Australian
Council of
Social Service

ACOSS Paper 157 | 2009

Australian Community Sector Survey

Report 2009
Volume 3 – Queensland

First published in 2009 by the
Australian Council of Social Service

Locked Bag 4777
Strawberry Hills, NSW, 2012 Australia
Ph 02 9310 6200 Fax 02 9310 4822
Email: info@acoss.org.au
Website: www.acoss.org.au

ISSN: 1326 7124
ISBN: 0 85871 837 X

Queensland

Survey results

The ACSS 2009 was completed by 156 agencies in Queensland who provided information about their activities over the financial years 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Service coverage

In terms of geographic coverage, 23.1% of respondent agencies provided services within a regional centre and 5.1% in a remote area.[1] Among the other geographic categories:

- 12.8% provide services primarily in a rural centre
- 9% provide services primarily in an inner metropolitan area
- 12.8% provide services primarily in another metropolitan area
- 19.9% provide services primarily across a region
- 9.6% provide services primarily across the state
- 3.8% provide services primarily across the nation

Service use

Demand for services

In 2007-08 respondent agencies provided services to 537,641 people, which is a 19% increase on the number of people who received a service in 2006-07 (448,498).

In 2007-08 respondent agencies turned away 84,359 people, a 5.6% decrease on the number of people turned away in 2006-07 (89,352).

Perceptions of demand

When demand for services outstrips the capacity to supply these services, many organisations will implement tighter targeting measures as a way of limiting this demand, and utilising constrained resources in the most equitable manner. Governmental policy, through funding and other arrangements, can also require that organisations target their services more narrowly.

With more tightly targeted service delivery aimed at rationing finite resources, many organisations will experience increased complexity in client needs. This increased complexity can have a significant impact on organisational workloads if appropriate resources are not made available.

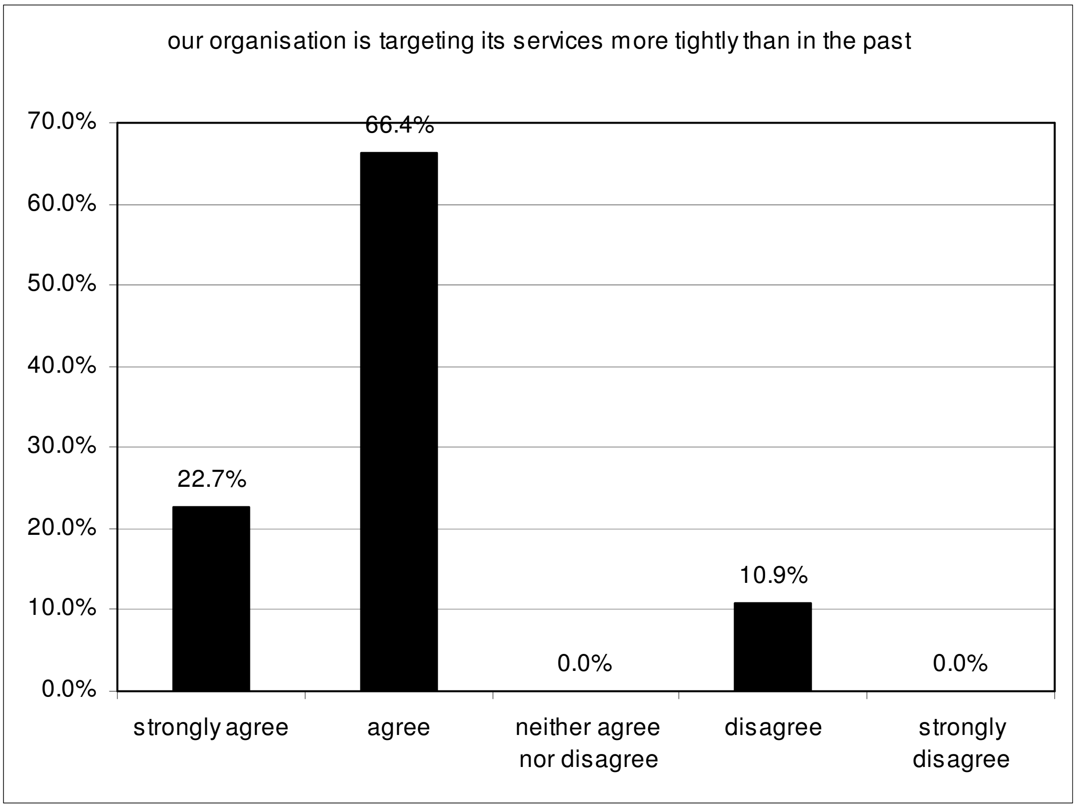
[1] Number of respondents to this question (N) = 156.

