

This edition of Update focuses specifically on registration, to address some frequently asked questions and to help ensure the registration process is as straightforward as possible.

100th charity registered under Charities Act

Riding for the Disabled on the North Shore (North Shore RDA Charitable Trust), members of the New Zealand Riding for the Disabled Association, recently secured the 100th spot on the Charities Register.

The charity provides special horse riding facilities for the therapy, rehabilitation, education and recreation of people with disabilities at the Riding for Disabled Park in Stillwater. These services are available for the benefit of the public in the North Harbour and Rodney District.

David Grey, trustee of the North Shore RDA Charitable Trust, said the 100th registration came as an added bonus to the knowledge that they had met the Commission's criteria.

"We are delighted to become New Zealand's 100th registered charity and look forward to the extra public confidence in our activities that a listing on the Charities Register may provide," he said.

What type of organisations have registered so far?

The majority of charities registered to date are small organisations; many of which are trusts. As at 23 March 2007, the four most popular charitable sectors among registered charities were education/training/development (20%), health (11%), social services (10%) and community development (10%).

A breakdown of the main centres revealed that 17% of registered charities operated in Wellington-Wairarapa, 16% in Canterbury,

10% in Otago, 7% in Auckland and 1% in Waikato.

Once and done!

We were impressed to hear from one of our workshop participants that it took them just 12 minutes to complete their application online at www.charities.govt.nz, including scanning in all their documents!

If you are considering applying for registration, here are some handy tips for you to "get it right first time", and help us to respond to your application as quickly as possible:

Applying online

- If, after creating a user account online, you don't receive an acknowledgment email from the Commission containing your username and password, please contact us on either **0508 242 748** or info@charities.govt.nz. Unfortunately some spam filters are blocking our emails and may prevent them from reaching you.
- When you log in to the Charities Register for the first time, copy and paste (rather than cut and paste) your password from our acknowledgment email. Write down your username, copy the password only, go to the login screen, type in your username (using capital letters), paste in the password and then click "login".
- If you continue to have trouble logging in, the best thing to do is to enter your username and select "Forgotten your password?" The Forgotten Password screen will display. Enter your username in the space provided and click "submit". The system will generate another password and email it to you.
- If you choose to scan and upload your rules and Officer Certification Forms rather than post them to us, you might find the following tips useful.

Scanning tips

- Please scan your rules and each Officer Certification Form as separate files.
- Scan the pages in the order they appear.
- There is no need to scan the Guidelines on each facing page of an Officer Certification Form - just scan the pages you have filled out.
- Try to scan at a minimum resolution of 150 dpi (dots per inch) to ensure each file is legible. A resolution of 300 dpi or higher will create a file that is too large and takes longer to upload as part of your online application.
- JPEGs are generally the best file format to create with your scanned image and the easiest to upload.

Applying by post

- Send in a completed Officer Form for *each* of the officers you've listed in your rules (e.g. if your rules say you have four officers, send four forms).
- Remember to tick the box on the second page of Form 2, (the Officer Certification Form), so we know what you're certifying.
- Give us plenty of information about the nature of your activities, so we don't have to come back to you for more. It may be helpful to send us a copy of your newsletter, or similar material that provides a clear example of your activities.
- If, after sending us your application, you realise that you left out an important document (such as an Officer Certification Form), please wait to hear from us before sending it in isolation. We will return your application, so you can resubmit it in full.
- If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, with common rules, it is helpful if you tell us. Just attach a covering letter to your completed Form 1, which contains a reference to the legal name of the organisation with whom you share rules.
- If you're applying to register a company (with a name ending in "Limited"), be sure to send the Commission rules for a limited company.
- Please note that **applying to register is free**, so there is no need to send us a cheque in the mail.

New to all this?

A registration information pack is the best place to start. These packs help to explain:

- the purpose and benefits of registration
- when to register
- other important information to help you with your application.

Registration information packs also contain the relevant registration forms, should you choose to apply by post.

There are special information packs for **group registration** under the Charities Act, if you would like to consider this option for your organisation.

Download your registration information pack at www.charities.govt.nz (follow the link from our homepage) or call our free information line **0508 242 748** to request a copy by post.

Searching the Charities Register

Members of the public can now search the Charities Register at www.charities.govt.nz to find information on registered charities.

The information currently available on registered charities includes:

- name, address and registration number
- names of the current officers
- the sectors, activities and beneficiaries
- the area of operation
- the balance date.

Later this year, it will also be possible to search the Charities Register to access:

- a copy of the rules or governing document of each registered charity
- the application for registration (including all required accompanying information and documents)
- annual returns; and
- notifications of change.

Under the Charities Act, the Commission may restrict access to information and documents if it considers it in the public interest to do so.

Registration workshops

Our scheduled nationwide workshop programme draws to a close at the end of this month.

Thank you to everyone who attended one of the 65 sessions we held – our evaluation sheets show that many people found them useful and highly practical in terms of preparing for registration under the Charities Act.

After we have reviewed the workshops next month, we will make a decision about scheduling further workshops in areas where there is a demand for them - and promote them in future issues of *Update*, as well as on our website.

Update is the monthly 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. Use these channels or visit our website at www.charities.govt.nz for further information about registration under the Charities Act.