



# SRE Update

## ICCOREIS Forum: Valuing Volunteers



Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August was the day over 50 delegates from across New South Wales and four from the ACT came together at Robert Menzies College of Macquarie University for *Forum 2009: Valuing Volunteers*.

The forum was organised by ICCOREIS in recognition of the demanding part that recruiting, training and supporting volunteers

plays in the life of SRE coordinators and the fact that many are finding it difficult to attract new teachers. To reflect the importance of the role and the desire to support coordinators, ICCOREIS subsidised the registration fee so that the \$10 fee covered all sessions, morning and afternoon tea and a particularly scrumptious lunch.

Mr Michael Ryan, lecturer in the School of Education at the Australian Catholic University, the invited keynote speaker, presented his PhD research into volunteering. He covered such pertinent topics as what motivates people to volunteer, what contributes to volunteers staying and what they get out of it. He encouraged us to think of volunteers as 'customers' who have the power to choose whether or not they will stay involved

with us, particularly given that most volunteers are involved with more than one organisation. Volunteer positions should be of benefit to both the community and the volunteer.

He said that a big factor in whether or not people will take up our offer of a volunteer position and how long they will continue in it, was 'self-efficacy', whether or not the person feels they will be (or are) successful in the role. This has implications for us as we think about the orientation and training we offer and the resources that we provide to help SRE volunteers do a good job.

Volunteer coordinators were encouraged to ask what motivates each of their volunteers so that they could support and encourage them better. When the volunteers experience benefits which match the reason they signed up, they are much more likely to stay.

*Sally Smith  
Baptist Churches NSW*



## SRE Training and Accreditation

*\* addition to ICCOREIS website \**

During 2008 a special project, *An investigation into current training programmes, accreditation processes and ongoing support of SRE teachers across NSW*, was commissioned and funded by ICCOREIS, and carried out by Mary Smith from the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The focus of the project was to gain an overview of training and support currently available to SRE volunteers, denominations and groups involved in SRE training.

The research revealed that, for a variety of reasons, SRE teachers in many areas were not receiving adequate training or support.

Discussions initiated during the project covered a range of topics such as the responsibilities of SRE providers, the need to provide adequate training and support for SRE teachers, and the need for different denominations to work together in this area.

Several denominations have since reviewed their requirements for child protection, basic training and support. Other providers have recognised the need to advertise the availability of training in their regions more broadly.

One of the recommendations of the report was to gather basic information on denominations' accreditation and training requirements and make this available on the ICCOREIS website. This data is being collected and the initial details are now available on the SRE Training and Accreditation page (accessible via the Training and Accreditation section of the FAQs page).

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# Valuing Volunteers: Workshop Report

The two informative presentations by Mr Mick Ryan, the keynote speaker, were used as motivators for the breakout sessions. Participants, who came from both country and urban areas and were representative of the diverse Christian churches around the state, were able to be part of two workshops.

I was lucky to attend the following workshops:

## **Understanding Volunteer Networks** facilitated by Peter Adamson

In this session we looked at the various network models and how they related to the work situations we are employed within. We also investigated how to go about maintaining the networks and outreaching further to make everyone involved feel a vital part of the mission of our particular workplace.

This session was a great one for actually looking at the model existing presently in your situation and then rethinking, challenging and inviting new measures to the model you participate in.

## **Meeting Volunteers Expectations** facilitated by Cheryl Hallinan

Cheryl presented the Octagonal Model of Volunteer Motivation which encompassed the shared inward-outward dimension of the individual's motivation and expectations for participating in volunteering with a group.

The model of Getting-Giving; Thought-Action; Distance-Proximity; Continuity-Newness... a style of inward (ego centered motivation) and an outward motivation was an interesting and thought provoking model. It helped me to understand the many dimensions which

make up the decision making of a prospective volunteer. Perhaps it is very easy to have a one-eyed view as the recruiter!!