Any change in service targeting is, therefore, an important gauge of both demand for services, and organisational resources relative to this demand.

Eighty-nine per cent of respondents agreed that their organisation was targeting services more tightly than in the past.

Figure 3.1: Targeting services: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'this organisation is targeting our services more tightly than in the past' (QLD)

N=119



What services are needed?

Agencies were asked to list, in priority order, the services most needed by their clients (other than the services provided by their own agency). Long term housing and crisis and supported accommodation services were clearly identified as the services most needed by the clients of community service and welfare agencies. These were followed by health care services (including mental health and drugs and alcohol services) and family relationship services.

Table 3.1: Client need by service type 2007-08 (QLD)

N= 70

Service type	Ranking score[2]	Number of times ranked most important	% of respondents who ranked this service in the top five most important
Long term housing	1	17	71%
Crisis and supported accommodation	2	12	59%
Health care (including mental health and drug and alcohol services)	3	5	68%
Family relationship services	4	4	42%
Income support	5	2	63%
Legal services	6	7	37%
Transport	7	6	37%
Child care	8	6	14%
Aged and disability services	9	4	24%
Domestic violence/ sexual assault services	10	2	32%
Child welfare services	11	2	24%
Employment, education and training programs	12	1	37%
Cultural, arts, recreation, sporting, information and social activities	13	2	10%
Assistance with the cost of utilities (energy, water, telecommunications)	14	0	34%

[2] Ranking is determined by adding the number of times respondents marked a service type as the most important, second most important and third most important.

Delivery

Character of the workforce

Paid staff

In 2007-08 respondent organisations employed 3,365.1 paid staff (Full Time Equivalent).

Volunteer staff

In 2007-08 respondent organisations engaged 996 volunteer service delivery workers.

Larger organisations tend to have a larger proportion of paid staff, although organisations of all sizes still utilise large numbers of volunteers.

It is noteworthy that organisations of all sizes are governed primarily by volunteer boards.

Staff hiring and leaving

There was an overall increase of 19.35 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees working in respondent organisations during 2007-08. This represents an increase of 0.7% on the total number of paid staff.

Table 3.3: Staff hired and left 2007-08 (QLD)

Employee category	Hired (FTE)	Left (FTE)	Difference (FTE)
Management	65	61	4
Service worker	846.8	851.8	-5
Clerical/administration	123.95	103.6	20.35
Total	1035.75	1016.4	19.35

Staff turnover

Staff turnover is a function of the number of staff leaving over the number of staff employed. In 2007-08, respondent agencies employed 1,035.75 full time equivalent staff and lost 1016.4 full time equivalent staff. Average staff turnover across respondent agencies is therefore equivalent to 35.3%.

Additional work

One way that agencies can increase their capacity to meet excess demand is to try to squeeze more out of existing resources, which includes the use of increased volunteer and unpaid staff labour. Fifty-eight per cent of respondents agreed that they had increased the number of paid hours worked by staff in 2007-08. Ninety-two per cent of agencies agreed that the unfunded work by staff and volunteers had increased between 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Figure 3.5: Use of paid work: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'this year we have increased the number of paid hours worked by staff' (QLD)

