

Blue Mountains Community Interagency

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Consultation on the Definition of a Charity
The Board of Taxation,
The Treasury,
Camberra 2600.

September 30th, 2003.

To the Consultation Manager:

This submission is from the Blue Mountains Community Interagency.

This Interagency comprises over 70 non-government organisations in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney and includes the following types of services: Neighbourhood Centres, Family Support Services, Community Development projects, Youth, Disability, Migrant, Children's and Child Protection agencies, Community Housing, Employment projects, as well as staff from a number of government agencies.

These organisations represent the interests of thousands of people in the Blue Mountains LGA. Some of these agencies have charitable status and many do not, despite offering similar services and having similar objectives to each other. For instance of six neighbourhood centres, three have been able to obtain DGR status and three have had their applications rejected. As individual organisations and as an Interagency we have not known why this is so and we hoped that the Charities Definition would recommend amendments to rectify this situation.

All of the member services are involved to some extent in advocacy for their clients and their community. One of the functions of the Interagency is to collectively represent the interests of disadvantaged residents and to work for equity of resource distribution for our area, on behalf of our member organisations. It is essential to the work of community organisations to lobby for social justice.

We consider it to be crucial that the proposed Charities Bill 2003 does not develop barriers for this work.

We would like to endorse the submission by the Australian Council of Social Services.

Yours Sincerely,

Mary Waterford on behalf of the Blue Mountains Community Interagency.

Blue Mountains Community Interagency is a regular Forum attended by representatives from Neighbourhood Centres, Family Support services, Community Development projects, Youth services, Disability services, Migrant services, Children's and Child Protection services, Community Housing and staff from Blue Mountains City Council, and government agencies. It is convened by the Mountains Community Resource Network.
