable to do more to help, or that their work should not be necessary in the first place: 'It should be provided by the government or funded agencies.'

More broadly, volunteers described the emotional strain of their work as a source of dissatisfaction. One respondent described the stress of working with 'the knowledge that our friends live in a terrible demoralizing limbo, without any official humanitarian assistance, entirely dependent on the efforts of a conscience-stricken community of ordinary Australian citizens:

> 'It is difficult for volunteers working with refugees to remain impassive when hearing so many stories of hardship, and knowing that they are unable to genuinely understand the magnitude of their clients' situation.'

There is awareness that irrespective of the resource shortage, the volunteers and workers are, by definition, unable to provide their clients with what they really want – which is permanent residency – and are 'simply helping them survive until (hopefully) this happens:'

> 'The thing that dismays me is that I know every day is a struggle for them, that they're living with someone who makes them feel like an uninvited guest, who can't wait to get rid of them. I feel like they're treated really badly, treated with the lack of minimum respect ... they're here now, they can't afford to go to the doctor, if they're sick they stay home, they can't afford medication, they've got no Medicare card, they've got no health card, they pay a consultant fee to see any doctor about anything. They say they're living with friends, [they] can't pay them rent, they're angry with you etc .... The more I find out about people's living circumstances, the more I realise there are all kinds of systems that are almost inhuman, or wear people down – and it's not what you think! It's never the most grinding sickness or poverty, it's just the everyday self-respect of "this is my own house I live in; I'm not an unwelcome guest at someone's house." It's funny but it's not what you think. One lady told me "I couldn't come today because I couldn't afford a tram ticket", and I just felt so bad. It's crazy.'

One volunteer found it dispiriting that apathy towards the situation of refugees was displayed by so many Australians.

When asked to choose words to describe their work, the most commonly chosen responses by 81 percent of the volunteers were 'satisfying' and 'rewarding', closely followed by 'worthwhile', which was chosen by 77 percent of respondents and 'challenging' by 65 percent. 'Frustrating', 'depressing', 'easy' and 'difficult' were also chosen, in decreasing order. Other responses suggested were 'interesting', 'informative', 'fun', 'emotionally draining', 'enlightening' and 'very like my role as father and grandfather'.
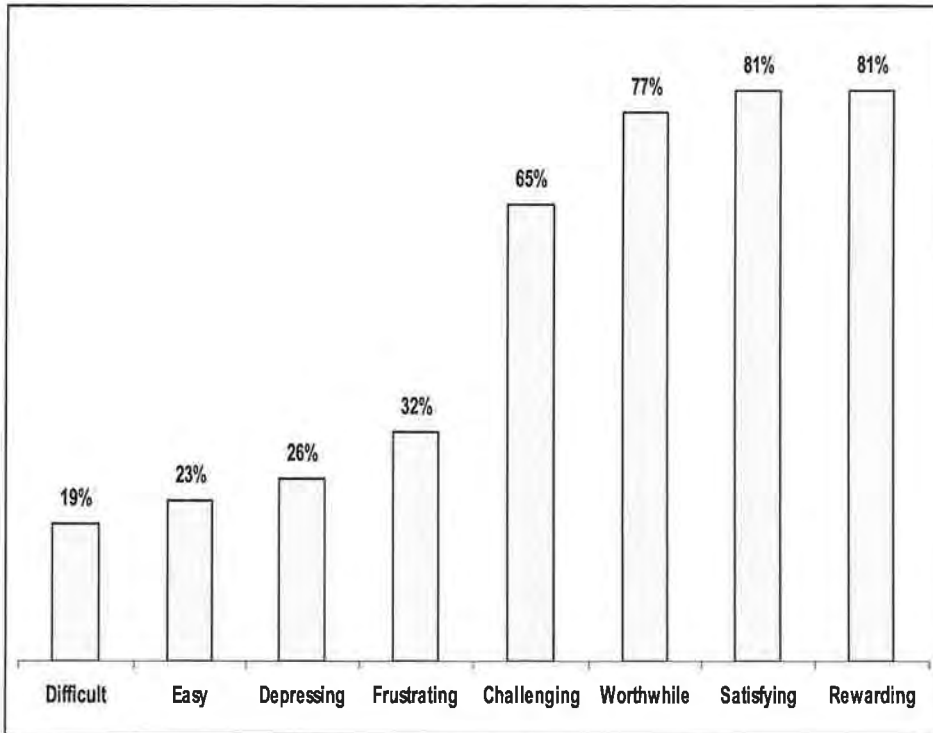
Figure 71: I find my work here ...

Resources available to perform role

On the whole, volunteers felt that the resources available to them were adequate for them to perform their job properly. The notable exception to this was for funding available, which nearly half (46 percent) considered 'inadequate' or 'completely inadequate' to do their job properly. The highest level of confidence expressed was for expertise, which nearly three quarters (72 percent) believed was adequate to properly perform their job, with none disagreeing. Over half (58 percent) found staff levels adequate although over a third (35 percent) believed they were neither adequate nor inadequate. Nearly half (48 percent) found that the time available to them to do their job was sufficient, 16 percent found it inadequate and 29 percent believed it to be neither adequate nor inadequate. Opinion was divided on the material conditions, with a slight majority believing them adequate (39 percent), while 29 percent believed them inadequate and the same number found them to be neither. One volunteer commented that they felt 'too angry and ashamed' of the government response to refugees that 'I'd come no matter what the problems.'
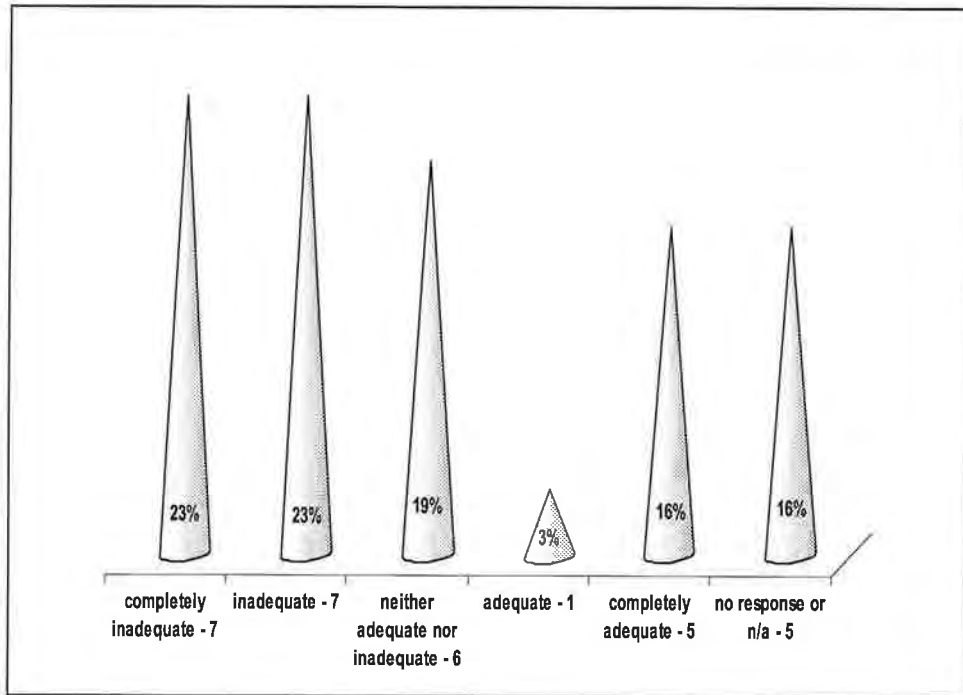
Figure 72: The funding available is adequate for me to do my job properly

Client base

The number of clients that each volunteer worked with varied greatly, from one to several hundred. Most indicated that their number of clients was not constant and varied over time. The interaction with each client was generally ongoing, depending on need.

Nearly half of the volunteers who participated indicated that between 80 to 100 percent of their clients were TPV holders, and most of these respondents (43 percent out of 49 percent) estimated that between 90 and 100 percent of their clients were TPV holders. Approximately one third did not know, or did not respond to the question. Estimates were sometimes qualified by noting that often they were unaware of their clients' visa status. One person pointed out that s/he assisted people according to need, and those with the greatest need were given the most help. S/he went on to say, however, that visa status would most likely be a factor since the most help was given to people with no financial support or other benefits, and that often these were people on a TPV.

The percentage of volunteers' workloads engaged with TPV holders was commensurate with the percentage of clients who are TPV holders. There was a slightly higher percentage of workers who were 'unsure', and a corresponding drop in those who claimed that 90 to 100 percent of their workload was with TPV holders.
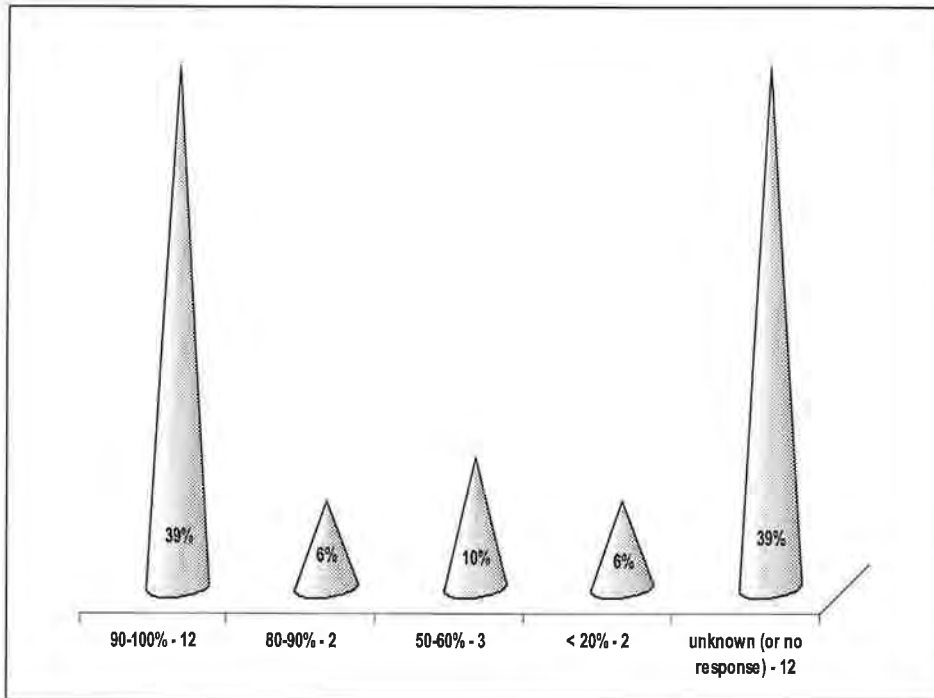
Figure 73: Percentage of workload which is with TPV holders

It would appear that there is no significant workload difference between working with TPV holders and working with other clients in the organisation, whether they be permanent visa holders or others.

