

Contrary and Congruent Views of Leadership and Management in the Australian Social Economy

A research project by



"The 21st Century will be the century of the social sector organisation. The more economy, money and information become global, the more community will matter. And only the social sector nonprofit organisation performs in the community, exploits its opportunities, mobilizes its local resources, [and] solves its problems. *The leadership, competence, and management of the social sector nonprofit organization will thus largely determine the values, vision, the cohesion and performance of 21st Century Society.*"

Peter F Drucker, Drucker Foundation 1999

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Via this report we introduce the concept of "open source research". This idea parallels the very successful open source movement in the software industry exemplified by Linux, Firefox and thousands of other valuable projects. A core element of the open source movement¹ is a license that forces derivative works to be as free as the material on which it is based. In this way, intellectual property can enjoy total freedom, maximising its opportunity to be used and improved. Academia has a long tradition in this vein. The difference here is the legal framework that requires derivative work to be shared publicly and for free.

Note

The data and evidence were collected in this study during the period July – October 2007. Since then conditions may have changed. Hence, interpretations provided in this report may also have changed in the interim and in the period of dissemination and discussion about the outcomes of the study. The reader is referred to the archives for further verification of both data and interpretations. These preliminary findings are shared in the spirit of action learning and collaboration, an organising theme in the conduct of the research. Your constructive criticism either with the team via email or via the SEEEN discussion forums (www.seeen.org.au) is welcome.

¹ For an overview and introduction see the wikipedia entry at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source.
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Chapter 8: The Long Tail: Small-Large Organisations in the Sector

"We are a small organization that is up against the overhead wall. To get and retain qualified staff we need to pay more than we are able to. To be able to pay more we have to raise more funds, but to raise more funds we need more staff. A perfect vicious circle"

8.1. A question of size

Time and time again we were met with responses about the number and size of organisations, especially the number and challenges to small organisations in the Social Economy. It was similar to the situation of the "long tail" described by Chris Anderson⁷⁷. Anderson talks about the extraordinary contemporary expansion of small organisations in various industry-sectors especially technology-based industries and the creative industries. Long-tail economics suggest that this phenomenon will continue side by side with the continuation of large corporate businesses and to some extent at their loss.

In the first survey, we did not ask a direct question about how size/scale affected organisations but we received many responses across all eighteen issues about small-large organisations in the sector⁷⁸. It was clearly related however to two key issues, namely *overheated competition*, and the inability of most organisations and programs to *collaborate and cooperate* for greater efficiencies.

The surprising thing was that while many participants were very vocal about the issue, we actually have little reliable data about the overall size, nature, structures, revenue mix, business models, impact etc of organisations and programs in the sector. What research that has been conducted, is not repeated and so we do not understand how the sector and the issues it addresses are changing over time.

Of particular interest to the size/scale issue, we have no information on the rate of formation of new organisations. There is even less information available on the rate, timing and circumstances of failure.

8.2. Small, large and diverse organisations

As with the issue of competition, it is very important to remember that the sector is very diverse and the operating conditions within its "industries" are very different. The very different conditions lead to different types and forms of organisations – for example, employment agencies, are very different to a community theatre group. Thus it is important that in addition to overall observations about the Social Economy we consider the idiosyncrasies of each segment of the sector.

⁷⁷ Anderson, C. (2007) *The Long Tail: How Endless Choice Is Creating Unlimited Demand*. Random House Business Books, London

⁷⁸ We have avoided the descriptor small vs large because while there are evident tensions between small and large organisations in the Social Economy we do not presume they need to be in opposition.

8.2.1 *The vicissitudes of being small*

The majority of comments in the study were about the consequences of size of organisations – especially the small organisations in the sector. There were many comments about smallness and we reproduce them here.