N= 121

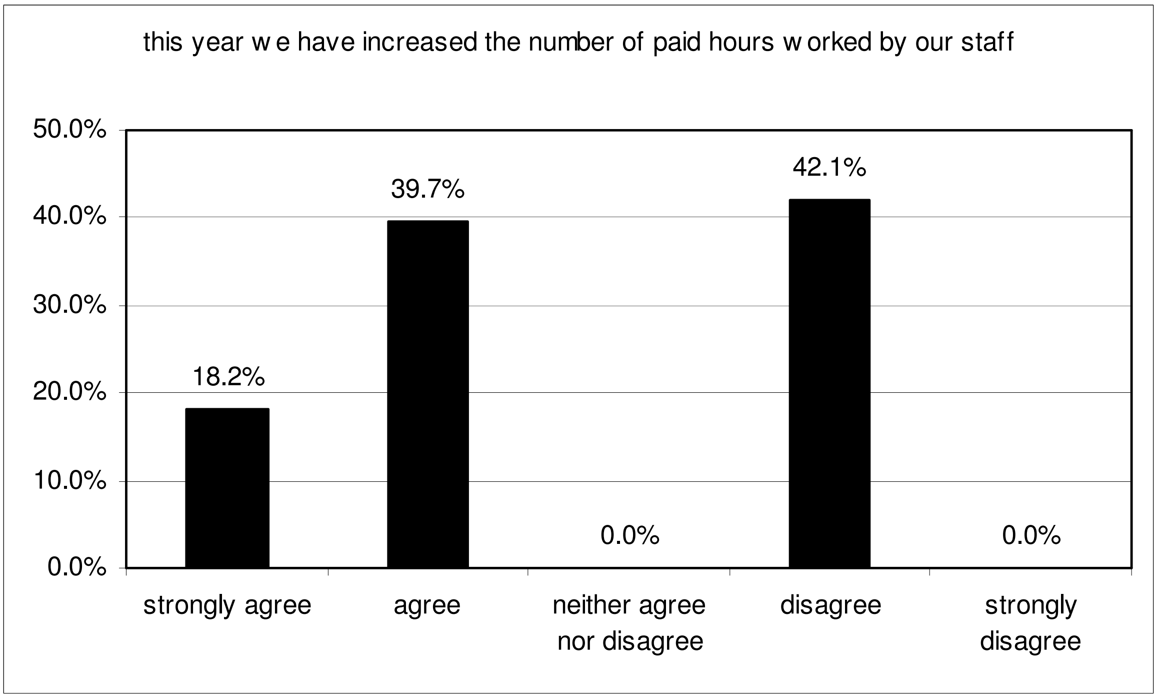
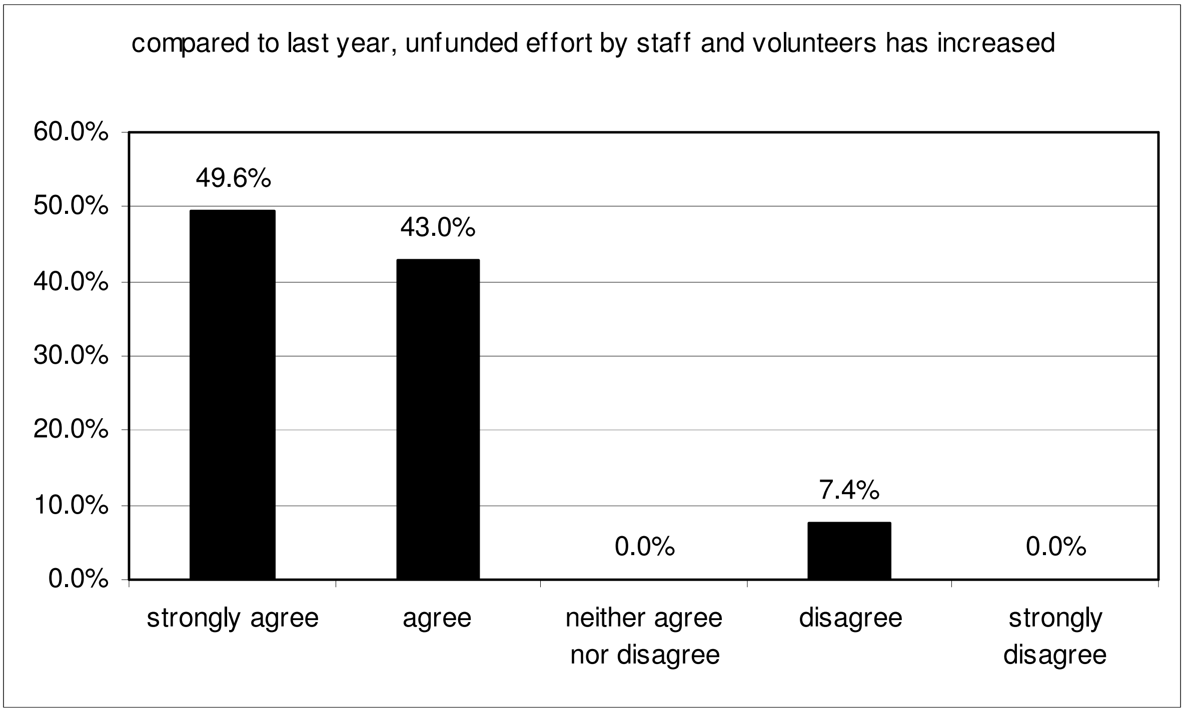