Services provided

Material aid was the most commonly provided service, with 61 percent of respondents indicating that they provided this to their clients. Of the options presented, language services were the second most commonly provided with nearly half (48 percent) providing this service, followed by education (39 percent), employment (32 percent), advocacy (29 percent) and housing (23 percent). A small number indicated that they provided services relating to health (13 percent) and income security (7 percent). Sometimes the services were provided indirectly, for instance an employment service may also provide options for further education or for gaining recognition in Australia for overseas qualifications, or a worker may assist a client to access health services by informing them of their options, assisting them to negotiate Medicare, making appointments for them with health professionals, and driving or accompanying them to their appointments.
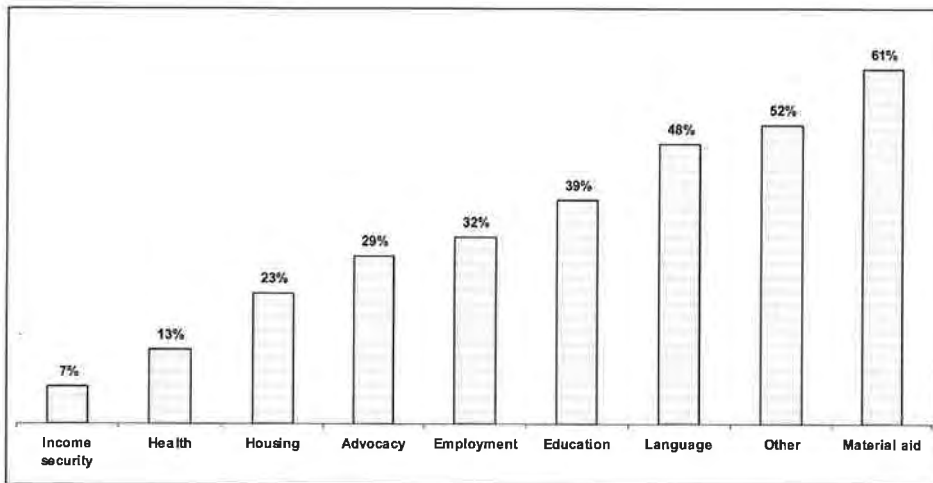
Figure 74: Type of service provided to TPV holders

More than half (52 percent) felt they provided services not mentioned in the list. Some of these were programs that did not fit neatly within any one category, such as a playgroup for mothers and children, counselling, referral, transport or daily living skills. Mostly, however, they referred to social or emotional support such as friendship, building confidence and language skills, social lunches, conversation, and moral support – things, as one volunteer said, which 'never show up on paper'.

Demand for services

When asked if the demand for services has changed since the introduction of the Temporary Protection Visa, the majority of respondents (59 percent) either did not know, did not respond, or marked the answer 'not applicable'. This is likely due to the fact that the majority of volunteers began working in their current positions after the introduction of the TPV, and are therefore unable to offer a comparison. As one volunteer noted: 'I've only been volunteering for six months so I can't comment on this area.' Not one respondent believed there had been a decrease in demand for services since the introduction of the TPV, and 22 percent believed that demand had increased either considerably or significantly.

Several noted the contradiction inherent in the question as many of the participating services were established in response to the TPV policy, or 'grew from the needs of TPV and Bridging Visa holders' and therefore 'is the reason we exist'. Others mentioned again that they helped all people, so the visa status of their clients was 'unknown and not directly related'. In many cases, the volunteer will be unaware of the individual visa status of the clients.

Those who believed there had been a change in demand since the introduction of the TPV pointed to an increase of clients seeking services and the consequent increase in volunteers and resources needed to meet that need. As certain benefits (for instance, English language tuition) are not available to refugees holding a TPV, one respondent noted that word of

mouth within communities worked effectively to bring TPV holders to services that provide these services. Volunteers also noted that their work practices needed to change to accommodate their client group. One worker mentioned that they need to be sensitive to language and culture when working with their clients, particularly when many have traumatic histories and are demoralised by their current situation.

Difficulties for TPV holders

Volunteers believed TPV holders were having difficulty accessing a range of services, including those which were provided by them. The most frequently mentioned were employment services such as assistance with finding work, accessing job networks, receiving vocational advice, work rights and unemployment support. These reflect the importance of a stable income for building a life. Health and educational services were also seen to provide difficulties for TPV holders. Despite the availability of Medicare, there was still a high demand for health services, particularly dental and specialist medical treatment. All levels of the educational institutions presented some barriers to TPV holders, from pre-school to secondary and higher education, as well as vocational training and training in the skills required for everyday life such as proficiency in English language and literacy. Other issues raised were the need for transport concessions, counselling, and assistance with accommodation and Centrelink. Permanency was again raised in this context, as one person noted:

'[The] 'temporary nature of the visa affects everything. [It] makes you not a great employment prospect. Anything short of permanent residency, the rug will be pulled out from under you.'

Ability to respond to the needs of TPV holders

Mostly the volunteers felt they were able to respond to the needs of TPV holders. Nearly half (47 percent) stated that they did not have difficulties responding to their needs. A large number (25 percent) did not respond to the question or indicated that it was not applicable to them.
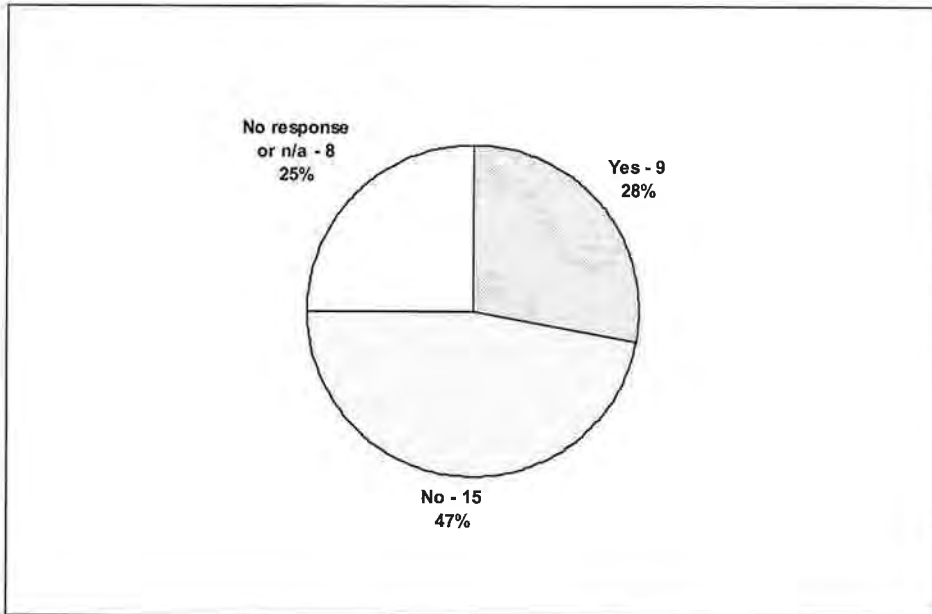
Figure 75: Do you have difficulties in responding to TPV holders' needs?

Of those who indicated that they did have difficulties responding to the needs of refugees on a TPV, the most common problem identified (by 40 percent of respondents) was the lack of resources available to them. One organisation, for example, provided household goods and was limited by the availability of storage facilities. Even if they secure enough donations from the community, they have to turn away goods if there is nowhere to store them. Just over a quarter (27 percent) felt that their expertise was a problem on occasion.
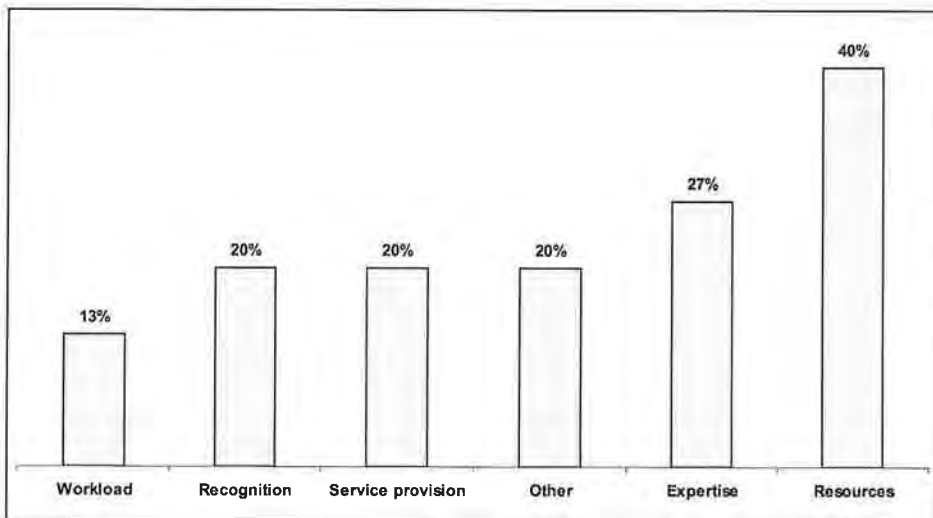
Figure 76: Difficulties in responding to TPV holders are related to...

In terms of expertise, several people commented on the difficulties of linguistic and cultural difference. Few of the volunteers were bilingual in the language of their clients, and the refugees often had limited English language fluency. These factors could, at times, make communication difficult. As the services of interpreters were typically not within the budget of their organisations, most volunteers had to manage as best they could. Cultural differences could also be a source of misunderstanding, and one worker commented on 'the need to establish enough trust in each other to get beyond the first exchanges'.

One person felt that her/his level of personal commitment was a potential difficulty. The time available to volunteer and the energy to do so wavers, which is accompanied by a sense of inadequacy and feelings of guilt for not contributing more.

Improving service accessibility

Over half the respondents (52 percent) believed that increased funding and other resources would improve service accessibility. Many volunteers also saw a benefit in a more coordinated approach to service delivery between the government and non-government sectors (42 percent) and between service providers (36 percent), although as one person commented, 'the service needs to be offered in the first place!' Many workers already find themselves liaising with other agencies as one solution to limited time and resources. To suggest other ways in which service accessibility could be improved, most respondents indicated either that temporary protection should be abolished and replaced with permanent protection, or that TPV holders should be given the same rights to settlement assistance as permanent refugees.
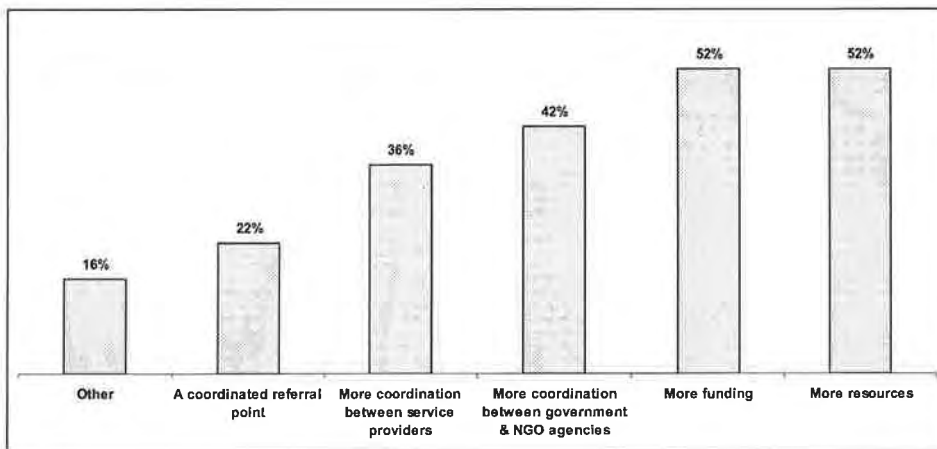
Figure 77: What could be done to improve service accessibility to TPV holders?