My personal thanks to Peter and Cheryl for their great work on the day. The challenge is now to look seriously at taking on board the findings from their work and the input from the other members of the group.

Congratulations to the ICCOREIS organisers of the forum for choosing a needed topic which commands all of our respect.

*Paul Worthington  
CCD Parramatta*

*Note from the Editor: The keynote presentations and two workshops were videoed on the day, and will soon be available on DVD. Watch for updates on the Resources page of the website.*

## 2009 Heads of Churches Meeting

The Heads of Churches meeting, held once every three years, provides the opportunity for ICCOREIS to report to the heads of the Christian churches it represents. The 2009 meeting was attended by representatives from churches across the breadth of the Christian faith.

The tone was set by Mr Brian Elliott, the Human Society and Its Environment Manager for the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET), who began his address with the statement, "SRE is an integral component of the curriculum in our schools. The whole public education system is improved by the fact that we have SRE in our schools".

The contentious and persistent issue of a separate ethics course to be presented in schools was raised by both the ICCOREIS Chair and Mr Elliott. It remains DET policy to embed values and therefore ethics across all curriculum areas, so it is unlikely that such a course will be allowed.

The Chair spoke about proposed changes to the representational nature of the Commission and the importance of attracting people who are able to understand the philosophical, theological, educational and political issues underlying the ministry of SRE and who can influence the policy and administrative decisions that affect it. Any proposed changes in representation would have an affect on the constitution and a discussion of various proposals followed. It was announced that formal notice of any changes to the constitution will be sent out in December 2009 for approval at the March 2010 AGM.

Two motions were moved by the Treasurer, Mrs Ann Maree Whenman, pertaining to the amount of member churches' contributions and the adoption of the budget for the next triennium. The fact that Sydney Anglican Diocese is not presently part of the Commission has had a negative effect on the budget. This has been addressed by suspending the special projects initiative and drawing upon reserve funds. The motions were carried.

## Interview with a Maple of Great Vintage\*

Like a fine wine with deep colour resonating with overtones of a wonderful heritage, I reminisced with Grant Maple on his time with ICCOREIS. Grant is a relative newcomer, having joined the Commission in 1994, but already with a prior decade of experience with the North West Regional Committee (an ICCOREIS affiliate).

Grant has seen continuing improvements in ICCOREIS, specifically noting the very successful conferences it has organised that were major events for the many SRE teachers who attended. ICCOREIS has embraced new technologies which have allowed quality information to be provided on a consistent basis, through the setting up of a website. "This", he reflected, "results in fewer problems at the local level where SRE takes place, because most SRE teachers are well informed as to their rights and responsibilities as providers of SRE in schools."

Asked about some of the highlights, Grant expressed gratitude that the DET and NSW Government have supported SRE over the years and not been swayed by minority pressure groups. He also reflected on the good spirit of cooperation that has been enjoyed amongst all the denominations, and the newer denominations that have joined the Commission. A particular highlight was in the early 1990s when Mrs Sinclair, wife of the then NSW Governor, entertained long serving SRE teachers at Government House in Sydney.

Grant has been totally immersed in ICCOREIS, serving as the Treasurer for three years, then the Secretary and finally as the Chair since 2007. Brought up in the Anglican church from an early age, he personally benefitted from having regular SRE at both primary and secondary schools as he grew up. These lessons reflected a strong commitment from the local clergy. "Looking back I can see the benefits of the faithfulness of those people", he said.

Where to from here? With no intention of retiring Grant is looking forward to concentrating on his editorship of the *Journal of Christian Education*. He also wants to continue to contribute to the development of the School of Christian Studies at Robert Menzies College and to spend more time on his research and writing in the area of historical and current Christian thought.



Grant Maple (left) receiving a presentation from Deputy Chair Mark Hillis, at the September 2009 ICCOREIS meeting.

We wish him well and know that this Maple will continue to improve with age.