The small size of many Social Economy organisations appeared to have unwanted consequences. These consequences often resulted in:

- Quality of leadership and management where “at the top end there are some excellent managers but in many of the smaller community agencies the management and governance is not great”⁷⁹.
- Reduced capacity to attract funding.
- Low staff retention.
- Difficulty in recruitment of qualified staff.
- Discounted wages and salary structures.
- Lower remuneration of board members (where relevant).
- Greater dependency on pro-bono resources (for volunteer staffed organisations especially).
- Strong operating competitive environment.
- Extreme difficulty in collaborating with other organisations.
- Excessive focus on passion (“leading with the heart”) rather than mission leading to ineffectual action.
- Over dependency on external grant funding.
- Unlikelihood of gaining DGR status thus limiting funding opportunities.
- Access-equity problems for rural organisations (especially in applications for infrastructure grants).
- Failure to prioritise investment funding (because of focus on maintenance and recurrent funding).
- Reputation: a “poor” track record.
- Lack of base capital leading to failure to; respond to needs; and attract funding.
- Lack of “viability and capacity” due to intensity of operations in context of scarce resources.
- Spectre of imposition of business models by others (“Business is evil”).
- General lack of capacity in early stage development (to springboard into mezzanine stage of investment and development).
- Wastage of resources through necessary applications for many small grants.
- Lack of capacity to apply and win large targeted grants.
- Scalability issues leading to difficulties of compliance with Government regulations and policy.
- Competition on unequal terms in competitive tendering process.
- General negative effects such as impact on networking, succession planning and professional development.
- Sustainability (‘survival’) dependent on one or two key personnel.
- Business models that don’t easily “fit” small organisations.

⁷⁹ L&M HQ 139 1

- Little evaluation of their impact (“and often don’t have the resources to do so).

The long list of relative disadvantages of being small seemed to reproduce the very problems they eschewed.

These “vicissitudes” are counterbalanced by views about large organisations; but with one difference - there were fewer comments.

8.2.2 The advantages of being large

When we searched the database for perspectives on large organisations in the sector we found proportionately fewer comments. While it may be surprising that there very many comments on being small, most respondents appeared to have forgotten about being “large”. That said, respondents stated clearly that larger corporate “charities”:

- Are viewed as the major power brokers (especially with Governments and funders);
- Have a higher capacity for developing and acquiring infrastructure.
- Engender greater favour through good relationships with Governments (indeed Governments generally prefer to “do business” with few rather than more organisations and where “few” means bigger organisations which can deliver and have a demonstrated capital, infrastructure, and capacity base).
- Generally have significant comparative advantage in the funding process relative to small organisations. An example of a corporate charity using all its donation funds to hire expert staff to write grant applications was cited. Other were claimed to “have submission writing teams and corporate relationship managers” that gave them an unassailable advantage⁸⁰.
- Were viewed with suspicion generally by smaller organisations (rightly or wrongly for their “monopoly” over funding⁸¹.
- That were also faith-based who were also viewed with suspicion but only on the grounds that Governments may prefer them (for personal preference or political reasons)⁸².

The list indicates the joys of power and working with a plenitude of resources.

We conclude this overview of the comments about small and large organisations in the Social Economy, by noting that there were approximately equal numbers from both large and small organisations in the sample as shown in Figure 7.1).

⁸⁰ CB 406 1 S#1

⁸¹ OI 42 (3) S#1

⁸² GP&R 617 (1) S#1

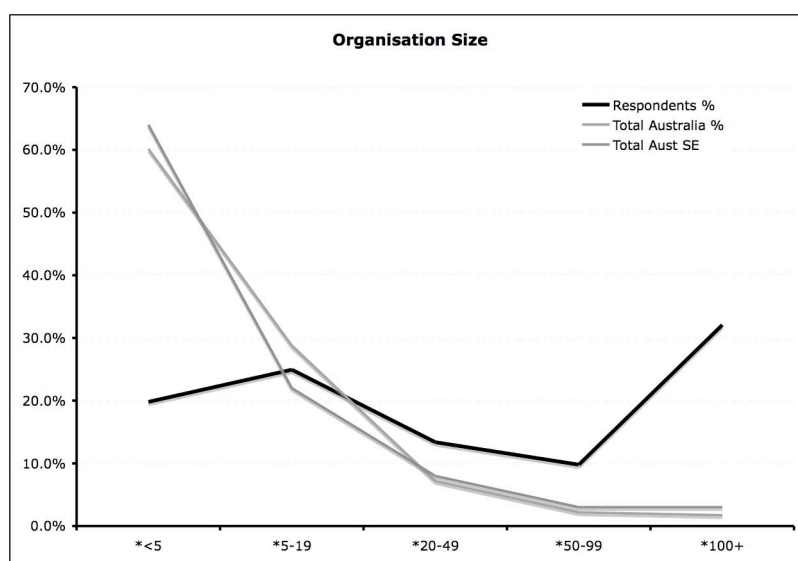


Figure 7.1 Organisation size for study respondents' organisations.