Social capital – who benefits from the work performed?

Nearly all volunteers surveyed (97 percent) believed that the work they were performing benefited the users of the service and only a marginally smaller number (93 percent) felt that their work was also of benefit to themselves. One commented that they personally get a lot out of helping, while another noted

that doing such work provided 'a positive channel for my frustration with government actions'. This clearly reflects the motivations for volunteering discussed earlier, which suggest that voluntary work in circumstances such as these can be a conscious act of self-empowerment. An equal number (93 percent) believed that their work was benefiting the community, with one person commenting that volunteer engagement with the refugees demonstrates a more tolerant community.

The vast majority (84 percent) also believed that the organisation benefited from their work. The labour provided by volunteers helps the agency consolidate itself, and allows it to provide the services it does.

A little more than half believed the work in which they were engaged benefited the government, and this category received the most comments. The general tenor of these was that volunteer labour enabled social services to be provided by the agencies at little or no expense to the taxpayers – services which the government would otherwise have to provide. Several people referred to 'picking up the slack' where governments failed to provide services and expressed the opinion that the responsibility for provision should in fact lie with the government. One respondent described the relationship as the government providing a safety net, and that the NGOs provided a safety net for the holes in the government's safety net.

Others suggested that the volunteer's personal networks of friends and colleagues were enriched by learning of the issues through the work they performed, while one person believed 'Australia' benefited through the compassion demonstrated in community responses to refugees holding a TPV.
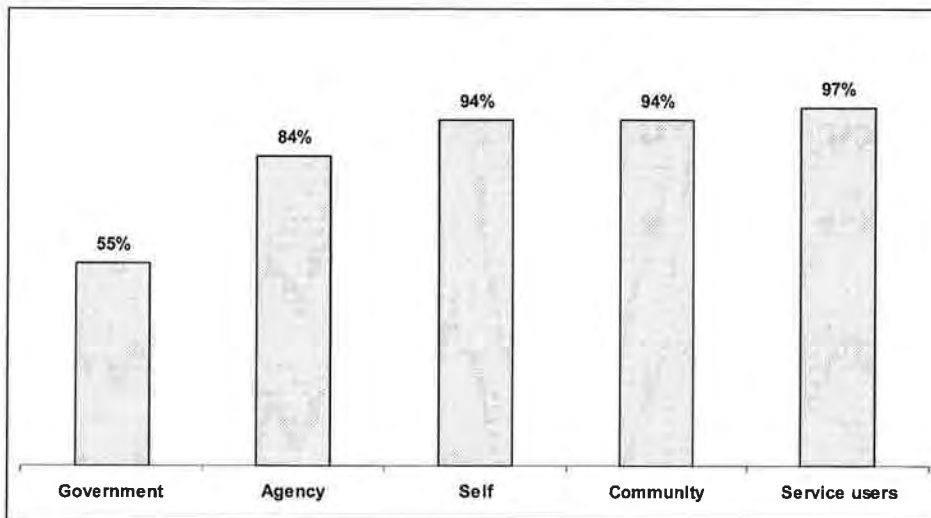
Figure 78: I think my work here is benefiting...

Volunteers' perception of support for their work within the general community

Volunteers working with refugees holding a TPV had mixed reactions when asked about their perceptions of the general level of support within the

community for the work they performed. Mostly they leant towards seeing the community as sympathetic. 45 percent believed that the community was either supportive or very supportive, although this was weighted heavily towards supportive. A quarter believed that the community was unsupportive and 29 percent responded that they felt the community was neither.
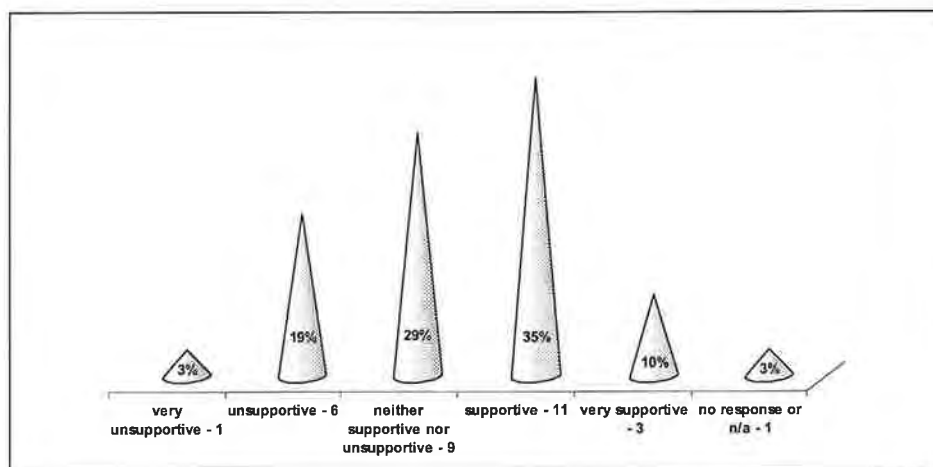
Figure 79How supportive I believe the wider community is of my work with TPV holders...

The results show a response that is both varied and ambiguous. Choosing 'neither' could mean they feel the community is indifferent to their work or it could mean that they believe there are mixed reactions in the community (which could potentially range from very supportive to very unsupportive). Both propositions are borne out by comments such as 'I am not sure the community is aware' on the one hand, and 'I'm sure there are people who think that I'm crazy and others who think it's marvellous that I'm doing the work', on the other. One respondent described the different reactions s/he hd encountered in the sphere of family and community:

> 'I think a lot of people feel, just generally when we've been discussing it, that we haven't done the right thing ... even my children at school when they discuss it, it's a big issue really. And I'm sure our children will make us feel very guilty for doing so little and not fighting harder for the rights of the people who come here, because they aren't treated properly, they really aren't - that's my perception. [I have a] sister-in-law from Malaysia who doesn't see things that way.'

Effect of TPV policy on the organisation

Only 3 percent of respondents felt strongly that the TPV policy had a positive effect on the organisation, while a further 13 percent agreed, but not strongly. Several respondents mentioned the increase in volunteers and supporters as a positive outcome of the TPV policy:

'There is, in Darebin at least, a huge groundswell of sympathetic support for asylum seekers. It is inspiring to meet the donors of material aid, week by week, who so faithfully support the ASRC and fulfil their needs.'

Organisations supporting refugees on a TPV have gained considerable community support and interest as a result of the policy. One volunteer noted that one outcome has been the active involvement of middle class people reacting to the policy who, by volunteering, are providing a link between middle class Australia, TPV holders and other refugees: 'TPV needs are not widely known and understood but when average person is told of situation nearly all are indignant and very supportive.' People working in the organisations benefit from developing new contacts and understanding of other cultures, migration issues and employment issues:

'[T]he solidarity of the team of volunteers here, week by week, over the years is invigorating and restores one's faith in humanity, in contrast to the degrading policy re immigration and refugees of our government.'

This can in itself create logistical problems for the organisation. An increase in volunteer labour entails managing and organizing the labour: 'the capacity to harness and filter these human resources are big issues for agencies working with TPV holders.'

The *ad hoc* nature of migration patterns, however, places a strain on organisational capacity to cope with sudden influxes of new refugees. At such times the workload can increase dramatically, and workers can find themselves 'at breaking point physically and emotionally'. The uncertainty generated by the TPV policy also puts pressure on organisations through the psychological toll it takes on workers and clients. One commented:

'No-one should be asked to live with such disabling uncertainty. It has not one positive attribute and most certainly makes my work so much more difficult'

Another empathised with the family separation that refugees holding a TPV had to endure:

'A volunteer has to cope with this and the knowledge that these people have overcome enormous difficulties in getting their families (some cases extended families) to the relative safety of Australia. My views have developed from being a father and a grandfather.'

Nearly a quarter of respondents (23 percent) 'strongly' disagreed that the TPV policy had a positive effect on the organisation, and a small number (3 percent) disagreed. One respondent pointed to the increase in workload as a result of the policy, while several noted that the policy is the reason why the organisation exists, implying that it would be preferable for the clients if the need was not present in the first place. One respondent interpreted this as a shift of responsibility from government to the community sector which places an unfair burden on NGOs. Several pointed to the detrimental effect of the policy on the clients themselves, and implied that the demoralisation of the clients could not be seen as beneficial to the agency. The volunteers who felt strongly about the effects of the TPV policy were vehement in their criticism of the TPV regime, particularly in relation to its impact on holders of the visa. The TPV policy was variously described as 'shameful', 'appalling', 'cruel', 'horrendous', and an 'inhuman...deterrent to those people most in need of

assistance'. It was seen to bring shame to Australians. Several volunteers were at pains to point out that the views they were expressing were personal opinions only and not organisational perspectives.

Nearly half the respondents (47 percent) did not answer the question, although some indicated confusion (and even outrage) at the question being asked. One respondent who left the question blank commented 'It is atrocious that there is any need for our resource Centre and others like it.' Some respondents declined to comment on the grounds that they were not involved in policy, were unaware of the broader situation of TPVs, or that they did not wish to make a political statement.

4.3 A Case Study of One Organisation – Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS)

This case study of one organisation, Victorian Arabic Social Services (VASS), looks in detail at the factors contributing to, or limiting, effective service provision to establish the respective roles of government and non-government organisations (NGOs) in providing services to TPV holders. In light of VASS's unique position in the Arabic speaking community, it is ideally placed to provide important and strategic information to all levels of government and community agencies. For this reason, VASS was selected as a case study for understanding organisational responses and capacities for responding to TPV refugees' needs and issues. It provides an interesting counterpoint to the other organisations studied in comparing the different production and use of social capital between ethno-specific and mainstream organisations.

In-depth interviews were conducted with all levels of management and workers at VASS including the chairperson, the manager, the TPV support worker and a long standing volunteer working on the TPV program. Throughout this report, the term 'worker' is used with the meaning of someone engaging in either paid or unpaid work, and is therefore used to refer to all interviewees.

4.3.1 Organisational Profile

VASS is a State-wide agency providing social services and advocacy for Arabic–speaking background (ASB) communities in Victoria. It describes itself as a non-profit, community-based agency that provides and promotes social, cultural, educational, recreational, and support services to ASB communities of Victoria (VASS, 2004).VASS is non -political, non-religious and non-sectarian.

VASS was established over 20 years ago by a network of workers concerned with the issues facing ASB communities and has grown into one of the peak organisations providing services to ASB communities. Despite an operating budget of less than $400,000 in 2003-2004, VASS provided an extensive array of services including youth programs, elderly programs, community settlement services, mediation, information and training, and drug and alcohol prevention programs.

