

The Role of Recruitment Expectations and Organisational Trust  
in Volunteer Organisations

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## Abstract

Volunteer organisations provide significant value to society. However, limited research exists on ways through which volunteer organisations can manage the behaviour and attitudes of their volunteers. The main purpose of this study was to contribute to literature in this area by assessing the applicability of setting appropriate recruitment expectations and fostering organisational trust in the volunteer context. This was done by examining the influence of the relationship between pre-entry recruitment expectations and post-entry experiences of volunteers on levels of satisfaction, commitment, co-operative behaviour and turnover intentions. The influence of organisational trust on these variables was also assessed. Volunteers from a national non-profit organisation were given a survey of their expectations shortly after joining (and prior to undertaking any voluntary work), and then completed another set of measures two months later after participation in voluntary training and activities. Sampling resulted in 22 matched surveys between phase one and phase two. Results partially suggest that expectations and organisational trust are associated with volunteer satisfaction levels, and provide evidence indicating that further research in this area using a larger sample may reveal significant associations. Overall, the present study suggests that volunteer organisations can benefit from the appropriate management of recruitment processes and organisational trust, and provides a foundation for further research on this topic.

# The Role of Recruitment Expectations and Organisational Trust in Volunteer Organisations

## Overview

Volunteers and the organisations they work for have received relatively little research attention. Given the important role that volunteers play in our workforce and society in general, researchers (e.g. Farmer & Fedor, 1999; Pearce, 1993; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998) often lament the shortage of data-driven, empirically tested studies on volunteers and the work that they perform. A remarkable amount of New Zealanders participate in volunteer work, with recent statistics indicating that around one third of New Zealanders participate in formal voluntary work for a group or organisation (Statistics New Zealand, 2009). This statistic is particularly impressive given that the level of responsibility and commitment of time and effort by volunteers can be just as great as what is found in paid workers (Vecina, Chacon, Sueiro & Barron, 2012). Furthermore, involvement in volunteer work may also involve substantial personal expense (Omoto & Snyder, 1995). The absence of research in this area is a great disservice to a significant portion of society, and leads to a narrow understanding of organisational behaviour in the volunteer context (Pearce, 1993). With the considerable commitment of volunteering, and the social significance of volunteer roles, it is clear that emphasis on organisational research in further understanding the donation of time will provide considerable benefit to organisations the world over, the people involved in them, and society in general.

Once a volunteer makes the decision to join an organisation and becomes involved in their operational activities, there are several questions surrounding what keeps them happy to continue to contribute to the organisation without being paid. Without the formal contract and material resources that come with being in paid employment, volunteers are

under no obligation to stay. Therefore, it should be a priority of all volunteer organisations to do all they can to keep their high-performing volunteers satisfied and committed to their positions, in order to get the most out of them and sustain long term volunteering within the organisation. It is known from the organisational literature that the successful management of recruitment efforts, such as recruitment expectations, is one way through which to positively influence post-hire outcomes and organisational attitudes, thereby enhancing performance and retention (Breugh, 2013; Breugh & Starke, 2000). However, there is limited application of this literature to volunteer organisations. Given that there are obvious differences between paid employees and volunteers, it is not known how relevant the application of much of this research is to volunteers. Successful recruitment is difficult, as evidenced by the sizable amount of research on recruitment efforts (Breugh, 2013; Breugh & Starke, 2000), but volunteer organisations are faced with material constraints that for-profit organisations do not necessarily have. This makes it much more difficult for many non-profits to both appeal to individuals initially, and retain new members (Pearce, 1993). Difficulty in persuading individuals to join an organisation often leads to unrealistic recruitment efforts, which are designed to make positions more appealing to potential recruits, but also lead to higher member attrition (Pearce, 1993). Volunteer organisations are highly dependent on retaining their volunteers, so clarification of how to promote long term retention via recruitment efforts is likely to assist them greatly to operate successfully.

The present study specifically examined how pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences of volunteers are related to four key attitudinal variables: job satisfaction, commitment, co-operative behaviour and turnover intentions. The relationship between organisational trust and these attitudinal variables was also assessed. In the following introduction, the literature on volunteerism is examined, followed by a review of existing literature on recruitment expectations and the psychological contract, and organisational

trust, with an emphasis on how they are implicated in the context of volunteering. This introduction concludes with a number of hypotheses to be tested in the present study.

## Volunteerism

Volunteering behaviour is generally defined as the donation of time for the good, collectively or otherwise, of others (Wilson & Musick, 1997). Formal volunteering behaviour is a long-term commitment to a volunteer organisation, distinguished from informal helping behaviour as it involves an individual making a commitment to an activity or organisation instead of episodic or solo acts of kindness (Davis, Hall & Meyer, 2003; Dwiggins-Beeler, Spitzberg & Roesch, 2011). It is also performed without obligation, in that the individuals involved typically seek out volunteer opportunities instead of being involved out of duty (Dwiggins-Beeler et al., 2011; Omoto & Snyder, 1995). There are a wide range of activities that volunteers perform, including emergency response, fundraising and community support. These activities often serve as the backbone for organisations that rely on the donation of their members' time to function effectively.

In some ways, volunteers are similar to paid employees. They are assigned tasks, and perform them for the benefit of other individuals or an organisation, and expect some considerations from the organisation in return (Farmer & Fedor, 1999). However, there are clear fundamental differences between volunteers and paid employees. For example, volunteers are not obligated to perform activities for an organisation beyond their personal desire and choice to perform them (Vecina et al., 2012). This is primarily due to the absence of financial stability and other visible incentives received in paid employment (Pearce, 1993) that make continued employment a necessity. Volunteer work is also considered to be somewhat of a leisure activity as it is performed in an individual's spare

time, and is usually only performed part-time because of this (Pearce, 1993). These factors combined lead to different levels of interaction between a volunteer and the organisation than what exists in typical paid employee/employer relationships, and may pose distinct challenges in keeping volunteers satisfied, committed and retained in an organisation.