8.3. Duplication and mergers

8.3.1 Duplication

Consistently we heard the following kind of statement:

They are too any small organisations, operating independently, duplicating services to the same social issue. They need to aggregate where possible to achieve practical economies and higher productivity while maintaining they sense of identity⁸³.

The view that there are too many small organisations was based primarily on the fact that there was no “magic pudding” and that the amount of available and accessible funds was finite. Too many small organisations in a climate of relatively low demand for accountability, transparency of performance, and especially rigorous impact in contexts of too little funding and resources for all members of the social sector best accounts for these views of excess numbers of small organisations. Yet the numbers of small organisations in the sector remain high.

Every time there is a tragedy a new foundation starts up and the need to compete. If we are really serious about what we are doing we should be looking for organisations already engaged in the [particular] industry and supporting it⁸⁴.

One explanation for the sustained number of small organisations is undoubtedly the steady increase in cause-related start-ups. There appear to be a never-ending number and few strict regulations from preventing anyone to commence a foundation or social enterprise. But does this situation differ from the private business for-profit sector, especially for small-to-medium enterprises? Under a market regime of choice there seems to be no difference, and “free” choice is exploited.

⁸³ CAS 521, (2), S#1

⁸⁴ FG6a

Possibly a more likely explanation for the high number of small organisations may be found in the “passion” driving personnel in the Social Economy. Driven by social mission the longevity of most Social Economy organisations is extended by the passion and mission of personnel; they often operate on scant resources, discounted wages, and low overhead costs (with preferential costs by choice (theirs) or requirement (funders)). They are driven by the four motivational drivers outlined in Chapter 10 and listed as *morality, democratization, political representation, and performance*.

The difference for-profit and “non-profit” is that while the Social Economy is “motivated” by all four drivers; the for-profit sector is more likely to be driven by the last named motivator. This makes it difficult of the Social Economy worker to “let go”. (S)he keep doing the right thing; contributing to the construction of a more democratic and just society, and wanting to appear credible in working for a social good. There are compelling for him/her to stay the distance longer; and if rules and regulation allow continuance of a struggling or declining social business operation the opportunity to continue dominates. The for-profit worker is often compelled to “let go”/or required to lock down purely for financial and legal reasons.

8.3.2 Mergers

We use the word “merger” here because it is the most familiar word used by study participants to describe a range of methods and opportunities for the sector to address the issue of small-large. The issue of mergers usually arose when:

- a) Forprofits criticised the sector for its inefficiencies with too many small organisations engaging in service delivery in the same or similar industry type, resulting in waste of resources and consequent potential impact. This criticism has been public and expressed in business publications⁸⁵.
- b) The sector itself (and by no means the larger organisations) is critical of the large number of small organisations within the sector (as reflected in comments in the above section).

The dominant appeal though was to create mergers. But is this “resolution” more a response to a symptom rather than a strategy to confront the cause of the problem?

A number of participants in Thought Leadership Forums were insistent that mergers were not the way forward. They claimed that:

1. “Mergers are takeovers”. This view was expressed and agreed by competent and experienced managers.
2. Mergers were invariably an exercise in power relations (between large and small).
3. The term “merger” can mean many things in the Social Economy (slippage of meanings)

⁸⁵ For example, see the Business Review Weekly, 2005. See Passey, A. and Lyons, M. (2003) *Social Economy Large Part of BRW Top 500*, Australian Policy Online, September 2003 <http://www.apo.org.au>

While we don't intend to pursue the intricacies of mergers and their variants, we do repeat some of the forms of merger suggested by respondents. Mergers were interpreted as a form of:

- **Consolidation:** "survival" in small organisations is thought to be enhanced through some organisational arrangement. A section or "department" of a partnering organisation rather than the whole of the organisation merges to engage in the rationalisation of resources and reduction of overhead costs with tangible benefits to both parties. The partnering or relationship is symbiotic and each retains independence of governance in most operations.
- **Collaboration:** The sustainability of the organisation is cemented by some long-term alliance(s). There were a number of entrepreneurial participants who were actively engaged in alliance with for-profit corporate partners. While this presented its own set of challenges the patient development of links with these organisations was said to be bearing fruit. The "new philanthropy" and dedication of young philanthropists seek strategic alliances with a more involved commitment to engagement with high-impact organisations or potential "causes" in the sector⁸⁶. Again we know little about the number and nature of such alliances and the real impact they bring to the work of Social Economy organisations.
- **Adoption of innovative/alternative business models:** This refers principally to earned income strategies through processes of social entrepreneurship. One of the participants in a Thought Leadership Forum referred to the potential of the "new wave social entrepreneurship" that seeks to integrate social mission and business entrepreneurialism. We have stated elsewhere that not enough is known about this part of the sector, and it should be⁸⁷.
- **Aggregation:** This strategy was mentioned without explanation by a participant in the study. Aggregation refers to one organisation collecting goods or services from a variety of producers in the sector and making them available, easy to find, and distributed or collected at a single place (this may be a virtual space or a physical location such as a building or warehouse). In this way, "liquid" markets are made from "illiquid" markets; and the cost of distribution is minimised and sales and profit maximised⁸⁸.

There are other forms of "mergers"; the examples presented indicate that at least some organisations had thought about the issue. Few had done much about it even though most participants used the term or suggested the strategy of "merger" when asked: How can the number of small organisations be reduced in the social sector?

8.3.3 Who leads: who benefits?

We know from the data that respondents from the Social Economy viewed larger organisations as ideal representatives of the sector; this view was expressed in the context that if smaller organisations spoke out on behalf of the sector they were excluded, or they

⁸⁶ Handy, C. (2006) *The New Philanthropists: the New Generosity*. William Heinemann, London.

⁸⁷ Social enterprises are characterized by the three principal attributes of *mission/sociality*, *market/entrepreneurialism*, and *innovation/impact*. When all three are represented in a social enterprise, they intersect and make explicit the idea of social entrepreneurship. This representation also reflects the *alternative business model* that may be observed in social enterprises (Bartlett, 2007). See also Nicholls and Cho, *Social Entrepreneurship: the Structuration of a Field*. In Nicholls, A. (2006). *Social Entrepreneurship*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

⁸⁸ Google, iTunes, and eBay are examples and although they use internet technology, IT is not an essential attribute of such aggregations.

could lose their DGR status, or they were less likely to secure funding. In reality, peak bodies in the survey emerged as potential representatives of the sector but who were also viewed in some parts of the sector as incapable of managing change *and keep[ing] government and others accountable*⁸⁹.

But generally speaking, front line staff and clients in the Social Economy were seen to have little regard for organisational hierarchy and power structures of larger organisations. Their interests were absorbed almost entirely with concerns about service delivery. We might suggest here that this view is prevalent among certain industry types such as training and education, health, disability and those smaller organisations and programs which have to compete with larger organisations for a finite funding pool.

The "stress" for these small organisations comes from trying to meet insatiable demand for services with insufficient resources, and their joy comes from the impact they directly have on their cause. However, as one respondent declared: *"in this environment, if an opportunity for two organisations to merge is presented the decision is simple ... if it improves the ability to deliver services then it is a good idea."* This was one of the more altruistic and reasoned responses to the issue of mergers of small and large organisations.

How do larger organisations view smaller ones? And what is their view of mergers? In larger organisations, senior executives appear to face quite a different situation when confronted with a merger opportunity. In the case of two CEOs involved in a merger, it is reasonable to expect that one of them will be left without a job and the status that comes with leading an organisation. Thus the CEO, and other senior executives, may resist the merger opportunity. Other CEOs who are invited to consider a merger know full well that unless the small organisation is financially and culturally viable (the cultural capital within the organisation such as staffing quality etc), mergers can have negative consequences with a drain on resources and personnel across the whole of an organisation.