The evolution of VASS has been organic and largely in response to need. It began as a local community based advocacy organisation with no resources and no paid workers. All those involved volunteered their time, and there was

no management structure to manage volunteers. The organisation evolved as it became successful in securing grants and funding which enabled paid workers to be hired, resources to be supplied, and specific services to be provided to the ABS community in Victoria.

VASS' roots are firmly imbedded in the community it serves, and its service provision model reflects its evolution from a grassroots initiative to address the needs of ASB community members. A strong board drawn from the ASB community oversees the governance of VASS, and most (if not all) of the workers are bi-lingual and/or bi-cultural. A large pool of volunteers engages community members in the work of VASS and allows it to continue providing services which are unfunded or under-funded, and which VASS would otherwise be unable to provide to its members.

VASS is governed by a board of management consisting of eleven members. A manager oversees the work of all workers, which in 2003-2004 included 18 paid staff working on a variety of projects, 5 consultants, 12 students and 26 volunteers.

Funding is received from a variety of sources including Federal Government, State Government, Local Government, corporate sponsorhip and philanthropic trusts. Most funding provided is short term and project-based.

4.3.2 Funding for TPV work

The work, specifically with TPV holders, is also funded through a variety of sources. Initially, some assistance was provided through the existing settlement support service, via the Commonwealth Settlement Support Scheme which was unfortunately cut when the administering body, DIMIA, became aware that the money was being used to assist TPV holders among others as the Federal Government does not fund settlement services for TPV holders.

The Victorian State Government initially provided a small research grant, and a social action research project in partnership with Deakin University fincanced a worker to assess the TPV policy and determine the effects of restricted access to settlement services. The position of the TPV social worker continued to be funded through a series of small grants, mostly from Local Governments, in particular, Hume, Darebin, Whittlesea and Moreland. Obtaining funding can be difficult and labour-intensive. One council, which provided funding for this work with TPV holders, had to be lobbied extensively before it was convinced to provide funds.

VASS's manager reported that she had written at least five submissions in during the 2002-03 period with about 90 percent success rate with Local Government, but no assistance was forthcoming from Federal and State Governments. 'However, we still put in the effort', she says somewhat optimistically. The Federal Government has a policy not to fund support services for TPV holders and while there are no such restrictions on State Governments, it can still be difficult to obtain funding from them for activities specifically geared towards refugees holding a TPV.

Philanthropic trusts initially funded a men's support project to bring them together to talk and support each other, but funding for this project has ended, and VASS has been unable to secure funding to continue the project.

'We do many submissions to get a little bit of money. Administratively it has been hard labour. A lot of hours have been spent seeking funding to keep the TPV project going. We know the funding process by heart now. We have been repeating the needs and issues on submissions so many times that we know them by heart. But we are committed to doing this because we feel the people here are genuine refugees who haven't been treated fairly. Because they are part of our community we are obliged to support them. We can't neglect them because they are a needy community.'

4.3.3 VASS response to TPV holders

VASS has been providing services to TPV holders since the beginning of their release from immigration detention centres in 2000. Most of the refugees on temporary visas that VASS works with are Iraqi, but there are also some Iranians and Afghanis. Clients include men, women and children. Men are the majority clients. Given the ethos and operational structure of VASS, and the fact that more than half the TPV holders are Iraqi, VASS's involvement was a logical and inevitable extension of their service provision.

Initially, a large number of refugees were being released with little or no organised support to assist their transition. One worker at VASS estimates that around 60 to 120 refugees per week were being released and all required housing and on-arrival settlement services for which they were otherwise ineligible. VASS's initial response to the demand was entirely volunteer-based. Approximately 20 volunteers assisted with settlement support for the new arrivals. VASS also became involved in advocacy work, which included meeting with the Immigration Minister to discuss the abolition of the TPV policy.

The work that VASS now undertakes with TPV holders is mostly case work for families and individuals. This includes provision of information, referral, crisis support, interpreting and translation support, assistance with completion of forms (such as those from Centrelink), linking with Job Network services and employment training services, and facilitating appointments such as medical.

The type of work VASS performs with TPV holders has changed over time. Its nature has shifted to reflect the changing needs of the client group. VASS's initial response to TPV holders largely involved crisis management, wherein the release of large numbers of TPV holders into the community stimulated a demand for immediate settlement assistance. Demand for VASS's services at that time far exceeded its capacity to supply it. With the decrease in arrivals – either from detention or from interstate – there has been a shift in VASS's work with TPV holders from crisis management issues to those of meeting the ongoing or longer-term needs of the TPV-holder community.

Family issues are becoming more prominent as children grow up and become teenagers. Raising teenagers can be hard work for all parents, but may be particularly challenging with teenagers who have experienced forced migration, mandatory detention, and are growing up in a new culture faced with an uncertain future. Psychological stress is also becoming exacerbated as periods of separation from families get longer and 'people are at a point of despair'. However, although many are still struggling with ongoing issues, some have now built friendships and networks which are helping restore some of the social bonds broken by forced migration.

VASS has been providing less recreational activities, partially because funding and resources have diminished, and partly in response to the expressed wishes of clients. One worker reported that the only outing to occur in the last year was to take a group of the men to visit a group member who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. The women's group has less interest in purely recreational activities than in being able to offer emotional support to other members of their community who are not in good health. For instance, they expressed a desire to visit a woman in hospital who had recently been taken out of Nauru detention centre because of her ailing health, but had left the rest of her family on Nauru.

Psychologically, the situation for TPV holders is deteriorating:

'Before they had hope that they would get a visa. Now, they hear the news about the rejected applications and the news about what is going on in Iraq and they feel hopeless. They feel that they have nothing to live for. Their levels of stress are very high at the moment and you can see that this is impacting on their levels of patience and tolerance with their children. It is also hard because their children have gotten used to the lifestyle in Australia and the thought of going back to Iraq is causing great distress.'

Because of the high level of stress and uncertainty, the TPV-holder community has been in greater need of intensive assistance from support workers – requiring more time and attention.

The legislative reforms announced in 2004 which offered the possibility of applying for different visas, have not held a great material benefit for the majority TPV holders. One worker at VASS commented that in fact, the effect was to further demoralise them when the details were known:

'It is still tough for VASS and for the refugee community. It made it harder for TPV refugees as it put responsibility on them to either marry or find a job in rural areas. How likely is this to happen? It put a greater burden on them and on us. We feel helpless and unable to support them. We are not in the business of match making or to offer employment support in the rural areas.'

Tension between advocacy and service provision

VASS began its life as an advocacy organisation which now also provides service delivery. The twin goals of service provision and advocacy evolved as a natural complement to each other but in the current climate there is also an unavoidable tension between the two roles.

Services are provided mainly in response to need. One worker described the organisation's goal as filling 'the gaps that are left by lack of funding by Federal Government.' For the bulk of VASS's clients, this means providing a linguistically and culturally appropriate service as an alternative to mainstream service provision that might not be as effective or accessible to the ASB community. For TPV holders it often means providing no service at all.

Immediate settlement needs such as housing, employment, education, banking, health, and information provision were not funded by government. In the opinion of one worker, these needs may last for up to five years before clients are self reliant. As initial needs are met, others become more prominent. Looming large are the mental health needs of TPV holders as time progresses,

particularly in dealing with the anxiety and depression resulting from the uncertainty of their status and their inability to plan for their future.

The nature of 'gap filling' includes an assessment of whether or not the role is one that is most appropriately filled by government (such as, arguably, settlement services for all migrants) or by non-government organisations (such as culturally and linguistically appropriate services).

It is difficult – if not impossible – to separate the provision of a service in response to an identified community need, from the identification of the cause of the need. For TPV holders, the difficulties arise from the temporary visa itself – either from the contingent visa restrictions or its temporary nature – with the resultant uncertainty and impermanence. Advocacy becomes the only real 'solution' and the only service VASS can realistically provide.

Through all levels of management and workers, the belief was shared that the TPV policy was 'detrimental to the community', 'unsustainable', 'demoralizing' and 'unjustifiable', and needed to be opposed. While acknowledging the diversity of VASS's membership and the views held, it was generally agreed that VASS as an organisation stands for 'more social justice for refugees and asylum seekers. Almost everyone believes that there has to be improvement in government responses.'

> 'Our vision for the TPV community is to have full rights like other refugees. Full access to services and for them to be considered as valuable citizens with contributions to make. For us, as a country, to recognise their potential and value, instead of this punitive approach.'

The TPV policy is perceived by the ABS community as a discriminatory policy. 'We feel (on behalf of membership) that the TPV policy is another layer of structural racism against people of Arabic background and Islamic Middle Eastern origin.'

Ways of addressing this have included: undertaking research to raise awareness of the effects of the TPV status on refugees and the community; writing to various ministers highlighting the need to abolish this policy; conducting forums and discussions on the government's treatment of refugees; participation in broader community campaigns; engaging in public awareness education; and supporting TPVs to develop skills to advocate on their own behalf.

In 2004, VASS lost its Commonwealth Settlement Support Scheme funding which had allowed it to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate settlement services to the ASB community. This was due largely, in the view of one worker, to the work they were doing with TPV holders which the government refused to fund. The irony of VASS's operational structure is that the services it provides are in response to an identified community need; to address that need it has to obtain funding, and to obtain funding it needs to demonstrate that the need exists. The advocacy conducted by VASS to raise awareness of the needs of TPV holders is having the result of further reducing its funding, and forcing the organisation to divert its resources into the constant struggle for financing. The worker describes it as a 'huge administrative burden to keep putting in submissions for small sums of money'.

For VASS, service provision and advocacy are inextricably tied together. Ability to provide services is dependent upon funding – 'capacity equals resources'.

Without secured funding, it is difficult for VASS to predict whether or not it will be able to continue to provide services. However, the capacity to provide services is also dependent upon government policy and legislation:

'If they are to continue to stay on TPVs, then we will not be in a position to alleviate their anxiety for the future, other than by offering moral support. To put it more succinctly: 'We can't give them permanent visas.' If they continue to be on TPV and we don't get any more resources, we will be in a difficult situation in being able to support them.'

Key factors of organisational resilience

The success of VASS's service provision can be attributed to a range of factors, from the commitment of individual workers to its organisational structure and ethos. The key factors can be grouped into three categories: personnel; activities; organisational practice.

Personnel

- Individual qualities of workers: Workers displayed a high level of commitment to the organisation and to the people they were working with, often providing assistance well beyond the hours or scope of their paid work. Workers have received professional recognition from other community services, and are recognised as leaders in their field of work.

- Personal networks: All of the workers, both paid and unpaid, were described as being 'known in the community'. A factor in the success of VASS is undoubtedly the personalised nature of the contact between 'worker' and 'client'. Rather than establishing a relationship of authority, VASS is able to build on an assumed basis of trust.