Volunteer organisations find themselves placed in a challenging and constantly changing landscape, with twenty-first century advancements meaning that volunteers have the potential to make more of an impact than ever before (United Nations, 2011). However, changes in recent decades also mean that volunteer organisations are faced with additional challenges regarding the management of their volunteers, including, importantly, volunteer retention (Cuskelly, Taylor, Hoye & Darcy, 2006). A United Nations (2011) report on the state of volunteering in the twenty-first century references recent developmental advancements throughout the world (such as mobile communication, the Internet and increased mobility of the world's population) as offering opportunities through which the value and significance of volunteerism can increase. These, however, are contrasted with changes that present contemporary difficulties for volunteer organisations, particularly with reference to long-term commitment of their volunteers. These include changes in demographics (i.e., the ageing population), household composition, employment patterns, and growing wealth and inequality (United Nations, 2011). Combined with changes to contemporary societal values, the priorities of individuals are becoming less community focused (Rochester, Paine & Howlett, 2010). These factors may lead to a reduction in the number of individuals willing to volunteer in the first place, and may mean a decrease in those who are able to find the time to volunteer consistently, particularly in sectors where special skills and training are required to fulfil volunteer responsibilities. Volunteer organisations cannot rely on the goodwill of their volunteers alone to sustain their

volunteering behaviour given these changes, thus must be proactive in the management of their volunteers to strengthen, direct and prolong volunteer involvement in the organisation.

In addition to these changes, volunteering is inherently characterised by uncertainty (Pearce, 1993). In a voluntary context, volunteers frequently do not know what the work they will perform will be like and often hold differing definitions of what volunteer work actually is, leading to inconsistent attitudes on whether the work should be performed in a casual manner or in a more business-like fashion (Pearce, 1993; Vantilborgh, et al., 2011). Volunteers are also faced with uncertainty and ambiguity over the value of the work that they perform, face varied behavioural expectations and work structure, and may have differing goals to the voluntary organisation that they are donating time to (Pearce, 1993; Vantilborgh, et al., 2011). The organisations themselves are faced with the ease of exit of their volunteers and frequently have uncertain funding sources outside of their control (Pearce, 1993). These factors all contribute to less cemented expectations than those held by paid organisational employees, who are often more aware of what they will find upon entering an organisation. This is attributable to the fact that employees are obligated by law in New Zealand to receive contractual commitments from their employer, imparting them with at least some knowledge of what to expect upon organisational entry.

Uncertainty is a characteristic that has been associated with poor outcomes for organisational members given that individuals have two fundamental needs – predictive needs and explanatory needs (Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish & DiFonzo, 2004). Predictive needs are associated with the need to predict what will happen next and explanatory needs are associated with the need to explain why things are a certain way. Thus, uncertainty is maladaptive and discomfoting in any context as it means that individuals cannot adequately prepare themselves for situations they may find themselves in (Bordia et al.,

2004). The absence of certainty and the challenges faced by those in the voluntary sector result in unique problems and a significantly different operational environment to the typical for-profit organisations that are at the heart of much organisational research (Pearce, 1993). Overall, literature largely indicates that existing knowledge collected from research in for-profit organisations should be tested for applicability and appropriateness in the volunteer sector, before existing principles are recommended for use with volunteers.

### Recruitment Expectations and the Psychological Contract

Appealing to members of society on a level that makes them want to be involved is a problem faced by organisations who want to attract qualified employees and volunteers alike. It is possible, however, that strategies employed by organisations to attract new members, including both paid employees and volunteers, may be contributing to the uncertainty surrounding positions by providing an incomplete picture of the job and organisation. Misinforming applicants (whether deliberately or not) in an attempt to maximise applicant interest (e.g., by downplaying the negative aspects of a role and overemphasising the positives) has significant influence over the knowledge that newcomers have about the organisation itself and job characteristics (Buckley, Fedor, Veres, Wiese & Carraher, 1998). By not detailing the full picture of what involvement in the organisation and the role will entail, distortions of reality can arise and leave individuals with expectations of job and organisational involvement that are far removed from the actual role (Buckley, et al., 1998). Setting accurate expectations is something that organisations commonly get wrong during recruitment. One study revealed that fifty-five per cent of those sampled felt as though their organisation had not delivered on what was promised, even after two years of involvement (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994), thus

demonstrating the apparent ease at which this process can go awry. In a volunteer context, it is likely that this is a much more common problem. Voluntary organisations are faced with the difficulty of attracting new volunteers, and the expectations of these volunteers (such as how they expect their time to be used) are typically not based on formal agreements but develop through informal means before and during the recruitment process (Jafri, 2011). These factors, combined with the absence of support and skilled human resource management practitioners (Taylor, Darcy, Hoye & Cuskelly, 2006), contribute to the likelihood that the recruitment expectations of volunteers are not adequately managed, triggering further volunteer uncertainty and exposing volunteer organisations to the pitfalls of unmet expectations.

Setting accurate recruitment expectations affects what an individual perceives they are expecting to give to and receive from the organisation (Wanous, Polland, Premack & Davis, 1992). These expectations are associated with a breach in the psychological contract, which occurs when an individual does not experience or receive something that they expected to find upon joining an organisation (Robinson, 1996). Psychological contracts are based on mutual exchanges between an employee and their employer which lead to the understanding that promises have been made regarding the terms and conditions of the employment relationship (Freese, Schalk & Croon, 2011), regardless of whether they have been explicitly stated or implied (Farmer & Fedor, 1999).

The formation of a psychological contract is not limited to the paid employee-employer relationship. Psychological contracts hold similar implications for the relationship between volunteer organisations and their volunteers (e.g. Farmer & Fedor, 1999; Taylor et al., 2006) as the necessary components of contract formation are still present. These include pre-employment factors, such as professional norms and societal beliefs about the organisation and the work itself, as well as active promise exchange and

the evaluation of signals during recruitment. Early socialisation also plays a role as promises continue to be exchanged during this process, and new recruits actively seek information soon after entry which can be delivered by multiple sources in the organisation (Rousseau, 2001). Later experiences within the organisation are also implicated in the psychological contract as individuals become more entrenched in the organisation's operations (Rousseau, 2001). These factors are all easily translated to the volunteer context, thus psychological contracts and their associated expectations are formed by volunteers.

Typical expectations and obligations in a paid employment relationship have been explored in the organisational literature, with individuals typically having expectations surrounding nine key factors: job content, rewards, career development, social atmosphere, policies and procedures, work-life balance, justice, supervision and culture (Colquitt, 2001; Freese, 2009; Jusoh, Simun and Chong, 2011). Psychological contracts are believed to form to guide employee behaviour, to create a sense of independence and influence in an employee, and to reduce the uncertainty around employment in a position by creating expectations (Farmer & Fedor, 1999). If a discrepancy exists between what is expected and what is found in an organisation, individuals are left with the perception that the organisation has not fulfilled their promises to them (Farmer & Fedor, 1999).