Figure 3.6: Use of unpaid work: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'compared to last year unfunded work by staff and volunteers has increased' (Qld)

N= 121



Attracting appropriately qualified staff

Sixty-six per cent of respondents indicated that they had experienced difficulty attracting appropriately qualified staff in the past year compared to 34% who had no difficulty.[3]

[3] N=74.

Income and Expenditure

The capacity to recruit, pay, train and support a high quality workforce depends largely on the financial capacity of the industry.

As Table 3.4 shows, income has increased over the year by $19 million and operating expenses by $14 million. This has increased the overall surplus by $5 million to $3.3 million, or 2.1% of total income.

Table 3.4: Income and Expenditure 2006-07 & 2007-08 (QLD)

Year	Total operating expenses[4] ($ millions)	Total income ($ millions)	Deficit/Surplus ($ millions)
2007-08	151	154	3.3
2006-07	137	135	-1.7
Difference	14	19	5.0

Income

Agencies have reported an 0.8 % decrease in overall income between 2006-07 and 2007-08.

- 20.1% increase in Commonwealth Government funding, representing 43.7% of total income
- 10.8% increase in State Government funding, representing 29.2% of total income
- 81.6% decrease in local government funding, representing 0.1% of total income
- 1.9% increase in client fee incomes, representing 4.1% of total income
- 21.2% increase in agency own source income, representing 19.6% of total income

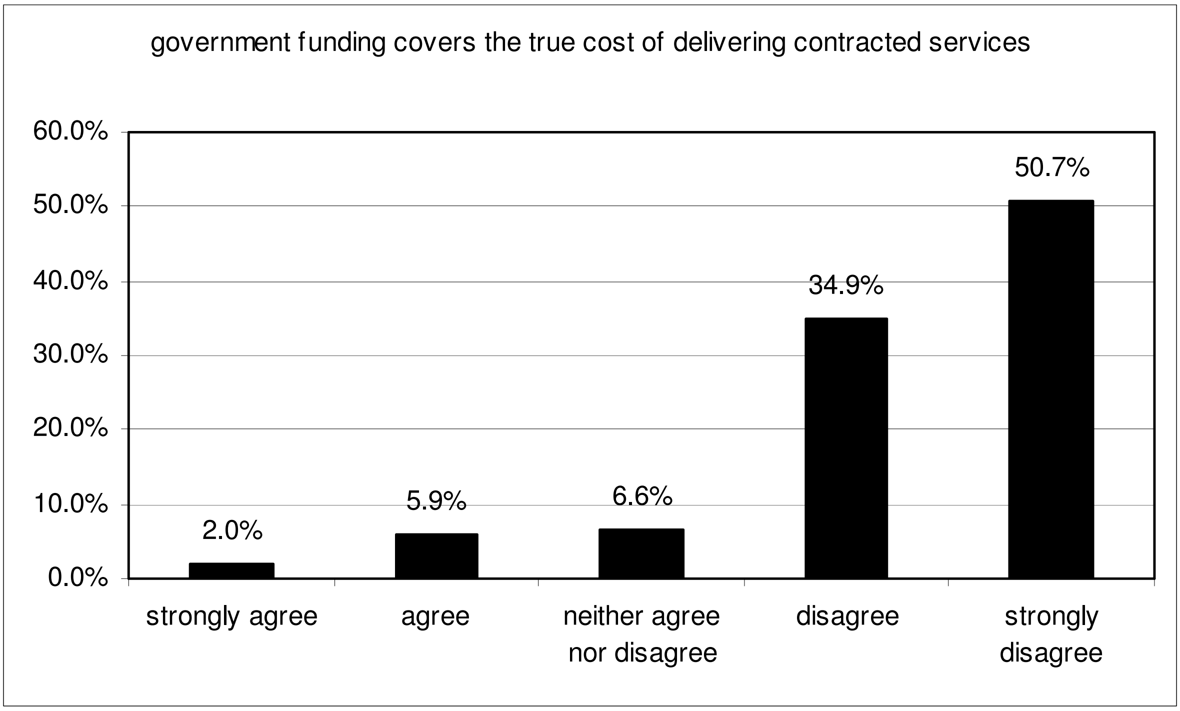
[4] N= 156.