- Professional networks: The workers are competent professionals, with a good deal of experience and knowledge in their field. Well developed contacts and networks with other service providers minimises effort wasted in duplicating services that could be obtained more effectively elsewhere.

- Language skills and cultural relevance: All workers are bi-lingual and bi-cultural. During the early phases of settlement particularly, the ability to communicate with the TPV holders in their own language has been crucial, particularly when navigating the Australian bureaucracy. This sets VASS apart from all other agencies providing services to TPV holders.

- Diversity of membership: VASS's membership represents a wide range of people who identify as being of an Arabic–speaking background. The membership of VASS encompasses substantial cultural, religious, ethnic and regional diversities and can provide an appropriate response to all its clients.

Activities

- Range of programs and services: The variety of services provided by VASS includes health, cultural, community, recreational, educational and social services. This enables it to cater to the diverse needs of the client group and to provide them with a comprehensive service.

- Strategic targeting of services: Working in schools is one way used to reach families. One example was given where educational programs, including drug education, settlement information and computer training, were run through a range of secondary schools in areas where there is a high number of families holding a TPV.

- Research projects: By undertaking research projects, VASS is able to tailor its services more effectively to the needs of its clients.

- Advocacy: Establishing connections with key stakeholders including Local, State and Federal Government ensures open channels of communication and greater mutual understanding.

- Community-based activities: By participating in a range of community events, VASS forges a strong bond between its clients and the communities in which they live. Events in which the TPV group have been involved include a Refugee Welcome Day, a memorial for families lost at sea, the Annual Harvest Festival at CERES, and local multicultural festivals. Engaging with the community at this level provides a positive presence of Arabic-speaking people in the community and helps to foster a tolerance of diversity.

Organisational practice

- Diversity of funding: A diversity of funding sources insures VASS against having to cut programs and services. VASS currently receives funding from Local, State and Federal Governments, as well as philanthropic trusts and has recently been successful in obtaining corporate sponsorship for the first time.

- Work practices: Creative use of time and resources stretches limited means. Networking and liaising with other agencies enables workers to enhance the services they already offer. Being able to speak the same language as their clients has also been a very important asset for reaching and communicating with TPV holders.

- Relationship with external stakeholders: Workers at VASS maintain good relationships with funding bodies and other service providers. They have an ongoing supportive relationship with Local and State Governments particularly, which maintains their profile as the peak support service for people from an Arabic-speaking background. Positive relationships with other agencies helps VASS workers to link clients to services which they are unable to provide themselves such as legal aid, English language tuition and material aid.

- Organisational ethos: A belief that support and respect are crucial to individual wellbeing makes clients feel valued and gives them dignity and respect. This is particularly important to TPV holders who may feel unwelcome in Australia.

Limitations and Challenges

Some limitations faced by VASS in providing services to TPV holders are inherent in the organisation and its operational structures. Others, namely restrictions on funding and resources, are beyond the immediate control of VASS.

Organisational factors

The diversity of the community is both a strength and a challenge. There is a need to be sensitive and aware of cultural issues, and differences in the needs and expectations of clients. For instance, within the Iraqi community, clients may be Christian or Muslim, Catholic or Orthodox, Shia or Sunni, Kurdish, Arabic, Chaldean, Assyrian and so on. VASS attempts to work with the diversity of needs and tailors the programs and, as much as possible, match workers and clients in support groups to provide a comfortable and supportive environment. For instance, a separate group has been established for the Chaldean group to meet their linguistic and cultural needs.

Initially, the immediate settlement needs of TPV holders required very intensive individual assistance that was carried out largely by a legion of volunteers. Currently there is little use of volunteers. The workers assert that the changing nature of TPV holders' needs are such that cannot be provided adequately by volunteers (such as case management), or are of a nature that VASS is unable to provide directly. It will therefore refer clients to other services. English language tuition and legal advice are two such services.

The time and workload of VASS's paid workers are stretched beyond reasonable capacity. Descriptions of the manager's work, both by other managers and by herself, would be unthinkable for most people within the course of their employment, although she is very adept at finding ways of mitigating her workload and providing services. For example, due to funding cuts her position was reduced from two days per week to one. To compensate for this shortfall, she attempts to work collaboratively with other organisations:

> 'We try to get around it by working with other services. By working collaboratively you are able to tap into other resources that you cannot otherwise meet. For instance, Thornbury Women's Neighbourhood House provides educational courses and support groups etcetera. We arrange the group for them and they provide the English tuition. So we have been doing a lot of bridging work and linking the refugee community into these projects.'

Where paid or unpaid workers are overworked, the quality of the service and relationship between worker and client can be detrimentally altered. The paid worker noted that many of her clients were 'in desperate need of accurate information and clarification' and thus required ample use of her time. While individual case-work is more time consuming than group work, she found that she lacked the time and resources to run group information sessions:

> 'Limited resources are putting more pressure on me and my clients. Initially, (one year ago) I had the resources to meet the needs by doing group work (taking them all at once to necessary appointments). Now, I have to do it on a one-to-one basis, and I don't have the time or financial resources to do this.'

Despite being overworked, the paid worker volunteered some of her leisure time to assist with her clients' needs. Thus she found herself working on her days off and on weekends. She also provided services that are outside the scope of her job mandate. It was not unusual, for example, for her to provide interpreting services between her clients and other service providers when required:

'I needed to work with him to call and make an appointment with the lawyer to fill in the immigration form. Then I need to take him to this appointment. But now because I do not have access to transport through the council bus I can no longer do this. They have had to find their own way, but they are struggling with this, and I find that they get lost. In desperation, they go to Centrelink and I get a call from them to see if I can help.'

Meeting the many diverse needs of TPV clients was difficult without adequate time or resources. The paid worker's description of the process of attempting to secure a bank loan, for example, highlighted the intensively time consuming nature of meeting certain needs, as well as the complex interplay of factors which could hinder these needs being met, such as the unavailability of translating services:

'For instance, you need three to four hours to complete the form and to take it to the Commonwealth Bank for approval. To get approval, they need to supply and therefore collect appropriate documentation such as an income statement. Once approved, you need to take it to a Migrant Resource Centre in order to be given the money. A worker needs to go with them to the MRC as they need a guarantor before they can be given this money. They also need to provide quotes of the model and price of the goods that they wish to purchase. In order to do this they need a worker to go with them to find the items (for instance a fridge) that they need. If they go themselves to do these things, they struggle with the language. There are no interpreters at the bank and they don't use the Translating and Interpreting services because of involved costs. I don't have the time to meet this need with every client.'

While the commitment and energy of the paid worker are remarkable and laudable, her work practices run the risk of being unsustainable, either on a personal level, or for another worker who may be faced with unrealistic expectations by clients or from management. Furthermore, working in situations of high emotional stress can lead to burnout and/or vicarious traumatisation, particularly when the worker is inherently unable to offer solutions to their clients needs. The support worker explains:

'I feel helpless because I am unable to reassure them. I am unable to offer them any guarantees. I can't even give them a sense of hope. Before, I used to say "'hopefully soon we will have good news, etcetera.'" But now I am even unable to offer them this sense of hope.'

If not carefully managed, worker stress has the potential to lead to illness, absences from work or resignation which can all have a detrimental effect on the organisation. Services may not be provided, and the organisation may face additional sick leave or compensation payments, or be faced with recruitment and training costs for new workers.

There is little formal organisational support or debriefing for workers. Workers are largely expected to draw on their own resources and external contacts, or rely upon peer support for debriefing. One manager says of the worker: 'She hasn't had regular debriefing, but she is a resourceful person and has been able to carry on with her work regardless of all her challenges.' This is no doubt a tribute to the worker's strength and capacities and has been true enough to date, but it raises several possible concerns. One is the organisational culture

and attitude of management to their workers. There is no doubt that resources are stretched, but although this represents an understandable economy, many organisations have discovered to their detriment that it can be more cost effective in the long run to provide adequate debriefing, supervision and stress management to their employees.

The organisation has insufficient infrastructure support. There is no funding allocated for the manager's position or administrative assistance, and VASS does not have a budget for infrastructure and support. This is a common problem in community organisations where funding is usually provided for direct service provision, and administrative support is expected to be extracted from that funding. It can be a difficult dilemma to allocate money for infrastructure when demand for direct services is already far outstripping the ability to supply it.

External Factors

VASS is unable to meet all the needs of their client group. Despite the fact that demand has decreased since arrivals slowed in 2001, there still remains a higher demand for services than VASS is able to meet, and existing clients often require ongoing and more intensive support. The inability to provide all the services required is largely a result of insufficient funding.

Single males were identified as needing extra support. Initially a worker was able to run group programs for single men on a TPV but when funding ran out the program was discontinued. The remaining worker was unable to take over the group as she was already overloaded, and furthermore it would be more appropriate for a male worker to be the group facilitator. VASS has expended a great deal of effort trying to obtain funding for such a project but have been unsuccessful to date.

> '[We] have tried for years to get through Department of Human Services and FACS to get funding to support Arabic males, including TPV males, but so far no luck. We lobbied, researched, wrote proposals, met with Federal and State representatives. A lot of time went into lobbying – over 1.5 years. We almost made it, but not in the end. It was so disheartening.'

VASS's employment program needs to be expanded to cater for the needs of TPV holders. Currently the program is restricted to young people under 25 years old, while most of the men holding TPVs are between 25 and 32 years of age.

Women are in need of recreational activities. Since losing the use of the Local Government bus it has become even more difficult to provide such activities. Organising recreational activities for women raises particular logistical problems as many of them also have children, which requires more planning and more budgeting.

Health needs, both emotional and physical are under-serviced in the TPV client group.

The Federal Government does not provide funding for work with TPV holders. As such, organisations like VASS must rely on other sources of income. Local Government has proven to be financially supportive of the communities within their municipalities, and philanthropic trusts have also contributed. While State Governments do not differentiate between TPV holders and others, VASS has

been unsuccessful in obtaining money from them to work specifically with TPV holders. One worker suggests that their reluctance may be due to the fact that '[t]hey don't see that they should fund settlement because they see it as the responsibility of the Commonwealth'.

The TPV policy and its inherent restrictions limit the practical support that organisations like VASS can offer. Workers cannot alleviate the greatest needs of refugees holding a TPV – permanence and the right to family reunion. The bottom line is that while refugees remain on TPVs, there is little that service providers can do for them except offer moral support and whatever practical support they are able to muster.

Permanent residence is the most crucial need of TPV holders. Without it, they are unable to make long term plans and to build their lives. 'This uncertainty is clouding their future. They want their citizenship status to be finalised so that they can get on with their lives.' Until permanency is achieved, TPV holders will continue to live with the demoralising effects of uncertainty. It is beyond the capacity of a support service such as VASS to change the legislative regime that denies refugees this right:

> 'Once this need is met, then their other needs will take care of themselves. Once they have permanency, they can access their other needs. They then won't have the mental health issues that they currently have resulting from the uncertainties in their lives. This need for certainty is specifically unique to them. Otherwise, they will have the same needs as other refugees, such as employment, housing, education, etcetera.'