The violation of obligations (or expectations), or at least the perception that obligations have not been met (Robinson, 1996), can have significant implications for organisations. Unmet expectations have been shown to be associated with decreased job satisfaction, in-role performance, organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviours, as well as increased turnover intentions (Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski & Bravo, 2007; Wanous, et al., 1992). Psychological contract breach and unmet expectations have also been associated with lower levels of organisational trust (Jafri, 2011; Robinson, 1996; Robinson &

Rousseau, 1994). This is thought to be because after a discrepancy between what was expected and what is experienced, individuals no longer trust that the organisation will fulfil other expectations and that the organisation has indirectly indicated that it no longer cares for them (Robinson, 1996). It is suggested that it is this loss of trust that significantly leads to the detrimental and destructive organisational outcomes associated with the disregard of perceived obligations (Montes & Irving, 2008; Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Morrison, 2000), given that this perceived disregard calls into question two of the key conditions that lead to organisational trust – beliefs of integrity and benevolence towards the organisation (Robinson, 1996).

## Organisational Trust

Organisational trust can be defined as an individual's certain, positive beliefs concerning an organisation's conduct, including their words, actions and decisions (Lewicki, McAllister & Bies, 1998). It is based on the expectation that the organisation will act in a way that fulfils their explicit or implicit obligations to the other party, and that these obligations were made with the honest desire to fulfil them (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996). Organisational trust influences the willingness of an individual to be exposed to the organisation's actions (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). This is because these expectations of behaviour allow the individual to anticipate how the organisation will act in situations that are important to them (Mayer et al., 1995), thus promoting an effective and constructive relationship between an organisation and its members (Jafri, 2011). The importance of organisational trust in for-profit organisations has been strongly argued, with high levels of trust recognised as playing a significant role in overall organisational success (Colquitt, Scott & Lepine, 2007; Davis, Schoorman, Mayer & Tan, 2000; Flaherty &

Pappas, 2000; Pirson & Malhotra, 2011), and is implicated in other important organisational outcomes such as increased levels of satisfaction, commitment and co-operative behaviour, and decreased levels of turnover (Davis et al., 2000; Flaherty & Pappas, 2000; Jafri, 2011; Mayer et al., 1995).

The formation of trust between an individual and an organisation involves many factors. These include the features of perceived trustworthiness of the organisation, such as confidence in their ability and perceptions of their benevolence and integrity, as well as the predictability of these factors (i.e., the organisation will consistently act in a positive way) (Mayer et al., 1995). An individual's general propensity and ability to trust others are also implicated in organisational trust levels, with these generally considered to be stable and individual-specific features affecting the probability that, and extent to which, an individual will trust another party (Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995; Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007). The personality dimension of altruism is also implicated as it influences the likelihood that an individual will perceive an organisation in a favourable light (Burt & Dunham, 2009), which when considered with dispositional trust, can be thought of as a combined predisposition to trust.

Trust is considered to be at the heart of any charitable activity and is central to the development of charitable relationships, and thus defines volunteer organisations (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). It provides the basis for their credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of its members and followers, the media and the general public, thereby playing a significant role in the amount of time and money donated to their operations (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). Volunteering itself is often a carefully considered decision, and the organisation that is the recipient of that donated time is also chosen with a great deal of care (Davis et al., 2003), so individuals are likely to enter an organisation with high levels of initial trust, as without it, a volunteer would not choose to support the organisation in the first place. Without the

continual promotion and maintenance of this trust upon organisational entry, trust levels weaken and, given its strong ties to the voluntary sector (Sargeant & Lee, 2004), sustained volunteering is put at risk.

Organisational trust has been studied in a charitable context in the past, however, the focus of these studies has been on the donation of money, rather than time (e.g. Burt & Dunham, 2009; Naskrent & Siebelt, 2011; Sargeant & Lee, 2004). With reference to the donation of money, trust plays a significant role, with research suggesting that individuals are much less likely to give money to charities that they do not trust (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). These studies concern the transactional component of trust, which is directly related to an individual's expectations of other parties' behaviour and the uncertainty surrounding it (Burt & Dunham, 1999). In giving money, donors trust that the funds are going to a reputable organisation to use their money in honest ways, as they rarely have the opportunity to know what happens with it after donation (Burt & Dunham, 1999). When considering the donation of time, the transactional nature of trust becomes much more straightforward as the individual can see and experience how their time is being used. In the volunteering context, the most applicable way of viewing transactional trust is the expectation (or, the trust) that their time is going to be used in a particular way, and that their volunteering for the organisation will involve certain features encouraging their involvement. If the expectation and experience equate, it might be expected that trust in the organisation will develop further, or at least maintain itself at a high level. Conversely, when the expectations and experiences do not align, it is likely that trust in the organisation will deteriorate, and that a decline in attitudes associated with organisational trust will follow.

## Current Research

Volunteers are a valuable resource to organisations that rely on the donation of time to achieve their goals. However, volunteers and their behaviour are difficult to manage, thus the present study aims to provide volunteer organisations with further knowledge on volunteer recruitment and retention. This research specifically examines the relationship between pre-entry recruitment expectations and post-entry experiences of volunteers, and satisfaction, commitment (affective and normative), co-operative behaviour and turnover intentions levels. The effect of organisational trust on these outcome variables is also examined.

Knowledge of factors influencing volunteer retention is necessary for the successful operation of volunteer organisations, as without effective retention strategies it is unlikely that volunteer organisations are living up to their potential, particularly in highly skilled sectors where there is a heavy investment in training volunteers. A considerable research gap exists in the study of what influences sustained volunteering behaviours. This study intends to contribute to literature in this area by assessing the applicability of setting appropriate recruitment expectations and fostering organisational trust in the volunteer context. The research involved assessing pre-entry expectations and comparing this data with post-entry experiences, with this comparison resulting in one of three outcomes: expectations are not met, expectations are met, or expectations are exceeded. In line with past findings, the following five hypotheses were tested:

**Hypothesis 1.** Met and/or exceeded expectations for job content, career development, social atmosphere, policies, work-life balance, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, supervision and culture will be negatively correlated with intentions to turnover.

Hypothesis 2. Met and/or exceeded expectations for job content job content, career development, social atmosphere, policies, work-life balance, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, supervision and culture will be positively correlated with job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3. Met and/or exceeded expectations for job content job content, career development, social atmosphere, policies, work-life balance, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, supervision and culture will be positively correlated with normative commitment.