Sue Sneddon  
ICCOREIS Secretary

*\*Interview with Dr Grant Maple, recently ending his term as Chair of ICCOREIS*

## National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)

The Council of Australian Governments recently endorsed "Protecting Australia's Children is Everyone's Business, National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 - 2020".

Strategy 1.2 of the National Framework specifically identifies that NAPCAN will be supported to undertake national awareness campaigns to engage the whole community in this issue and it identifies the conduct of a community attitudinal survey as an initial step.

The survey is the centrepiece of a community engagement campaign which was launched on 6th September, the beginning of National Child Protection Week and will continue through to the end of



Children's Week on 1st November 2009.

The aim is to have as many people as possible, throughout Australia, respond to this survey. The survey is confidential and will largely be conducted online, although a telephone option is available for people who cannot access the internet. Participants in the survey will also be directed to appropriate advice and assistance should they require it.

To complete the survey and for further information about resources, see [www.preventingchildabuse.com.au](http://www.preventingchildabuse.com.au).

For any other questions, contact Mark Di Stefano on 02 9269 9200 or [mark.distefano@napcan.org.au](mailto:mark.distefano@napcan.org.au).

# Resources

## Volunteering

### Volunteering Australia

[www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)

Volunteering Australia is the national peak body working to advance volunteering in the Australian community.

Resources on the website include:

- links to local volunteer resource centres in all states of Australia,
- free skills, training and education resources,
- monthly e-newsletter,
- training and events calendar,
- information on public policy concerning volunteering.



### Australasian Volunteer Program

Management (OzVPM) [www.ozvpm.com](http://www.ozvpm.com)

OzVPM is a resource, consultancy and training company specialising in volunteerism.

Its services include:

- resources and information from international partner organisations,
- a newsgroup dedicated to volunteer programme management,
- information sheets on different aspects of volunteerism,
- monthly newsletter,
- bookstore,
- consulting services,
- volunteer management training.

One of OzVPM's partners is Volunteer<sup>2</sup>, a Canadian company that specialises in volunteer management systems. *Volunteer Impact* is a program that has been created by Volunteer<sup>2</sup> to coordinate and track the activities of volunteer involving agencies. It can be easily adapted to the Australian environment. The software allows you to perform tasks such as recruiting from your website, tracking qualifications, creating schedules, recording hours and generating reports. Details are available on the OzVPM website - click on V2 *Volunteer Database*.

### More Volunteers [www.morevolunteers.com](http://www.morevolunteers.com)



Directed by Dr Judy Esmond, More Volunteers provides many free resources, including a book and a weekly newsletter. There are also books for sale either by download or in hardcopy.

Dr Esmond and her team conduct seminars, workshops, research and organisational consulting. Workshops and presentations can be tailored to the needs of your organisation.

### The Centre for Volunteering

[www.volunteering.com.au](http://www.volunteering.com.au)

The Centre for Volunteering is the peak body in NSW promoting and supporting volunteering and community participation. The Centre for Volunteering includes Volunteering NSW, the service-delivery arm, and the School of Volunteer Management, a registered training organisation.

Resources available include:

- e-newsletters,
- research reports,
- events calendar,
- publications, videos, resources for sale.



### Internet Matching Sites

There are a number of websites that match volunteers to organisations requiring their services. For example:

Good Company [www.goodcompany.com.au](http://www.goodcompany.com.au)

Go Volunteer [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au)

Seek Volunteer [www.volunteer.com.au](http://www.volunteer.com.au)

Volunteer Match [www.volunteermatch.com.au](http://www.volunteermatch.com.au)

## More...

The sites listed above are a small selection of those based in Australia. There are many more organisations, both locally and overseas, that provide resources for volunteers and those who manage them.

Material from the *Valuing Volunteers* forum will be available soon from the Resources page of the ICCOREIS website. This will include handouts from the workshops, and an order form for the DVD featuring the keynote speeches and two of the workshops.

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#### Enquiries

Please direct all general enquiries to the Secretary, and website enquiries to the Technical & Administrative Officer.