The TPV policy also restricts the right of its bearers to family reunion. Most refugees on a temporary visa will have left wives or husbands, children, parents or other family members in their country of origin or in a third country such as Iran or Indonesia. Often they have been left in situations of relative danger or insecurity while the strongest member of the family takes the responsibility of finding a place of safety for the family. The restrictions on the TPV prevent its holder from bringing family to Australia and from the right to re-enter Australia if they leave to visit their family. As one worker points out, while the family member who enters Australia in search of refuge has taken on the role of ensuring family stability, they themselves are not stable as a result of the TPV policy:

> 'It is really, really sad. They sit here and cry at Eid time. You give them options that you yourself know aren't going to help them. Like, 'you can write a letter to a Member of Parliament', or you talk to them about how they can cope. It is very disheartening. They sometimes ask me, "what am I doing at this time that is special with my kids?" It is so hard for them and hard for you as a worker, knowing that you can't make a difference to their lives other than hearing them crying hard and loud.'

As time passes, the need for family reunion becomes more pressing. This is reflected in the nature of services VASS is providing. Immediate settlement needs such as housing and employment are becoming less prominent than providing psychological support, and as families grow the separation of families becomes more acute. The workers at VASS believe that once permanency and family reunion are satisfied, most other issues will resolve themselves. VASS is ill equipped to provide adequate support for the psychological deterioration they witness. Living on a temporary visa is

inherently demoralizing for refugees and the longer they are denied permanent residence the worse they become. The worker described the de-motivating and demoralising effect she sees on the people she works with:

> 'They are lost – in limbo. They had hoped to learn English, find a job, learn new skills, create a better future for their children. But now they are finding it difficult to concentrate. Even with learning the English language, they are no longer eager as they are not certain that there is any point ... They are now experiencing more difficulties with concentration and motivation ...Before, they had settlement needs, but now they have no hope. Their 'in limbo' status has also made it difficult for them to establish themselves because of fears that they will be sent back.'

In addition to the insecure conditions from which they have fled and the harsh treatment they have received from the government since arriving in Australia, 'Islamic TPV holders' have faced further threats to their physical safety and psychological well-being as a result of 'escalating tensions overseas'. Inevitably the children absorb the prevailing atmosphere:

> 'Before they seemed happy, relieved to be in Australia but now they listen to the news about home and feel the stresses of their parents. They fear that what they have been given (toys, etc) will be taken away.'

There is a strong sense of community spirit and members of the community provide a great deal of support for one another, but a consequence of close ties is that the problems of others become another source of stress. Witnessing the ill health of others, or the rejection of other people's visa applications, contributes to their own psychological deterioration. The rejection of the further visa application is not an individual event, but one that is affecting the whole community. At one point news arrived of 30 rejections at the one time. It is wearing down the whole community and leaving them 'feeling devastated'. The impact on their emotional health is not hard to predict.

While the granting of permanent protection would ultimately be the only measure to address the root cause of these problems, the situation calls for a reappraisal of the support needs of people affected. 'Needing to meet additional counselling and crisis support needs as a result of the uncertain future they face, was not something that we expected to happen.' The support worker tries to alleviate their stress by engaging them in outings 'to give them a change of scenery', but is hindered by lack of resources. She admits that this is a meagre response to the problem.

Obtaining sufficient funding is an ongoing problem. Current levels of funding allow VASS to meet some, but not all, demands. The part-time support worker would be better able to meet the needs of her clients if she was working full-time:

> 'Clients find it hard to understand that she is not working full-time and she has to put in a lot of voluntary time to respond to calls outside of her working hours, including weekends. We wish we had more money to pay for all of her working hours'.

The threat of non-funding is always a factor in service provision. There are no guarantees that any program will be refunded. Short term, project based funding has been invaluable for VASS to provide the services they do, but to

be able to plan long term provision of services it really needs recurrent funding. Short term funding makes it impossible to plan ahead.

Intrinsically tied to lack of funding is a lack of resources to properly do the work. The support worker draws the distinction between the work of VASS and that of a local council, where groups have access to transport, interpreting services and catering when they meet up for a session. The availability of these resources to VASS clients would better assist them to access activities. Losing the use of a bus provided by the local council has been a blow to VASS. Without the availability of transport (such as a bus), there are more demands on the worker's time, people are less likely to get involved in social activities and this impacts on their ability to mix and socialise with other people, and contributes to their isolation. Social activities are important for them to feel safe and comfortable and reduce isolation. Many people are fearful of using public transport because they are either unfamiliar with the public transport system, concerned about getting lost, or are fearful of harassment and attacks:

> 'After September 11, they have been living in fear and have been afraid to use public transport. They fear being abused or attacked as they have heard of cases where this has happened, but some of the women in the group have also been verbally abused. Therefore there is a need for them to have information about their rights if they experience vilification, but VASS can't afford to send them to these information sessions. It is very important for them to know that the government and the justice system are able to protect them and there are services that they can go to for to for support and assistance.'

Strategies and solutions

The limitations faced by VASS – many of which are imposed on them by external factors – has resulted in it devising creative work practices to work around the difficulties imposed.

Collaboration

Initially, VASS attempted to meet all the needs of TPV refugees by itself but it soon realised that it needed to change its approach if it wanted to represent its clients effectively. Working collaboratively with a range of other organisations was the clearest way of making a substantial difference without a significant outlay of resources or of having to find more money. The personal contacts and networks of the workers are an important resource. Workers are experienced professionals who continue to build on existing relationships with relevant organisations and strong networks in the community.

VASS works collaboratively with a number of other organisations including those which offer support specifically for refugees on a TPV, including: the TPV Support Network, Al-Amel TPV Holders' Association and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre; mainstream community services, including Thornbury Neighbourhood House and various community Health Centres; and Local Government. Collaboration takes a number of different forms, including liaison, skill sharing, resource sharing, and referral arrangements.

Sharing skills and resource between VASS and other organisations enables more effective use of both agencies' resources. For instance, VASS has an arrangement with one local council where client groups are combined, and

the two organisations contribute according to their resources, whether that be providing meeting space, use of the bus, catering, mobile phone expenses, or translation and language skills.

The part-time support worker is also able to combine her work with VASS with projects from her other employment, to make up for shortfalls in resources in both. In one instance, dental check-ups for children between 2 and five years of age provided by a Community Health Centre was combined with information sessions from the Equal Opportunity Commission for the parents on where to seek support for racial vilification. Had the sessions not been combined there would not have been funding for two sets of catering, transport and venue.

Referral to other services prevents VASS from duplicating services provided elsewhere, particularly where these services are acknowledged to be outside their scope of expertise. VASS regularly links clients to services that it is not able to provide, such as health and employment services.

VASS acts as a peak organisation for groups working with refugees holding a TPV, such as the Iraqi Refugee Support Organisation, Al-Ghadeer Association, the Iraqi Forum Organisation, and Salaam Australia. VASS creates both linkages between the organisations, and links to mainstream services. By resourcing these organisations, VASS assists them to provide services to TPV holders which may otherwise fall to VASS to provide.

Diversity of funding sources

VASS's funding comes from a variety of sources. Although this is partly in response to necessity, it is also a sound management strategy as it diffuses the risk of being de-funded.

Currently VASS receives funding from Federal Government, State Government, Local Government, philanthropic trusts and private business, and they continue to seek new and alternative sources of funds. For instance, through lobbying, VASS has succeeded in convincing two new Local Governments to commit funds to projects. The benefits of increased or diverse funding, however, may need to be balanced against the time and energy required to submit such proposals. As a great deal of the manager's time is spent writing submissions and funding proposals, in practical terms, this may not be a choice available in the future.

Research

VASS conducted research into the needs of TPV holders at a very early stage of service provision. Identification of the needs of its clients group enabled it to tailor its service provision to the most effective means of delivery. VASS has an ongoing partnership with Deakin University and continues to conduct targeted research on the needs of asylum seekers.

Grassroots contacts

VASS's unique position as the peak organisation for the ASB community in Melbourne means that it has direct grassroots contact with almost all of the TPV community in Metropolitan Melbourne. Weekly contact with VASS TPV group and regular case work services provides an awareness of the changing needs of the groups in the community and to assess its ability to respond.

Information sharing with clients

Group information sessions have the potential to reduce the individual casework load of workers. VASS has run information sessions about existing services and the Australian education, legal and housing system. It also paid the registration fee for some TPV holders to attend an education forum run by another organisation.

Strategic use of ethnic media has provided an effective way for VASS to transmit information to the refugee community.

The workers have also spent time informing clients about the nature of services VASS offers and the limitations on what can be provided. Initially, TPV holders were misinformed about the type of assistance that was available from VASS, and it had to be explained that a lot of the support that they were getting was from volunteers. A clear mutual understanding of the availability and limitations of services reduces stress for both the workers and for the clients.

Staff Support and Training

All workers have received crisis counselling training to enable them to look after themselves and their clients. Mediation training has been offered to some workers who work with refugees. External counselling may be available to workers if necessary, although this does not take place as a matter of course due to limited resources. Staff members engage in peer support and debriefing as a way around budget constraints.

Advocacy

Advocating on behalf of clients ensures better outcomes for them. For instance, VASS has been engaging in advocacy around accessing the rental market as this has been a particular problem for refugees holding a TPV. Their temporary status makes many real estate agents reluctant to give them access because of the uncertainty of their stay.

VASS has also been advocating for permanent visas for TPV holders and trying to raise awareness on the lack of certainty in their lives. As much of the work with TPV holders stems from their impermanent state, a permanent visa would relieve much of the associated workload for agencies such as VASS.

4.3.4 Work by volunteers

VASS has relied heavily on volunteer support, particularly for work with TPV holders that had not been funded elsewhere. Volunteers have enabled VASS to provide a larger number, and a greater range, of services to more people than would otherwise have been possible.

History of volunteer involvement

When first released from detention on temporary visas, many Arabic speaking refugees (particularly Iraqis) approached VASS for assistance. With no paid workers to cope with the influx, volunteer labour was integral in providing settlement support for the new arrivals. Approximately 20 volunteers were involved in the initial effort, and VASS coped well with the demand, despite the absence of management support to manage the volunteers. The State Government provided some funding to assist with settlement.

The regular volunteers were chosen because of their contacts with the community and other services. While they were both Iraqi and non-Iraqi, most came from an Arabic-speaking background and had well established links with the community.

When State Government funding ran out at the end of 2001, some local councils provided VASS with funding to continue settlement work. VASS successfully applied through the Community Grants scheme to employ a worker.

Volunteers are assigned specific roles such as helping with transport, or interpreting when legal cases are being drawn up. Within the Social Support Program at VASS, some volunteers are matched with TPV holders for one-on-one support. One volunteer, who was mostly involved in the TPV project, spoke with us of his experiences volunteering with VASS.