Hypothesis 4. Met and/or exceeded expectations for job content job content, career development, social atmosphere, policies, work-life balance, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, supervision and culture will be positively correlated with affective commitment.

Hypothesis 5. Met and/or exceeded expectations for job content job content, career development, social atmosphere, policies, work-life balance, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, supervision and culture will be positively correlated with organisational trust.

In addition, to assess the applicability of existing literature surrounding organisational trust in a volunteer context, associations between organisational trust and commitment, satisfaction, co-operative behaviour and turnover intentions were examined. This was tested with the following two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6. Higher levels of organisational trust will be positively correlated with the measures of: satisfaction, commitment (affective and normative), and co-operative behaviour.

Hypothesis 7. Higher levels of organisational trust will be negatively correlated with the measure of turnover intentions.

Overall, this study aimed to provide a further understanding of what can be done to add to the success of volunteer organisations through the proper management of their volunteers. Additionally, the study will inform practice in volunteer organisations, will solidify the importance of fostering and maintaining organisational trust in volunteers, and will inform expectation-setting processes in the recruitment and induction of volunteers.

## Method

### Design

The study utilised a two phase, longitudinal survey design to test the hypotheses. Phase one was administered to participants as soon as possible after they joined Land Search and Rescue New Zealand (LandSAR), and phase two was administered two months after phase one. The presentation order of the scales in the survey was counterbalanced.

### Participants

Ninety-seven new volunteers from LandSAR were contacted by mail and invited to participate in the study. They were based at various locations across New Zealand and recruited through the LandSAR head office using information given when joining. Only new volunteers were eligible to participate. All participants provided their written consent to take part in the study and a five character code using the first three letters of their mother's maiden name and the last two numbers of their birth year for anonymity.

Participants were also given the option to go into the draw to win one of two \$150 petrol vouchers as an incentive for participation.

**Phase One.** Of these 97 individuals sampled, 47 responded to phase one of the study, giving an initial response rate of 48%. Participants included 33 males and 14 females. Their ages ranged from 17 to 73, with a mean age of 42.5 years ( $SD = 12.4$ ).

**Phase Two.** Thirty one volunteers completed phase two, which resulted in 24 matched surveys. Two of these participants indicated that they were not new volunteers and were removed from the sample, resulting in 22 useable responses, yielding a final response rate of 23%. Participants included 16 males and 6 females. Their ages ranged from 29 to 73, with a mean age of 47 ( $SD = 12$ ).

## Measures

The survey was developed for the volunteer context using existing, validated organisational scales.

### Phase One Survey. (Shown in Appendix A)

*Demographic Information.* Information regarding whether they had volunteered for other organisations prior to joining LandSAR, gender and age was collected.

*Volunteer Expectations.* Fifty items were used to assess the new volunteers' expectations of what the organisation they are volunteering to will offer, and what their volunteering work will be like. This measure was based on The New Tilburg Psychological Contract Questionnaire (NTPCQ) (Freese, 2009) which measures the extent to which six organisational expectations are met. This was adapted by changing wording to be appropriate for the volunteer context, and several obligations were added to those provided

by the NTPCQ to reflect the depth and breadth of typical employee organisational expectations found in organisational literature. The rewards subscale of the NTPCQ was removed as this was not relevant to the current study using volunteers. Ten organisational expectations were used in the final expectations scale distributed in the current study. Items were prefaced with the instruction to indicate, by circling a number, “*the extent to which you expect your volunteering to LandSAR to be characterised by the job descriptor*”. All items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *to a great extent*. Overall internal consistency for this scale at phase one was  $\alpha = .93$ .

*Job content.* Six items were used to assess expectations of job content. An example item is “*Interesting work*”. This subscale is originally from the NTPCQ, and has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .78$ . In this study, internal consistency at phase one was  $\alpha = .66$ .

*Career development.* Six items were used to assess expectations of career development. An example item is “*Training and education*”. This subscale is originally from the NTPCQ, and has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .80$ . In this study, internal consistency at phase one was  $\alpha = .79$ .

*Social atmosphere.* Five items were used to assess expectations of social atmosphere. An example item is “*Support from other volunteers*”. This subscale is originally from the NTPCQ, and has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .84$ . In this study, internal consistency at phase one was  $\alpha = .76$ .

*Organisational policies.* Eight items were used to assess expectations of organisational policies. An example item is “*Clear and fair rules and regulations*”. This subscale is originally from the NTPCQ, and has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .84$ . In this study, internal consistency at phase one was  $\alpha = .83$ .

*Work-life balance.* Five items were used to assess expectations of work-life balance. An example item is “*Consideration of your personal circumstances*”. This subscale is originally from the NTPCQ, and has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .58$ . In this study, internal consistency at phase one was  $\alpha = .68$ .

*Procedural justice.* Seven items were used to assess expectations of procedural justice. An example item is “*The ability to appeal decisions*”. This subscale is originally from Colquitt’s (2001) measure, which was then adapted to fit the framework provided by the NTPCQ, for example the original item “*Have those procedures upheld ethical and moral standards?*” was changed to “*Procedures that uphold ethical and moral standards*”. The original scale has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .84$ , and internal consistency in this study was  $\alpha = .77$  at phase one.

*Interpersonal justice.* Three items were used to assess expectations of interpersonal justice. An example item is “*An organisation that treats you with respect*”. This subscale is originally from Colquitt’s (2001) measure, which was adapted to fit the NTPCQ framework, for example the original item “*Has (he/she) treated you with dignity?*” was changed to “*An organisation that treats you with dignity*”. One item was removed as it could not be reworded for the volunteer context without changing the overall meaning of the item. This scale has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .96$ , and this study found internal consistency of  $\alpha = .94$  at phase one.

*Informational justice.* Three items were used to assess expectations of informational justice. An example item is “*Thorough explanations of procedures*”. This subscale is originally from Colquitt’s (2001) measure of informational justice, which was also adapted to fit the NTPCQ framework, for example the original item “*Has (he/she) communicated details in a timely manner*” was changed to “*Timely communication*”. Two items were

removed as they could not be reworded for the context without changing the overall meaning of the items. The scale has internal consistency of  $\alpha = .90$ , and this study found internal consistency of  $\alpha = .70$  at phase one.