We also observed that one consequence of competition between small and large organisations was unequal power relationships in the sector and lack of transparency⁹⁰. Views associated with these two issues are:

- Larger corporate "charities" are viewed as the major power brokers (especially with governments and funders);
- Smaller (SME and microenterprises) are seen as least powerful;
- The unevenness of power relations is most explicit in funding processes;
- Mistakes in the sector are rarely known or shared for fear of repercussions for funding and increased accountability demands; and
- Knowledge tends not to be shared within the sector particularly where there is potential for adverse criticism.

The reality of power relations is almost inevitable where there is a gross difference between capital base, and access to funding and resources between small and large organisations. The more "unfortunate" issue is the fact that on the one hand the reality of this difference is viewed with frustration by small organisations and apparent indifference

⁹⁰ Report FG1

by large; whilst on the other hand, neither group seem capable of taking a lead role from within the sector.

Finally, Australian governments appear to have studiously ignored the decline of cooperatives and mutuals, and this means decline of smaller organisations especially in rural regions. At a national level, the Government has outsourced services (in line with historical precedent: see Chapter 3: "Spotlight n the Australian Economy"). They have failed to take an active interest in the idea of linking entrepreneurial economic activity with social outcomes via new forms of mutualism (as occurs in social entrepreneurship). There may be merit in exploring the population's belief in mutualism and new mutuality principles⁹¹.

8.4. The fuzzy futures of small organisations

In arriving at some impasse about the future of small-large organisations and programs in the Australian Social Economy, we record five ideas for the future. They were raised in forums, in the online surveys, and in individual post-forum consultation with selected participants.

8.4.1 The continuing proliferation of small organisations

What is the future reality for small organisations in the Social Economy? There are several views that have emerged that point to continued proliferation of small organisations:

1. The futures of small Social Economy organisations will parallel the futures of small-to-medium enterprises in the for-profit sector.

In one of the final focus groups⁹², participants engaged in a lively discussion about the nature of future growth and development of small organisations in the Australian Social Economy. One participant argued strongly that the sector would witness a continuing proliferation of small organisations together with the expansion of larger organisations and at the expense of medium sized entities. Hence what was happening in the for-profit area would be cloned in the non-profit or social sector.

Medium sized organisations were seen to be most at risk in the private sector. They have neither the capacity to operate at a scale demanded in large corporate organisations; and they cannot respond to the demands of operating environments experienced by small businesses. They are captured in between and are eventually 'squeezed out', and most likely "absorbed" by large organisations and corporates. The argument was that the same phenomenon would be observed in the Social Economy for small organisations and business.

2. Small organisations in the Social Economy will survive, perhaps proliferate, and then collapse.

This view is similar to the view expressed above. Organisations whose primary purpose is to implement a service/product and at the same time have low overhead costs were also seen as more likely to survive. There was a view that small organisations should be allowed

⁹¹ Lyons, M. (2005. ACCORD Newsletter

⁹² Report FG4a & 4B

to proliferate and then fail after a period of operations if their operation is not sustainable – a pattern typical of all small business.

3. Small organisations will persist because of growing support from “new wave philanthropists”.

Driven by the interests and generosity of “young” philanthropists who tend to favour start-ups and scaling -up of programs which address disadvantage, many young, vibrant, and socially entrepreneurial small organisations will be given future hope for sustainability. This view contrasts with the past support for well-established and older non-profit organisations such as foundations.

4. Research indicates that smaller organisations will persist and medium sized ones fail.

There is growing evidence that the way for the future will be the proliferation of smaller organisations, the “long-tail” of business. This is based on the unrestricted and unlimited choice primarily a result of the adoption of technology, including communications technology. In the first instance the long tail has emerged in the arts and creative industries but evidence suggest it will apply increasingly to other industry types⁹³.

The network of small providers will be so networked through technology that their impact collectively will be equivalent to larger organisations. The expansion of these smaller organisations will not necessarily come at the expense of larger organisations but the latter are more likely to form mega-organisations to increase scale of economies.