Adequacy of Government funding to meet cost of contracted services

Eighty-five per cent of respondents disagreed with the statement that 'Government funding covers the true cost of delivering contracted services'.[5] Only 8% expressed the view that funding was adequate, with 6% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Figure 3.7: Adequacy of government funding: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'Government funding covers the true cost of delivering contracted services' (Qld)

N= 152



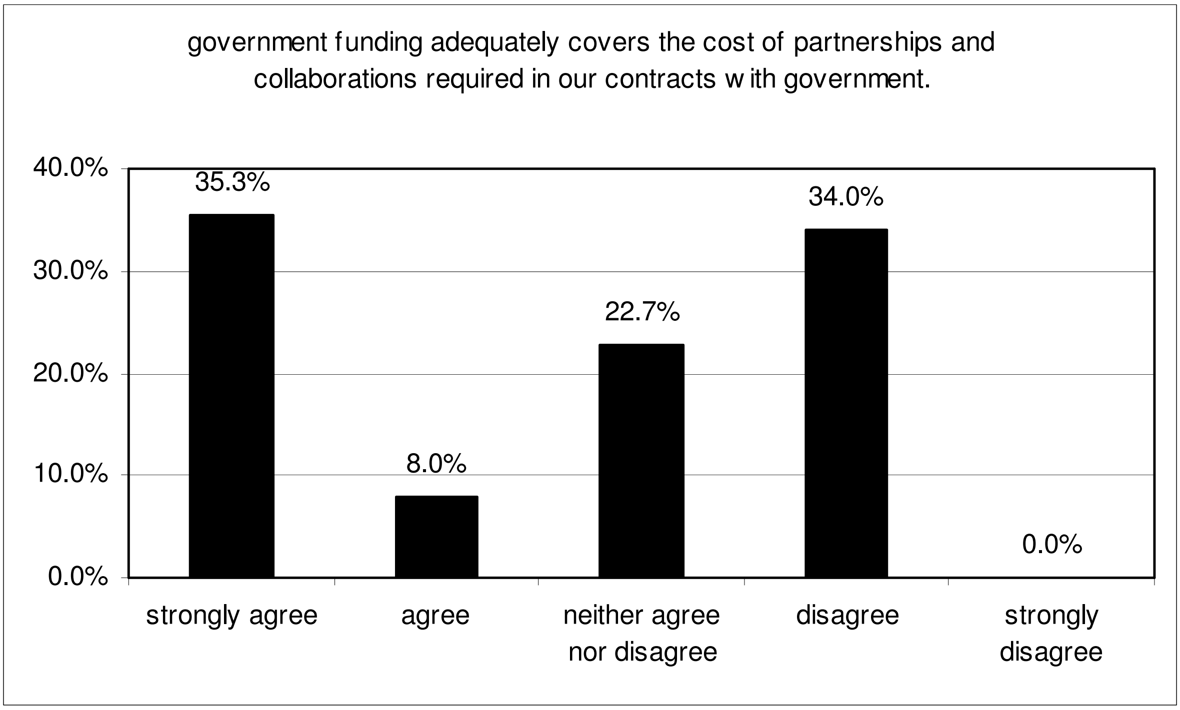
[5] N=152.