*Supervision.* Three items were used to assess supervision expectations. An example item is “*A supervisor that monitors performance for errors needing correction*”. This subscale was adapted for the NTPCQ framework from Jusoh, Simun and Chong’s (2011) leadership subscale, excluding three items inappropriate for the volunteer setting. For an example of an adaptation, the original item “*My supervisor serves as a role model for me*” was changed to “*A supervisor that serves as a role model*”. Internal consistency for the scale is reported to be  $\alpha = .84$  for preferred leadership and  $\alpha = .87$  for actual leadership. In the current study, internal consistency was  $\alpha = .89$  at phase one.

*Organisational culture.* Five items were used to assess expectations of organisational culture. An example item is “*An organisation where employees care for one another*”. This subscale was adapted for the NTPCQ framework from Jusoh, Simun and Chong’s (2011) organisational culture subscale, excluding one item inappropriate for volunteer setting. An example adaptation is the change from the original item “*Work in an organisation where employees work well together in teams*” to “*An organisation where volunteers work well together in teams*”. Internal reliability for the scale is reported to be  $\alpha = .85$  for preferred culture, and  $\alpha = .83$  for actual culture. In the current study, internal consistency was  $\alpha = .67$  at phase one.

*Organisational Trust.* Organisational trust was measured using Cummings and Bromley’s (1996) Organizational Trust Inventory Short Form (OTI-SF). The 12 items were adapted to individually based questions appropriate for a volunteer setting, for example the item “*We think that \_\_\_ meets its negotiated obligations to our department*” was changed

to “*I expect that LandSAR will meet its negotiated obligations to its volunteers*”.

Volunteers were asked to respond to this measure by circling the number that most closely describes their opinion of LandSAR, and were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. Five items were reverse coded. These 12 items were summed and divided by the number of scale items (12) to form an organisational trust score for phase one. The scale measures three dimensions of trust: reliability, honesty and good faith. The composite reliability of these three dimensions fall between .90 and .93 (Cummings & Bromley, 1996), and internal consistency of  $\alpha = .70$  (Naquin & Paulson, 2003). Internal consistency in this study was  $\alpha = .82$  at phase one.

*Personality Measures.* The personality facets of dispositional trust and altruism were measured using items from the International Personality Item Pool (2012). Ten items were used to measure dispositional trust, and 10 items were used to measure altruism. These were preceded by a statement asking the participant to rate how accurately each statement described them using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = *very inaccurate* and 5 = *very accurate*. Four items on the trust scale, and five items on the altruism scale, were reverse coded. For each facet scale, the items were summed and then divided by the number of scale items (10 for dispositional trust; 10 for altruism), giving an individual score for each facet ranging from 1-5. The mean of each facet scale was calculated for each individual, giving an individual score for dispositional trust and altruism. Higher scores on each facet indicate a higher level of that facet in the individual. The dispositional trust facet scale has reported reliability of  $\alpha = .82$ , and altruism has reported reliability of  $\alpha = .77$  (International Personality Item Pool, 2012), which changed to  $\alpha = .81$  and  $\alpha = .77$  in this study, respectively.

## Phase Two Measures.

*Demographic Information.* Participants were asked to provide information on the activities that they were involved in during their time with LandSAR using a checklist compiled through discussion with subject matter experts at LandSAR of typical activities engaged in by volunteers. This was done to provide an overview of the extent of their involvement in the organisation. This checklist is provided in Appendix B. These data are not central to the hypotheses tested in this study and are not examined in the results section.

*Volunteer Expectations.* The same 50 items from phase one were presented again, but were prefaced with the instruction to indicate “*the extent to which your volunteering to LandSAR has been characterised by the job descriptor*”. There were no other wording changes between phase one and phase two. A measure of met expectations was calculated by subtracting the ratings at phase one (given upon entry to LandSAR) from what was experienced after two months of involvement (phase two ratings). For example, if an individual rated a job content item 3 at phase one, and then rated the same item 2 at phase two (indicating their expectation was not met), this would result in a difference score of -1 ( $2 - 3 = -1$ ). However, if an individual indicated that they were not expecting a job descriptor (giving it a score of 1 in phase one), and indicated that it was found (giving it a score of 5 in phase two), this would result in expectations being exceeded ( $5 - 1 = 4$ ). Thus, expectations were considered to be met when the difference score = 0, with a larger positive value indicating things were even better than expected and larger negative values indicating things were even worse than expected. Difference scores could range from -4 to 4. They were calculated for each of the ten organisational expectations by adding the difference scores for the items for that expectation (e.g., job content) and dividing by the number of items measuring that expectation. The difference between expectations and

reality is referred to an expectation shift in the results section of this report. This measure was calculated based on Robinson's (1996) measure of psychological contract breach.

*Organisational Trust.* The OTI-SF was used again in phase two, however, phase two wording reflected the change in experience of the organisation by the volunteers without altering the meaning of each response. An example item from phase one is "*I expect that LandSAR will be reliable*", which changed to "*LandSAR is reliable*" in the phase two survey (see Appendix C). All 12 items were summed and divided by the number of scale items (12) to form an organisational trust score for phase two, ranging from 1-5. Internal consistency for this scale at phase two was  $\alpha = .87$ .

*Organisational Commitment.* Commitment was measured using the affective and normative commitment scales developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). Affective commitment was measured using eight items, and normative commitment measured using seven (the final item of the original normative scale was removed as it could not be adequately reworded for a volunteer context without changing its meaning). For each statement participants were asked to circle the number *that most closely describes your opinion of LandSAR and your experience with the organisation* using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. The scale was adapted by changing words relating to work to words relating to volunteering, for example, the original item "*I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation*" was changed to "*I would be very happy to spend the rest of my time volunteering with LandSAR*". Adapted items are attached in Appendix C. All eight items for affective commitment were summed and divided by the total number of scale items (8) to form an affective commitment score. All seven normative commitment items were summed and divided by the total number of scale items (7) to form a normative commitment score. These scores could range from 1-5.

The affective and normative commitment scales recorded original internal consistency of  $\alpha = .85$  and  $\alpha = .73$  respectively (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In this study, the internal consistency values were  $\alpha = .76$  and  $\alpha = .64$  respectively.