While many aspects of the VASS volunteer experience is shared with volunteers from other organisations working with TPV holders, there are also some substantial differences. These can possibly be attributed to sharing the same cultural or linguistic background, or migration history. A politicised sense of outrage was noticeably absent in the VASS workers, despite it being clear that they believed the TPV policy had a detrimental effect on their clients. There appeared to be a strong empathy with the TPV holders rather than the feeling of personal responsibility for government policy that was evident in other non-government organisations.

Volunteer involvement at VASS specifically with TPV refugees, began when the first temporary visa holders began arriving in Melbourne. The level of volunteer participation fluctuated with the number of arrivals and consequently lessened as the number of TPV holders released from detention began to wane. One volunteer, Mohamed, started work with VASS on the Refugee project in 2001 and apart from a short break, continues to volunteer his time. This is a longer period of time than average compared to the other volunteers surveyed, possibly because the need was more apparent within the Arabic-speaking community at an earlier point in time.

The work performed by volunteers at VASS has decreased in recent times as the numbers of refugees coming out of the detention centres has slowed down. The type of assistance required by clients changes with the length of time they are in Australia, and this work possibly does not lend itself as easily to volunteer work.

Motivations for volunteering and work satisfaction

Most of the volunteers at VASS come from the Arabic-speaking community, and have been members of VASS or an affiliated organisation. Most are migrants, and some have been refugees themselves. In Mohamed's case, he had been doing a course at AMES when somebody informed him about VASS and its work. He completed a placement there and stayed on as a volunteer after this ended, choosing to work on the refugee project because he was a refugee himself in Egypt before migrating to Australia, and felt empathy for their plight and understood their needs. Whilst in Cairo he also worked with Sudanese refugees and brings his extensive personal and professional experience with him to his work at VASS. He was also motivated by a desire to help people, and because he saw it as a way to 'build friendship relationships and to get to know other people.'

Volunteers at VASS were less likely to speak directly of the Australian immigration policy as a motivating factor for their involvement in volunteer work, and although Mohamed spoke of the hardship faced by refugees – in particular the circumstances of those on temporary visas – as a salient consideration, the moral indignation expressed by volunteers working in the other organisations was largely absent.

Volunteers at VASS gained satisfaction from a sense that they were able to help people, particularly in a time of perceived crisis. Mohamad said:

> 'When you see the sadness of these people, you feel affected inside. But at last when you make sure that everything is done okay, they start to smile and the children start to relax. You feel that at least for these people there is an end to the miseries they were living with. You feel very happy. Yeah, it's a feeling you can't express. You feel that you have done something good.'

Unlike the other volunteers surveyed, there was no ambivalence about whether or not the service needed to exist. There appears to be an assumption that there will always be a need for culturally and linguistically appropriate services which may change in nature over time but will always exist.

Like the volunteers surveyed in other organisations, the major sources of frustration for workers at VASS was the lack of available resources and the emotional strain of being unable to provide clients with what they most need. Mohamed acknowledged the limitations in the support that can be offered to people coming out of detention, and the frustration from not being able to offer enough. For workers at VASS, the close connection they have with the community has meant that the boundaries of what is considered 'work' can be blurred. Mohamad spoke of being called for advice at 10 or 11 o'clock in the evening.

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Services provided and resources available to perform role

Mohamad performed a variety of tasks in his role as a volunteer at VASS. Like other volunteers, he performs a number of general tasks such as administration and driving the bus. However, as an Arabic speaker he is also called upon to act as a translator, particularly for people preparing legal documents.

Neither the paid or unpaid workers at VASS spoke of their role as a social connection between refugees and the wider community.

Funding and resources were mentioned frequently by workers at VASS as an impediment to doing their job properly: 'you feel happy when you find that what you need in order to do your job is available.' Specifically, the decrease in availability of the community bus was frequently mentioned as a source of stress.

Volunteers were under-resourced in their roles and did not receive a great deal of organisational support, largely as a result of a lack of resources which VASS has at its disposal. Mohamad raised several examples of where organisational support was missing or minimal, and remarked that as a volunteer you need:

> '... to be supported and backed up by your organisation and others working in the field. This is very important as it gives you confidence and if you have a problem that you know there is someone to help you find a solution.'

For instance, financial reimbursement was not provided for volunteers who were doing a lot of travelling, which may place undue pressure on volunteers who may not themselves be particularly financially comfortable. No debriefing was available to volunteers to discuss problems encountered and to help them find solutions. Mohamad was concerned that he was not covered by insurance while working for VASS and pointed out that 'insurance of a volunteer is important. If you take [a client] to an appointment and have an accident, who is going to cover you?'

Mohamad also suggested that ongoing evaluation of the project would be beneficial to improvethe efficacy of service delivery and to provide feedback to workers.

Expertise was not an issue for Mohamed, as he had significant experience in helping people with resettlement needs through his work with Sudanese refugees in Cairo, and prior to that as a General Manager for transport and relief aid for families affected by drought and floods.

Difficulties for TPV holders

In the experience of workers at VASS, TPV holders have difficulty accessing many services, including English language tuition, financial support, Medicare and other health needs, and accommodation. In many instances the problems were exacerbated by the cultural dislocation involved in arriving in a new country with unfamiliar systems and bureaucracies. Mohamad explained that:

> 'There is a problem that these people come out and really don't know English, they don't know anyone. They don't know how to go out, they

don't have money (although Centrelink gives them some. They also don't know how to go to the shops to buy their groceries.'

Basic everyday activities become difficult, particularly when paperwork or administration is involved.

Many of the clients, particularly the children, have emotional and psychological support needs which are not being met:

'These people always come from very far detention centres. When they come they are very tired and you look at the faces of the children and you can see they are frightened. Definitely, there is a big effect on them in being in a detention centre. You can see it in their faces.'

Ability to respond to TPV holders' needs

VASS's strength lies in its ability to provide the daily acculturation support needed by new arrivals to familiarise themselves with an alien environment. As many of the workers – both paid and unpaid – have themselves been refugees or migrants, they have an understanding of the difficulties faced on arrival in a new country, and of the type of assistance most needed by their clients. Qualities which are helpful in a worker include:

'Patience and an ability to understand that you are working with people who have real problems coming from very different situations in their countries, and their travel here by sea and their experience in the detention centres for a long time. So they have come with a very bad experience and the volunteer needs to be able to understand that.'

Experience, language and culture were not cited as difficulties VASS workers had in responding to the needs of TPV holders.

They are also able to act as a bridge between their clients and mainstream services by linking them to services which VASS does not directly provide.

One difficulty that presented was the ability to provide assistance for psychological support needs.

'Actually we don't have these services, except to talk to them in a friendly way and try and let them feel that you are empathising with them. We are very busy trying to give them [their parents] the main essentials, such as finalising Centrelink, bank accounts and Medicare. This kept us very busy.'

Improving service accessibility

VASS networks effectively with other organisations to provide services for TPV holders, however there is always the potential for greater involvement of other agencies. In particular, Mohamad expressed disappointment that other Arabic and/or Muslim organisations had not in his opinion shown support or assisted TPV holders, despite his belief that some were financially resourced to do so.

Exploring alternative means of information provision could allow VASS to service its clients' needs more effectively. Providing written information was one suggestion made, although with the acknowledgement that not

everyone would be able to access these. A radio program was also mooted as an alternative. In particular, Mohamad believed TPV holders needed more assistance on how to find work and how to buy a house.

Effect of TPV policy on organisational capacity and volunteers

The advent of the TPV policy created a significant increase in demand for VASS's services, particularly when the policy was first introduced. There was a sense of responsibility to the new arrivals expressed by the workers at VASS, and a sense that the work simply had to be done. Mohamed expressed the view that:

> 'Not every organisation can do the initial contact work that VASS was doing ... [VASS] was able at least to help these people by giving them the main services and helping them with their first steps to settle in this country, which they really need ... what VASS did was a very good job, and at least it raised an Arabic flag.'

One impact of the TPV policy was that VASS lost its settlement support funding from DIMIA when it became apparent that it was assisting TPV holders. This has obviously affected the service it is able to provide to both the TPV holders and its other clients.

The future of volunteer involvement at VASS

Opinions diverge about the future of volunteer involvement with TPV holders at VASS. There is agreement that the needs of the client group is changing. Most asylum seekers who have arrived without valid documentation have either been refused asylum or already released from detention on a temporary visa. There are few new arrivals and the immediate settlement needs of existing clients have mostly been met. The needs of those already here are changing over time:

> 'Most of them get used to the community in Australia and find their way. In time they get accommodation and start working. Some of them have bought houses. Yes, in three years they have purchased a house, and some of them have good skills and have gotten good jobs and are doing very well. I met one of my clients a few months ago and he told me he is now a supervisor in a factory nearby.'

There is still a need for services, particularly English language tuition, legal services and case management. One worker believed that their current needs were beyond the capacity of volunteers. English classes and legal services are being provided through other agencies with whom VASS links their clients. Moreover, volunteers involve considerable coordination and management which is beyond the current capacity of VASS. Another worker, however, disagreed as she saw a different role emerging for volunteers. She gave the example of a leadership training session recently run by volunteers at VASS, which trained TPV holders on how to advocate on their own behalf.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this research project show that the TPV policy as implemented in Australia has generated considerable social and economic challenges for both individual asylum seekers, NGOs and the relevant service providers. In terms of their economic and material conditions, TPV holders who participated in this study reported a relatively low rate of access to settlement services. Across all three phases of the research, the quality of services being provided to TPV holders, including health, Medicare, employment, housing, material aid and income support were generally considered inadequate by survey respondents Employment services were consistently rated most poorly. The perception of services improved over time (37 percent of respondents considered housing services to be 'poor' in the first survey, while only 12 percent considered this service to be 'poor' in the third survey), although several types of services – most notably employment and material aid – were still rated poorly two years later. Considering the vital nature of such services to the lives of TPV holders, the longitudinal improvements could be regarded as not significant enough to indicate that the services generally satisfied the TPV holders' settlement needs.

In terms of social conditions, contact within the participants' own ethnic community and with the wider Australian community increased significantly with the length of time spent in the community. After having spent one year in the community, significant changes were observable with regard to bridging social capital. By the end of the second year of living in the community, the level of social capital enjoyed by TPV holders appeared to be considerably high. Participants reported significantly higher levels of connectedness within their own ethnic communities and the wider Australian society. Despite their uncertain futures, TPV holders demonstrated a spirit of resilience by developing a strong sense of social connectedness and social capital.

A significant source of stress for TPV holders was the prospect of repatriation which in turn affected their overall coping capacity. This was not surprising considering the high degree of instability in Iraq and the slim chance of improvement in the near future. Participants did not believe Iraq to be a safe place, did not think it safe for return, and felt anxious about their families left behind. These feelings did not diminish over time.

In terms of emotional and psychological wellbeing, participants' demonstrated disturbing levels of stress, anxiety and hopelessness about the future. Many felt that their families were safe and socially included within Australian society, yet they experienced loneliness and had significant concerns about the uncertainty of their future, particularly regarding the threat of repatriation.