Adequacy of Government funding to cover cost of partnerships and collaborations

Respondents were split on the question of whether their funding adequately covered the costs of partnerships and collaborations stipulated in contracts with government with 43% agreeing and 34% disagreeing.

Figure 3.8: Adequacy of government funding regarding cost of partnerships: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'Government funding adequately covers the cost of partnerships and collaborations required in our contracts with government' (Qld)

N= 150

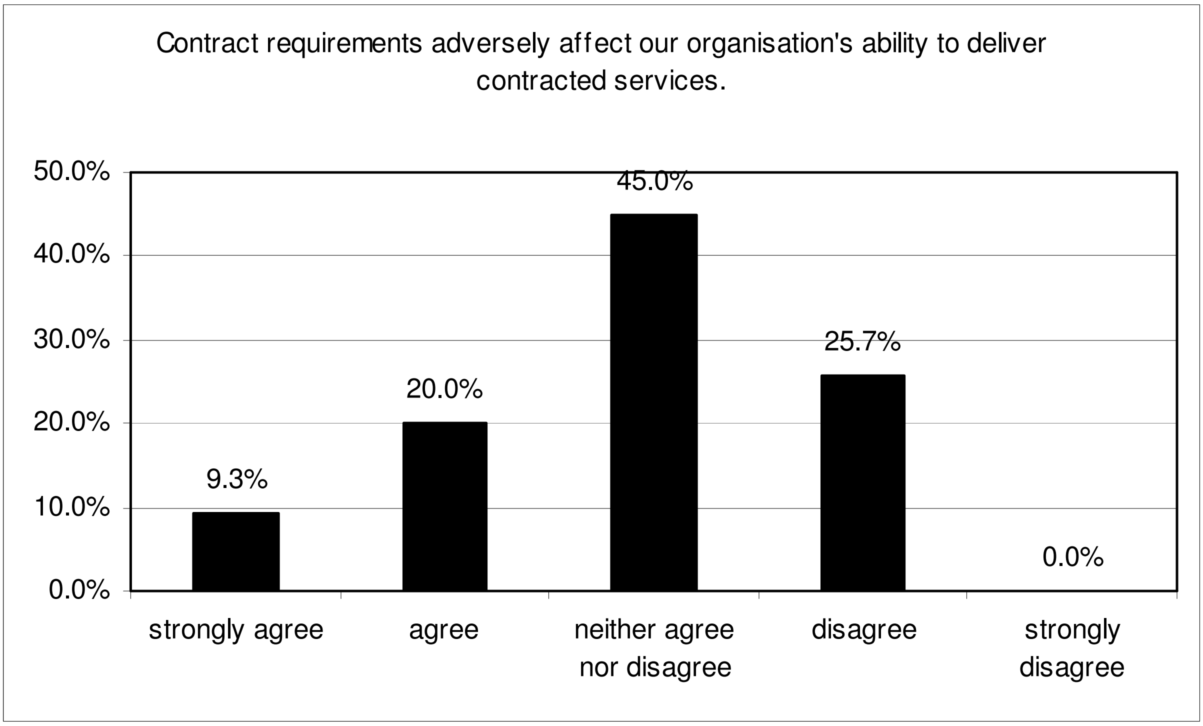


Effect of contract requirements on organisations' ability to deliver contracted services

Respondents were also divided over the effect of contract requirements on organisations' ability to deliver contracted services. While 29% of respondents agreed that contract requirements adversely affected their organisation's ability to deliver contracted services, 25% disagreed with this statement. The remaining 45% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 3.9: Effect of contract requirements: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'contract requirements adversely affect our organisation's ability to deliver contracted services' (Qld)