*Satisfaction.* Satisfaction was measured using a three item measure of overall job satisfaction, a subscale of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins & Klesh, 1983). One item on the scale was reverse coded. Similar to the commitment scales, participants were asked to circle the number “*that most closely describes your opinion of LandSAR and your experience with the organisation*” using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. The scale was adapted by changing words to relate to volunteering, for example, the original item “*In general, I like working here*” was changed to, “*In general, I like volunteering at LandSAR*”. The edited items are attached in Appendix C. The three items were summed and divided by the total number of scale items (3) to form a satisfaction score, ranging from 1-5. Bowling and Hammond’s (2008) meta-analysis of studies using the subscale revealed internal consistency of  $\alpha = .84$ , test-retest reliability of .50 and that it correlates with 17 hypothesised antecedents of job satisfaction. The current study found internal reliability of  $\alpha = .72$ .

*Turnover Intentions.* Turnover intentions were assessed by using a three-item measure of turnover intentions developed by Colarelli (1984). This was also appropriately adapted for the volunteer context, for example, the item “*I frequently think of quitting my job*” was changed to “*I frequently think of leaving LandSAR*”. One item was reverse coded and the scale has a reported internal reliability of  $\alpha = .75$  (Colarelli, 1984). For edited items, see Appendix C. Unfortunately, in this study the  $\alpha = -.01$ , indicating a problem with internal consistency. Upon closer inspection, item two of the scale was retained as a single

item measure of turnover intentions as it proved to be significantly negatively correlated with several key outcome variables, (satisfaction,  $r(22) = -.51, p < .05$ ; affective commitment,  $r(22) = -.63, p < .05$ ; normative commitment,  $r(22) = -.43, p < .05$ ), as would be expected if it was a valid measure of the turnover intentions construct.

*Co-operative Behaviour.* Co-operative behaviour was measured by asking individuals how many times they have been asked to undertake some activity or task by LandSAR, and how many times they have not accepted to do the task for any reason. A metric of co-operative behaviour was calculated by using an individual percentage acceptance rate, calculated by taking the total number of times the volunteer had actually been involved some activity or task at LandSAR, multiplying this number by 100, and dividing the resulting number by the total number of times the volunteer was asked to undertake some activity or task. For example, if a volunteer had been asked to undertake a task or activity 6 times, and accepted 4 times, the individual co-operative behaviour metric would be  $4 \times 100 / 6 = 66.7\%$ . Higher percentages indicate more co-operative behaviour.

## Procedure

The surveys were posted to participants by mail. New volunteers at LandSAR were identified by LandSAR's Office Administrator using the organisation's volunteer database. Participants received a phase one survey, an information sheet (see Appendix D), a consent form (see Appendix E) and an envelope to return the completed questionnaire and consent form. Approximately two months later they received a second information letter (see Appendix F) and a phase two survey. Phase two surveys were sent out to all participants who received phase one regardless of whether they completed phase one, as anonymous data collection meant information was not collected on who completed phase one. This study was approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

## Results

### Overview

Results were analysed using IBM SPSS version 20.0. Several missing item responses were identified and replaced using the series mean replacement method. Overall the incidence of missing data was 4.5 %.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations for measures from both phase one and two, as well as t-test comparisons of expectations and organisational trust between phase one and two. The means and standard deviations for expectation shifts for each of the ten subscales are also provided. The overall recruitment expectations mean indicates that phase one recruitment expectations were slightly higher than what was experienced after two months of volunteer involvement, indicating that volunteers enter with slightly inflated expectations. However, the t-test comparison of the overall expectations between phases one and two was not significant. Within the individual expectation measures, most scale means proved to be slightly lower at phase two, notably except for interpersonal justice and work-life balance, with the shift between work-life balance expectations and experiences proving significant. The difference between phase one and two for informational justice also proved significant. Differences in other expectations subscales between phase one and two were not significant. Means also indicated a decrease in organisational trust after two months of volunteer involvement, which t-test results indicate to be a significant difference.

It is also worth noting that dispositional trust and altruism levels were consistently high in this sample, with mean values for these scales sitting close to the maximum scale value, as is the case for levels of satisfaction and affective commitment. Organisational

trust upon entry is also consistently high suggesting that most individuals join the organisation with a high initial level of organisational trust. Turnover intentions in this sample appear low as the mean value for the scale is close to the minimum scale value.

Table 1.

*Means, Standard Deviations and t-test Comparisons (n = 22)*

Scale	Phase one	Phase two	t-test comparison	Expectation Shift
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)
Recruitment expectations	4.03 (.44)	3.92 (.45)	1.06, ns	
Job content	3.77 (.56)	3.74 (.44)	.15, ns	-.20 (.65)
Career development	3.73 (.70)	3.46 (.78)	1.62, ns	-.27 (.79)
Social atmosphere	4.23 (.60)	4.17 (.72)	.34, ns	-.05 (.72)
Policies	4.19 (.58)	4.08 (.47)	.88, ns	-.12 (.62)
Work-life balance	3.39 (.84)	3.79 (.66)	-2.71, $p < .05$	.40 (.70)
Procedural justice	4.02 (.57)	3.84 (.50)	1.38, ns	-.14 (.59)
Interpersonal justice	4.62 (.50)	4.65 (.55)	-.22, ns	.03 (.64)
Informational justice	4.23 (.69)	3.83 (.75)	2.41, $p < .05$	-.39 (.77)
Supervision	4.20 (.81)	3.90 (.97)	1.55, ns	-.30 (.90)
Culture	4.19 (.54)	3.98 (.68)	1.28, ns	-.21 (.76)
Organisational trust	4.69 (.34)	4.48 (.38)	2.125, $p < .05$	
Dispositional trust	3.98 (.41)	-		
Altruism	4.26 (.41)	-		
Satisfaction	-	4.56 (.55)		
Affective Commitment	-	3.54 (.58)		
Normative Commitment	-	3.04 (.48)		
Turnover Intentions	-	1.27 (.46)		
Co-Operative Behaviour	-	82.55 (18.22)		

Note: Scale response ranges from 1 – 5, excluding co-operative behaviour which is a percentage value and expectation shift which ranges from -4 to 4; overall recruitment expectations results calculated by summing responses to all items, and dividing by the number of items (50).

## Recruitment Expectations

To test hypotheses 1 to 5, correlations were calculated with the results presented in a correlation matrix for the expectations scales and attitudinal variables in Table 2. The expectation measures used to calculate these correlations are the expectation shifts between phase one and phase two for each of the ten expectation scales.