5. Finally, more rather than fewer small organisations will service human and “welfare” industries.

This position is based on several arguments. One argument proposes that smaller organisations can better serve these kinds of industries than larger organisations. In the health sector centralized systems appear less able to be efficient and productive than local smaller systems. The general mood of response to social philanthropy in Australia will probably support more rather than fewer organisations. The contribution of an increasing number of retiree is another phenomenon to be taken into account. And finally, there are the “new young entrepreneurs who are increasingly becoming involved in social causes.

There is also the argument that smaller organisations especially those that are ICT attuned have a greater capacity to enter markets with a market intelligence approach rather than an intelligent markets approach. The latter is a more “traditional” approach where knowledge of markets has always been a necessary condition for success (in the for-profit sector). Market intelligence however will characterise the younger smaller organisation which can capitalize on a more disruptive approach; on entrepreneurial alternative business models in niche markets that ensure impact and sustainability.

8.4.2 Transparency in the Social Economy marketplace

The issue of small-large organisations in the Social Economy is not about symptoms or causes which we have noted about key issues in other parts of this report. It is a reality immersed in the driver of democratization, in living in a capitalist economy, in government

⁹³ Anderson, C. (2006) *Idid*.

policy and regulation (however indisposed it is toward the social sector) and in a range of other issues that require closer scrutiny than can be undertaken in this exploratory analysis.

In short, the issue of small-large is about transparency. And we suggest that it is about transparency and the lack of transparency practised by leaders and managers in the Social Economy, and that transparency is a precondition for change.

We have also seen that the issue of small-large is enmeshed in a range of other key issues governing and constraining the Social Economy. These include among others, funding and resources, competition, collaboration and cooperation, and capacity building. And all of these rely on the capabilities and competence of the quality of leadership and management in the sector.

But from an analysis of the data, it seems that there is one *pre-condition for change* for this issue or for all other issues that impact on the Social Economy. The Social Economy needs the same kind of civic *transparency*. We currently observe an emerging transparency about the role of business and its responsibilities in the For-profit sector⁹⁴. The growing recognition of social responsibility issues (CSR- corporate social responsibility) and the need to be more transparent observed in this sector is a reflection of the goals of social enterprises, namely to integration of the social and business goals of an organisation.

We need to know more about these “drivers” of CSR within Australian For-profits; although we wonder about the need to turn the development into an industry as some scholars appear to be doing. And finally, we need to know more about quality ways in which civic transparency is best implemented in For-profit corporates and how smaller social sector organisations can contribute and benefit (based on the mutuality principle) from such relationships.

We also wondered during the course of the study whether larger and corporate charities were moving as quickly to become as transparent as their counterpart For-profit corporates and foundations appear to be moving. There was also the possibility that large organisations in the social sector acting in self-interest deliberately choose not to be advocates for the sector or to lead because they aim to keep small organisations small and less powerful.

The whole situation seems to be known within the sector but there is little initiative among leaders and managers. It is shrouded in an opaque veil and lack of transparency resulting in less than productive engagement within the sector. Does this situation reflect a lack of capabilities and competence of leaders and managers in being/not being more transparent? Or is it a question of will and unwillingness to act?

8.5. Quotes and Questions

The small to medium sized organisations suffer mostly thru insufficient funding to enable the employment of suitable qualified staff to manage on a day to day basis, develop

⁹⁴ There are indicators of this in the public arena with *Inconvenient Truths*, Nobel Prizes etc. But there is also a growing research output on the issue. See, for example, the work of Prahalad, Hart, and others.



seen

long term strategies, and satisfy policy and governance issues. This results in poor staff morale and excessive movement in personnel. Closing Comment, 411, (1), S#1

Many small to medium sized organisations do not have viable resource streams to respond to ever increasing reporting requirements to Govt. They are left with no time and energy to build viability and capacity, often spending all their resources responding to government and delivering services. Innovating and value adding are rarely properly resourced. Capacity building, 82, (1), S#1

There are still a large number of small organisations trying to go it alone with insufficient funds and management skills. C&C, 441, (1), S#1

The requirements of applying and reporting to multiple funding bodies in different formats put great strain on small organisations. Ol, 513, (1), S#1

Quotes: "the advantages of being large"