Perhaps reinforcing these findings are the outcomes of comparative surveys of ley organisations working with TPV holders in Victoria and Queensland who indicated that the TPV policy had a negative effect on their organisations. Community organisations such as VASS, have sent their limited organisational resources stretching to breaking point as they struggled to meet the pressing needs of TPV holders.

The findings in this report illustrate the social, economic and psychological cost of limited and diminished forms of protection. TPV holders reported disturbing levels of stress, anxiety and feelings of hopelessness. Even their sense of safety in being in Australia was gradually undermined by becoming less hopeful about their future. On a more positive level, one of the unexpected findings of this study is the high level of contacts and relationships TPV holders were able to build despite their uncertain legal situations. Interestingly, this bridging form of social capital increased significantly with the length of time spent in the community, though cases of loneliness and social isolation were also reported. In fact, by the end of second year of living in the community TPV holders participating in this study reported high levels of connectedness with both their own ethnic communities and the wider Australian society.

Yet, whether in relation to service provision or with regards to economic and educational outcomes, this project's longitudinal findings show that the TPV regime engendered deterioration of individuals' living conditions and their ability to fully integrate into Australian society.

This is ironic as Australia was one of the first countries to ratify the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention) (Edwards, 2003: 194). The evolution of asylum policies in these last few years is notably influenced by international trends and events. The Australian government argued that the deterrence measures introduced in Australia in recent years are justified because the 'boat people' are essentially 'queue jumpers' who bypassed the available avenues offered through the resettlement program. This argument is amplified by the post September 11 security concerns where suggestions have been made that stopping the 'illegal entrants' would help prevent the infiltration of potential terrorists.

International comparative analyses show us that even traditional immigration countries such as Australia, the UK and the USA can be as hostile to asylum seekers as other Western countries (e.g., Denmark – see USCR, 2003). Though the specific policies of Australia appear to be harsher that other countries, the difference is only one of degree. The most revealing aspect of Australia's radical asylum approach, in comparison to other countries, is that so few asylum seekers were needed to provoke it (the US, Germany, the UK receive on an annual basis tens of thousands of asylum applications).

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Appendices:

TPV Survey T3 (Draft)

Dear Participant

We hope you will fill out this short survey as your ideas and experiences are important to us. We are from Deakin University and the Victorian Arabic Social Services and are interested in the experiences of Temporary Protection Visa holders. Your name is not required and therefore your answers cannot be identified with any particular person.

Please answer all of the questions by putting a tick in the relevant box next to each question. Thank you, we welcome your participation.

Section One   **Personal Profile**

1. Have you taken part in the first or second TPV survey ?
        YES - first ( )   YES – second ( )   NO ( )

2. Gender: Male: ( )   Female: ( )

3. Year of birth is   19 _ _

4. What is your level of education: Primary:( )
                    Secondary: ( )
                    Tertiary: ( )
                    Other: ( )
5. Country of birth:

_____

6. What was your occupation in your country of origin?

_____

7. What languages do you speak?

_____

8. Family status: Married ( ) Single ( ) Separated ( )   Divorced ( )
        De-facto ( ) Widow ( )   Never married ( ) Other ( )

9. Is your spouse with you in Australia? Yes ( ) **if yes go to question 11**
            No ( )

10. Which country is your spouse residing in?

_____

11. Do you have children?   Yes ( ) How many? ____
            No ( ) **if no go to question 14**

12. Are all your children with you in Australia? Yes ( ) **if yes go to question 14**
            No ( )

13. In which country do your children live?

_____

14. Why couldn't you bring your children/spouse with you?

_____

15. Do   you   have   any   relatives   in   Melbourne?
_____

16. What   date   did   you   arrive   in   Australia?
_____

17. Which detention center did you come from?

_____

Section Two	**Repatriation and Iraq**

18. 'I am worried that new changes will remove the choice to stay in Australia.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

19. 'I think Iraq is a safe place to be at the moment.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

20. 'I would feel safe returning to Iraq.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

21. 'I am anxious about my family in Iraq'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

22. 'I would prefer to be in Iraq than in Australia.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

23. From the words below tick the ones that describe how the possibility of the government's offer of voluntary repatriation makes you feel.

Good ( )   Fair ( )   Bad ( )   Traumatic ( )

Stressful ( )　　Calm/Relaxing ( )Lonely ( )　　Frightening ( )

Worried ( )　　Distressing ( )　　Powerless ( )　　Bored ( )

Punished ( )　　Uncertain ( )　　Failure ( )　　Peaceful ( )

Re-application

24. Has your TPV expired?　　　　Yes ( )
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　No ( )
　　　　　　　　　If no then got to question 26

25. How long ago did your visa expire?　＿＿＿＿＿ (Months)

26. Have you applied for another type of visa?　Yes ( )
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　No ( )
　　　　　　　　　If no then got to question 29.

27. What type of visa is this?　Permanent ( )　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (type)
　　　　　Temporary ( )　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ (type)

28. Who is keeping you informed about your visa application?
DIMIA　　　　　　( )
Legal Centre　　　( )
Community Centre　　　( )
VASS　　　　( )
Other　　　　( )　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

29. How do you feel about reapplying for another Visa?
List of words

Good ( )　　Traumatic ( )　　Stressful ( )

Worried ( )　　Sad ( )　　　　Uncertain ( )

Hopeful ( )　　Excited ( )　　Relieved ( )

30. 'I feel informed about the reapplication process.'
　　( )　( )　　( )　　( )　　　( )
　Strongly　　Agree　neither agree　Disagree　Strongly
　Agree　　　nor　Disagree　　　　Disagree

31. ''Not knowing where I will be in the near the future scares me.'
　　( )　( )　　( )　　( )　　　( )
　Strongly　　Agree　neither agree　Disagree　Strongly
　Agree　　　nor　Disagree　　　　Disagree

32. 'I feel that I have already proven myself to be a refugee.'
　　( )　( )　　( )　　( )　　　( )

Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

33. 'The reapplication process is straightforward and easy to understand.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

34. 'I am anxious about being placed in detention again.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

35. 'I feel more secure now than I did a year ago.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

Section Three	Life in the Community

COPING: Practical

36. 'I have no health problems.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

37. 'I have access to health services.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

38. 'I have enough work to support myself and my family.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

39. 'I am able to communicate with anyone I meet.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

40. 'I have no trouble accessing the services that I need.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

41. 'I have appropriate housing for myself and my family.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly

Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

COPING: Emotional

42. 'I feel safe in Australia.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

43. 'I often feel lonely.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

44. 'I feel hopeful about my future.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

45. 'I feel more hopeful about my future than I did a year ago.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

46. 'I feel anxious about my family's safety.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

47. 'I worry about being able to support my family.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

CHILDREN

48. 'My children feel safe in Australia.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

49. 'My children are happy in the Australian community.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

50. 'My children's health is good.'
    ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
    Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
    Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

51. 'My children are receiving adequate education.'

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )

Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

52. 'My children have friends to play with.'

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )

Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

53. 'My children worry about whether they will be safe in the future.'

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )

Strongly   Agree   neither agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   nor Disagree   Disagree

54. What type of housing do you live in?

Long-term 1-3 years   ( )
Medium-term   1-2 years   ( )
Short-term   6 months – 1 year   ( )
Temporary   3 –6 months   ( )
Emergency   up to 2 months   ( )

Postcode of the area you live in   _____

55. In the following areas, how would you rate the level of support you are receiving?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	Other
Income	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Housing	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Health	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Material aid	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
English Lang.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Medicare	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Employment	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Section Four   Social Capital

In the following questions please **circle ONE number** which best represents you.

56. Do you think you are treated well by the Australian society?

No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely

1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

57. Do you receive help from friends and community when needed?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely

     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

58. Do you have good experiences in the Australian community?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely

     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

59. Have you made friends within the Iraqi community?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely

     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

60. Have you made friends with people outside of the Iraqi community?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely

     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

61. Do you generally trust Australians?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely
     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

62. Do you feel that Australians trust you?
No, not at all Not really   unsure   A little   Yes, definitely
     1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. You can contact Dr Fethi Mansouri, Deakin University (03) 9244 3914 if you have any comments or queries.

TPV Research Project

Organisational Survey

Section One	Agency Profile

1. **Name of agency:**_____

2. **Contact person:** _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. **Position of interviewee:**_____

   _____

4. **What type of service(s) does your organisation provide?**

   Income security   Housing   Health   Material aid

   Language   Education   Employment

   Other   (Please specify)_____

5. **What percentage of your work relates to direct service provision, and what percentage relates to advocacy?**_____

6. **Do you provide services to TPV holders?**   Yes   No

7._____ **If YES, what is the proportion of your TPV work?**   %

8. **How many employees does the organisation have?** _____

9. **Does the agency use volunteers?**   Yes   (Number _____)   No

                                          If no, go to question 12

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10. How many volunteers are actively working with TPV holders?_____

11. What specific tasks do volunteers perform? _____

_____

_____

_____

12. How would you describe the contribution of volunteers to your organization? _____

_____

_____

_____

13. From which sources do you receive funding?

Local government ___% State government ___% Federal government ___% Other (please specify) _____%

14. Is any of this funding tied to particular programs, services or contractual conditions?

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you receive funding from any of the following sources *specifically* for TPV needs?

Local government   State government   Federal government

Other   (please specify) _____

Section Two	Service Provision

16. Has the demand for your services changed since the introduction of the Temporary Protection Visa?

Less demand

No change

Somewhat increased

Considerably increased

Significantly increased

Don't know

17. If so, has there been an increase in resources provided by the government in response to the changed demand on your services?

Yes   **No**   If no, go to question 20

18. Is this local/state/federal government provision? _____

19. What resources have governments provided or removed? _____

20. Has the change in funding been equal to the change in demand?

Yes   **No**

21. Approximately what percentage of your clients are TPV holders? _____ %

22. What are the most pressing concerns of these clients? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. Are TVP holders mostly having their concerns met?   **Yes   No**

24. **What other organisations might TPV holders be accessing for your services?** _____

25. Do you have difficulties responding to TPV holders' needs?   Yes   No

If No, go to Question
29

26. Are these difficulties related to:

Workload   Resources   Expertise

Recognition   Service provision

Other   (please specify) _____

27. 'The TPV policy has had a positive effect on the organisation'

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )

Strongly   Agree   Don't Agree   Disagree   Strongly

Agree   or Disagree   Disagree

28. What could be done to improve service accessibility to TVP holders?

More coordination between service providers

More coordination between government and non-government agencies

A coordinating referral point   More funding   More resources

Other   (please specify) _____

29. Overall, how do you feel about the TPV policy and its effect(s) on your organisation?

_____
_____
_____

30. What is required in order to strengthen the services your organization offers?

_____
_____
_____

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_____

_____

_____

Section Three	**Your Say**

Further comments about any section or issues not touched on in this questionnaire are welcome.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

Centre for Citizenship & Human Rights, Deakin University

For further information, please contact: Dr Fethi Mansouri on 9244.3914