As Table 2 shows, turnover intentions were moderately and negatively associated with expectation shift. This is consistent with the logic that as expectations are exceeded, turnover intentions decrease, however, the correlations between turnover intentions and expectation shift for the ten expectations measures were not significant, thus hypothesis 1 is not supported. However, the moderate negative correlations between turnover intentions and informational justice expectation shift,  $r = -.36$ ,  $p = .10$ , and turnover intentions and culture expectation shift,  $r = -.41$ ,  $p = .06$ , were approaching significance. Turnover intentions were significantly and negatively related to both satisfaction and affective commitment, indicating that higher levels of satisfaction and affective commitment in volunteers are associated with less thoughts of leaving the organisation.

Two significant correlations in the hypothesised direction were found between expectation shift and satisfaction, suggesting an association between exceeded expectations and satisfaction levels. A significant correlation was found between satisfaction and informational justice expectation shift, and satisfaction and culture expectation shift. Several slight to moderate correlations were found in the hypothesised direction between satisfaction and expectation shift for remaining eight expectation scales, thus hypothesis 2 is partially supported.

Correlations between expectation shift and normative commitment generally appear small and non-significant, thus hypothesis 3 is not supported. This suggests that whether

expectations are met or not, there is generally little effect on normative commitment, however, one moderate negative correlation was found between normative commitment and supervision expectation shift, indicating that exceeded expectations with regards to the supervisor are associated with lower levels of normative commitment. Correlations between expectation shift and affective commitment also appear small and non-significant, thus not providing support for hypothesis 4, however, it is worth noting that all correlations are in the hypothesised direction.

Several small to moderate correlations were found between expectation shift and co-operative behaviour, with two approaching significance: procedural justice,  $r = .42$ ,  $p = .06$ , and informational justice,  $r = .41$ ,  $p = .06$ . The direction of the small to moderate correlations generally suggests that exceeded expectations are associated with increased co-operative behaviour, however, the correlation between work-life balance expectation shift and co-operative behaviour suggests that unmet expectations are associated with decreased co-operative behaviour. Yet, these correlations are not significant, thus providing no support for hypothesis 5.

Table 2.

*Correlations for Expectations with Attitudinal Outcome Variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Job content	-															
2. Career Development	-.32	-														
3. Social Atmosphere	-.21	-.67**	-													
4. Policies	-.12	-.44*	-.67**	-												
5. Work-Life Balance	-.05	.14	-.26	-.44*	-											
6. Procedural Justice	-.30	-.38	-.64**	-.81**	-.31	-										
7. Interpersonal Justice	.15	-.27	-.52*	-.72**	-.22	-.67**	-									
8. Informational Justice	-.14	-.21	-.39	-.61**	-.35	-.58	-.47*	-								
9. Supervision	-.07	-.66**	-.77**	-.68**	.06	-.68**	-.54**	-.23	-							
10. Culture	-.29	-.53*	-.63**	-.63**	-.29	-.65**	-.65**	-.68**	-.53*	-						
11. Satisfaction	.09	.31	.30	.13	.17	.26	.30	.45*	.15	.53*	-					
12. Affective	.28	.12	.19	.08	.15	.09	.00	.22	.06	.18	.42	-				
13. Normative	.08	-.03	-.18	.01	.22	-.02	-.06	.10	-.32	-.10	.08	.23	-			
14. Co-Operative	.29	.32	.28	.15	-.31	.42	.16	.41	.34	.29	.26	.41	-.03	-		
15. Turnover Intentions	-.25	.00	.02	-.15	-.07	-.11	-.19	-.36	.09	-.41	-.51*	-.63**	.05	-.26	-	
16. Organisational Trust	-.10	.33	.51*	.49*	.40	.39	.57*	.45	.51*	.67**	.61**	.17	-.20	.13	-.30	-

Note: \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$ ; organisational trust correlations calculated controlling for dispositional trust and altruism,  $df = 17$

## Organisational Trust

Organisational trust was significantly and negatively related to expectation shift when controlling for dispositional trust and altruism using partial correlations, specifically for social atmosphere, policies, interpersonal justice, supervision and culture. These results partially indicate that exceeded expectations are associated with increased organisational trust. Three correlations between organisational trust and expectation shift were also approaching significance: work-life balance,  $r = .40$ ,  $p = .09$ , procedural justice,  $r = .39$ ,  $p = .10$ , and informational justice,  $r = .45$ ,  $p = .06$ .

It was hypothesised that organisational trust would be positively correlated to measures of affective and normative commitment, satisfaction and co-operative behaviour. As shown in Table 2, organisational trust was significantly and positively correlated with the measure of satisfaction, however was not significantly associated with other outcome variables thus only partially supporting hypothesis 6. Organisational trust was also negatively but not significantly correlated with turnover intentions, thus not supporting hypothesis 7.

## Discussion

### Summary of main findings

The research was conducted to provide further knowledge about what volunteer organisations can do to successfully manage their volunteers. The study specifically examined whether the relationship between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences of volunteers was related to key post-entry attitudinal variables, including job satisfaction, commitment, co-operative behaviour and turnover intentions, and whether organisational trust also influences these outcomes. These aims were achieved by giving new volunteers at a

national non-profit organisation a survey of their expectations shortly after joining (and prior to them undertaking any voluntary work), and then having the same participants complete another set of measures two months later after they had participated in voluntary training and volunteering activities.

The findings from the surveys resulted in partial support of two hypotheses. It was hypothesised that met expectations would elicit several positive organisational outcomes, and results tentatively support the prediction that met and/or exceeded expectations would be associated with volunteer satisfaction levels. Specifically, slight to moderate positive correlations were found between expectation shift and satisfaction, revealing an association between exceeded expectations and increased satisfaction levels, however this relationship was significant for only two of the ten examined expectations. These findings are generally consistent with existing literature conducted in for-profit organisations (e.g., Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Zhao et al., 2007) which indicates that violation of psychological contract obligations are negatively correlated with satisfaction levels. However, it was expected that the relationship would be more clear cut (i.e., significant for each of the ten expectations). It may be the case that the significant associations (in this study, informational justice and culture) simply reflect what is more important to volunteers, thus in these areas the effect of expectations on satisfaction is more pronounced.

