

Update

January 2009

Quick Index

- Registration update and processing times
- Snapshot
- Using our Quicklinks
- Annual returns– helpful tips
- Donated software a hit
- Building better community engagement
- Upcoming events

Registration update

As at 26 January 2009, we had registered 18,507 charities.

Registration processing times:

Our analysts have now finished reviewing all the properly-completed applications that we received before 1 July 2008. Most (more than 70%) have been registered, and are now on the Charities Register.

Some, though, raised issues that need the experienced eye of a senior analyst, to make absolutely sure that, like every registered charity, they have a charitable purpose and there is no possibility of private financial profit while the charity is operating, or if it is wound up.

We hope to finish processing all these applications by the end of the first quarter of this year – but, of course, the timing of that depends to some extent on how quickly applicants get back to us if we ask them for more information or clarification.

Applications received after 1 July 2008:

We've also received more than 3,000 applications that came in *after* 1 July 2008 (and more are still arriving).

Our analysts are working on these in a parallel process, and are reviewing them in the date-order we received them. They are currently processing applications received on or around 22 August.

Again, many are likely to be registered as soon as they are reviewed, but some may need a second opinion (which takes a little longer!)

We appreciate your patience!

Snapshot

Overview of types of charities registered as at 26 January 2009

The “big three” most common:

Sectors – Education/training/research, Religious activities, Other

Activities –Other, Provides services (e.g. care, counselling), Provides religious services / activities

Beneficiaries – General public, Children/young people, Other

Areas of operation were as follows (note: the total is greater than the total number of registered charities, as some organisations tick two or more categories on their application):

New Zealand	
Auckland – 3,217	Northland – 1,009
Bay of Plenty – 1,254	Otago – 1,261
Canterbury – 2,143	Southland – 696
Chatham Islands – 34	Taranaki - 619
Gisborne – 341	Waikato – 1,539
Hawkes Bay – 845	Wellington – Wairarapa – 1,975
Manawatu - Wanganui – 1,095	West Coast - 397
Nelson - Marlborough - Tasman - 810	Nationwide – 4,303
Overseas	
Africa – 332	North America - 201
Antarctica - 24	Oceania - 621
Asia - 679	South America - 178
Europe - 256	

Quicklinks

The [homepage](#) of the Charities Commission website has some handy quicklinks for finding information. With just one click, you can:

- Search the Charities Register
- Apply online for registration
- View printable versions of our information sheets, forms and helponotes
- Read our *Update* newsletter

If you are already registered, you can click on the quicklinks to find out more about notifying us about changes to your charity, filing Annual Returns and how to promote your registration status.

Annual Returns - some helpful tips

**Q. When is an Annual Return not an Annual Return?
A. When it includes information relating to the wrong year.**

For the purposes of the Charities Act, an Annual Return consists of an Annual Return Form (completed online or on paper) and a copy of your accounts.

We have received several Annual Returns with financial accounts that don't relate to the year for which the Return is being filed. For example, returns for a financial year ended in 2008 were sent with accounts for a financial year ended in 2007 or 2006.

When it is time to send us your Annual Return, please check that the accounts you send with it are for the same financial year as the Return. So, if you are filing a Return for the year ended on your 2009 balance date, the accounts you send with that Return must also be for the year ended on your 2009 balance date.

We will update the help notes on our forms and info sheets to remind people to double-check their document dates.

File your Annual Return online – it's easy peasy!

At a recent workshop run by the Commission, some first-time Annual Return filers were delighted to find that the online system is “easy peasy once you have your login name and password sorted”.

We encourage you to fill out your Return online as it is already partly completed for you, and the fee for filing is only \$50 compared to \$75 if you file a paper form. (If your gross annual income is under \$10,000 there is no fee.)

Remember - you don't have to complete the online form all in one sitting. Once you have made a start you can log on and off until you have completed it and are ready to hit the “submit” button.

Need more information about Annual Returns?

Visit our website, <http://www.charities.govt.nz/> to view the *Annual Return Form – Form 4* and the Annual Returns information sheet and checklist.

**Donated software
and advice a hit**

Many charities operate using donated computers and software, which may not always fulfil their needs. Many also lack access to information and advice about computer products and their use.

An organisation called TechSoup is working to help remedy this. In New Zealand, in return for an administration fee, it provides donated software from companies such as Microsoft to eligible non-profit and charitable groups, helping them to build their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capability.

A charity registered with the Charities Commission, the [Big Buddy Mentoring Trust \(CC22447\)](#) is enthusiastic about the products and advice it has sourced through TechSoup.

Richard Aston, chief executive of Big Buddy says “We have already received our first order from TechSoup, which is making a big difference to our in-house design work for resources and marketing. TechSoup's software donation programme is great, but to me, its real value is in the knowledge and advice I get from their web site.”

Visit the [NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations](#) website for more information, or see www.techsoup.net.nz, which also has case studies from Big Buddy and other charitable groups using TechSoup-sourced products.

**Building better
community
engagement**

A discussion document on community engagement, *It's More Than Talk*, is available on the [Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector](#) website.

The document, published by the Building Better Government Engagement project reference group, includes options for building better community engagement skills, knowledge and values in the public service.

Consultation on *It's More Than Talk* is open until 31 March 2009, and can be emailed to ocvs@msd.govt.nz or sent to:

Building Better Government Engagement
C/o Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector
PO Box 1556
Wellington 6140.

Events

The Commission will be making presentations and available to answer your questions at the following events, now confirmed – details are also available on the events page on our [website](#).

<p>“Fit 4 Funding” seminar - finances, governance and volunteering</p>	<p>Lower Hutt Town Hall, Laings Rd</p>	<p>9am – 3pm Monday 23 February 2009</p>	<p><i>Contact:</i> Joanne Gomez, Community Development, Hutt City Council - 04 570 6757. <i>Email:</i> community.development@huttcity.govt.nz Registration fee \$10. Registration closes 13 February 2009</p>
<p>Funding Expo</p>	<p>Lawson Field Theatre, Gisborne</p>	<p>10.30am – 6.30pm Wed 25 February 2009</p>	<p><i>Contact:</i> Jenny Greaves, Manager Gisborne Volunteer Centre - 06 868 4522 <i>Email:</i> gisvolunteercentre@xtra.co.nz</p>

No longer want Update?

If you no longer wish to subscribe to this newsletter, simply email update@charities.govt and type "unsubscribe" in the Subject field.



Update is a regular newsletter of the Charities Commission.

If this is not your copy and you wish to subscribe, simply email info@charities.govt.nz with your contact details or call our free information line **0508 242 748**.