N= 140

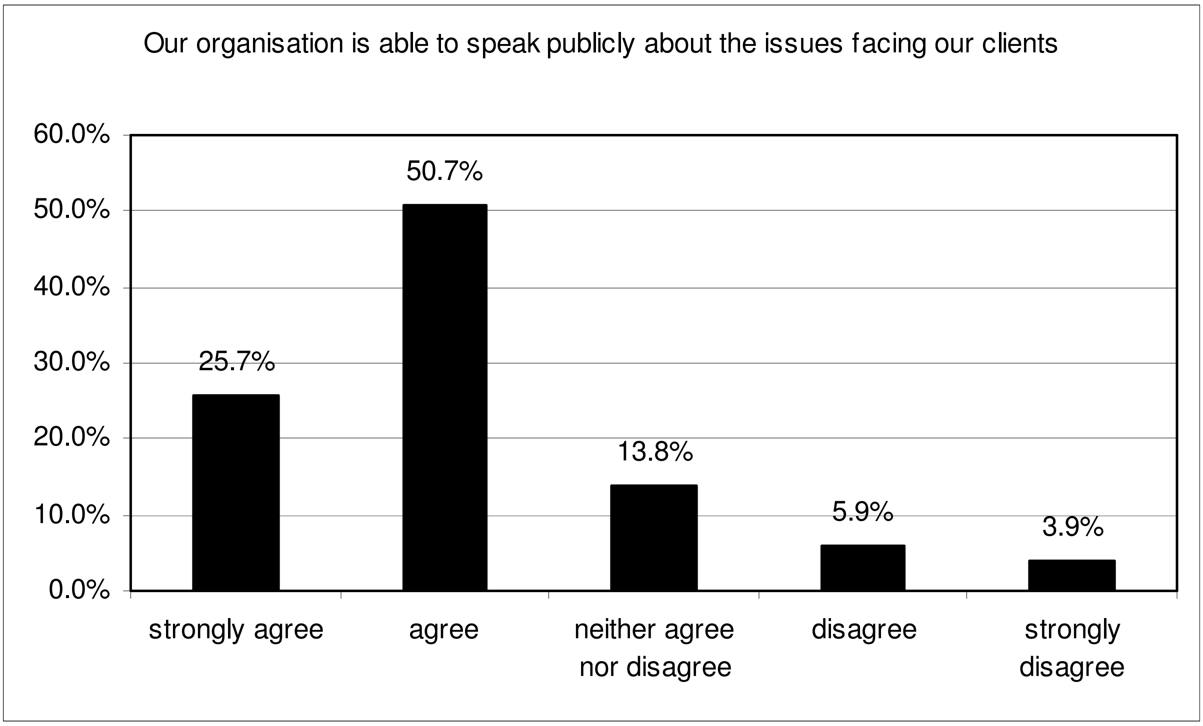


The advocacy role of community organisations

Of the 152 respondents to this question, a clear majority (76%) indicated that they were able to speak publicly about issues affecting their clients. Only 10% disagreed and another 14% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 3.10: Ability to speak publicly: proportion agree/disagree with statement: 'our organisation is able to speak publicly about the issues facing our clients' (Qld)

N= 152



Tax Status

The tax concessions available to community service organisations depend on the purposes and activities of individual organisations and how the Australian Taxation Office and State Government entities interpret the law governing charities and related organisations.

Tax concessions can be very valuable to individual organisations, running from exemptions from paying income tax to Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) exemptions which enable employers to offer employees 'salary packages' which include untaxed non-cash benefits.

Status as a Public Benevolent Institution attracts particularly generous concessions, including exemptions from FBT. Status as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) not only makes gifting to these organisations attractive but is a pre-condition for funding by most philanthropic bodies.

The tax status of survey respondents is mixed with 31.3% of organisation reporting having PBI or DGR status or both, 44.6% reporting that they were an Income Tax Exempt Charity (ITEC) only, and 6% reporting that they were none of these.

Table 3.6: Tax status (Qld)

Tax Status	Number of organisations	Percentage
ITEC	37	44.6%
ITEC, PBI, & DGR	15	18.1%
PBI	20	24.1%
DGR	3	3.6%
PBI and DGR	3	3.6%
ITEC and PBI	0	0.0%
None of the above	5	6.0%
Total	83	100

Proudly supported by

Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)
Level 2, 619 Elizabeth Street, Redfern NSW 2016
Locked Bag 4777, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Phone: 02 9310 6200   Fax: 02 931 0 4822
Email: info@acoss.org.au   Internet: www.acoss.org.au