Small not-for-profits with limited infra structure are competing against large organisations which have submission writing teams and corporate relationship managers. CB 406, (1), S#1

Third sector politics is driven by humanities and religious cause-based charities (due to size) leaving other causes requirements untended. CAS, 173, (1), S#1

Leadership in the sector is increasingly consulting with big corporate organisations and structuring change on that basis, most of the work is being done in communities with smaller organisations. As a broad rule government consults with four or five big organisations and one representative of smaller organisations. Smaller organisations which are community based in local areas should be more represented. SL, 445, (1), S#1

Quotes: duplication and mergers

I do see a great deal of duplicity and overlap in organisations. For sure they all have clear objectives etc but I question whether we could do better with providing more resources for fewer.

Collaboration is always better than competition in our sector though with increasing pressure on limited funding there is a fair bit of duplication and turf protection. CAS, 601, (1), S#1

Many Social Economy organisations are silo-specific, compete against each other in specific areas (e.g. cancer, guide dogs etc) and duplicate their activities resulting in increased expenditure across all areas.

They are too any small organisations, operating independently, duplicating services to the same social issue. They need to aggregate where possible to achieve practical economies and higher productivity while maintaining they sense of identity. CAS, 521, (2), S#1

Increasing centralization of third sector service delivery within large welfare corporations such as Centrecare, Relationships Australia, Lifeline, Ozcare and Spiritus that gives service users and service providers little option about which programs or organisations they would like to support. Smaller organisations are constantly stressed as welfare corporations gobble up funding and opportunities squeezing small agencies out of the arena and I have even been involved in a small organization whose manager paired up with the manager of a large organization to organize a hostile takeover of the small community group to teach the Management Committee a lesson. Other Issues, 782, (1), S#1

Quotes: Who benefits?

The creation of a bureaucratic copy of government consultation and representation methods has removed the ability of smaller organisations to even get their message on the agenda in most cases. The closed methods of invitation only consultation has meant that the sector this represented by the same people and organisations who may not truly reflect the scope and opinions of the sector at large. The tendency for representative agencies and peak bodies to cut deals with government and follow rather than lead is now to the point where there is very little difference in the aims of non government peaks to the departments they are intrinsically connected to. Grassroots representation is not only not appreciated but rarely allowed. SL, 808, (?), S#1

The big is beautiful mantra of government is often repeated by corporate and philanthropic support which tends to favour the glossy image of big organisations over grass roots capacity. CB, 113, (0), S#1

Government policy and regulation is forever changing. Organisations that receive government funding are typically bound by an enormous plethora of regulations and requirement, different for each program. Even a small organization may receive funding from several different government programs each with their own accountability requirements. This is a hedge against any one of them ceasing, but is administratively very burdensome and tends to stifle innovation. GP&R, 626, (1), S#1

Quotes: fuzzy futures

Small organisations are needed. They can play a very vital role, which larger organisations sometimes cannot. CB 625 1 S#1

I believe we need a very different approach that shows creativity and an ability to find approaches and solutions different to many of those we presently see/use. Much of what happens makes people dependent rather than encouraging change, responsibility and individual development. We need to walk along side and give a helping hand rather than "doing it for others". Too often we see "one size fits all solutions" that end up not fitting anybody very well. We are not asking the right questions and too often treat the result rather than identifying and working with the cause e.g. we build more goals rather than invest heavily in identifying and dealing with the causes of anti-social behaviour to prevent it happening. Closing Comments, 258, (1), S#1

8.5.1 Questions

1. How can we generate reliable and useful data cost effectively?
2. The question may now be asked: who will lead any charge in addressing issues of large-small? Everyone in the Social Economy seems aware of the challenges that need to be addressed in relation to this issue. No one appears to want to address the challenges. Is it then just another aspect of lethargy (real or apparent) among sector members?
3. Should there be mergers of small organisations?
4. Will increasing numbers of small organisations promote or hinder efficiency? And in what circumstances?
5. How can we get the best of both worlds – the proximity to community and agility offered by small organisations and the efficiencies of scale of large organisations?
6. What are the scale benefits of large organisations and can they be achieved through market mechanisms?