Results also partially support the hypothesis that organisational trust would be associated with positive organisational outcomes, with a significant correlation found between organisational trust and satisfaction. This finding is consistent with past research, however, based on this same research it was also expected that links between organisational trust and commitment and co-operative behaviour would also be supported (Davis et al., 2000; Flaherty & Pappas, 2000; Jafri, 2011; Mayer et al., 1995). As such, it can be suggested

that organisational trust may have more of an influence on satisfaction levels of volunteers than any other outcome variables considered in this study. While this contrasts the above cited research, it may simply be the case that organisational trust does not affect commitment levels and co-operative behaviour in volunteer organisations to the same extent that it does in for-profit organisations. Given the hugely influential role organisational trust plays in volunteer organisation and its strong ties to the voluntary sector (Davis et al., 2003; Sargeant & Lee, 2004), it is likely that the relationship between organisational trust and the predicted positive outcome variables may be much more complex than initially thought. As such, it may be the case that the measure of organisational trust in the present study was not appropriately complex, thus only scratching the surface of organisational trust in volunteers.

Several predicted outcomes were not supported in the present study. Results did not support the hypothesis that met and/or exceeded expectations would be negatively associated with turnover intentions, nor were they significantly positively associated with co-operative behaviour. However, several small to moderate correlations were found between expectation shift and both of these outcome variables in the direction hypothesised, suggesting slight associations between met expectations, turnover intentions and co-operative behaviour. It is possible, due to the volunteer nature of the work, that individuals are generally willing to overlook their personal feelings about whether their expectations have been met or not by the organisation, given that volunteering there provides them with the opportunity to provide a valuable service to those in need. That is, the emphasis on the value of the work that is performed in voluntary work (Farmer & Fedor, 1999) may be suppressing the relationship between recruitment expectations, turnover intentions and co-operative behaviour. However, this explanation is speculation only and could be addressed in further research. A further explanation for these non-significant results may be that it was not the perception that an expectation shift had occurred that was assessed, but instead the actual expectation shift.

Robinson (1996) argues that it is the belief or perception that obligations have not been fulfilled that principally contributes to subsequent behaviours and attitudes, not if the obligations have actually been met. Thus, effects may have been stronger if this emotional perception of expectations was assessed instead.

It was also predicted that correlations would indicate that met and/or exceeded expectations and normative commitment would be associated, however correlations between these variables were generally weak and non-significant suggesting that normative commitment levels are not sensitive to expectation shift. Normative commitment is concerned with an individuals' sense of obligation to the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Thus, the results are surprising given the reciprocal nature of recruitment expectations and psychological contracts (Freese, et al., 2011), as when an organisation does not fulfil its obligations to the volunteer it was expected that the volunteers' sense of obligation to the organisation would also decline. Non-significant findings may be attributed to the assessment of the obligation to stay in the organisation by volunteers as a reflection of their moral obligation to perform the volunteer work rather than a sense of obligation to the organisation itself, which may have obscured effects. The hypothesised relationship between affective commitment and met and/or exceeded expectations was also not found, and these results are similarly inconsistent with literature regarding commitment levels and recruitment expectations (e.g. Farmer & Fedor, 1999; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Descriptive analysis revealed that volunteers do experience feelings of affective commitment, with the mean value for this scale sitting close to the top value of the scale used, thus it may simply be the case that expectations and affective commitment are not associated in the volunteer context.

It was predicted based on previous literature (e.g. Flaherty & Pappas, 2000) that organisational trust would be negatively correlated with turnover intentions, and while the

negative direction of the relationship was found, the correlation was not significant. The correlation found, however, was moderate in size, and it is possible that the fact that the sample included little variation in turnover intentions and organisational trust may have contributed to the non-significant association.

Non-significant results should not be interpreted as evidence to disprove the applicability of the particular variables in volunteer organisations, as many of the results described above tentatively indicate that a weak relationship between variables does exist. This is particularly true for the relationships between expectations and turnover intentions, expectations and co-operative behaviour, and organisational trust and turnover intentions, given that correlations between these variables suggest slight to moderate relationships in the hypothesised directions with several approaching significance. Overall, it is likely that the limited sample size and sampling from one organisation concealed the association between these variables. Results generally provide evidence to suggest that with a larger sample, and with wider variation in responses to the scales (i.e., a sample that included people who were strongly considering leaving their volunteer position; volunteers who did not participate in many volunteer activities; and individuals who experienced low levels of organisational trust), results may provide more support for hypotheses. Sampling more volunteers across a number of volunteer organisations could help resolve this issue.

Several additional findings were also made, incidental to the hypothesised results. Organisational trust levels were high in the volunteers upon organisational entry indicating that volunteers join LandSAR had high regard for the organisation. This is unsurprising given prior research on the donation of money indicates that individuals are more likely to give money to charitable organisations that they trust (Sargeant & Lee, 2004). Research conducted by Robinson (1996) suggests that initial levels of organisational trust may affect how likely

individuals are to perceive a breach in the psychological contract, with high initial levels of organisational trust moderating the relationship between psychological contract breach and subsequent decline in trust. The small sample size limited the ability of the present study to assess whether the high levels of organisational trust upon entry had any affect in the current sample, however, future research may benefit from analysing whether this moderating effect also occurs in volunteer organisations, and whether this may have contributed to some of the non-significant findings in the present study.

Relationships between expectations and organisational trust were among the strongest suggested by this study, with five significant negative correlations found for expectations of social atmosphere, policies, interpersonal justice, supervision and culture. Combined with the significant difference between phase one and phase two levels of organisational trust, this suggests that meeting and exceeding expectations may have important implications for levels of organisational trust in volunteers. These findings are generally consistent with literature indicating that when expectations are not met, organisational trust declines (e.g., Jafri, 2011; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson, 1996) as individuals call into question the foundations of organisational trust, contributing to decreased organisational trust levels (Montes & Irving, 2008; Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Robinson, 1996). The present study also found that turnover intentions were significantly and negatively related to both satisfaction and affective commitment, indicating that volunteers who are more job satisfied, and who feel more positive emotional attachment to the position, experience fewer thoughts of leaving. This has general implications for volunteer organisations by confirming that it is largely worthwhile to ensure that volunteers are satisfied and committed to keep them retained in the organisation.

Overall, although somewhat preliminary due to the present study's small sample size, the results do tentatively suggest that the recruitment expectations of volunteers and organisational trust are important when considering volunteer satisfaction levels. There are several surprisingly strong effects indicated in the results given the small sample size of volunteers used in this study, generally demonstrating the potential for some more clear-cut trends to emerge upon the application of the hypotheses in a more rigorous investigation.

### Implications for Volunteer Organisations

The present study adds to, and extends, existing knowledge of volunteering behaviour, and expands upon the recruitment expectations and organisational trust literature by assessing their applicability in the volunteer sector. Most significantly, the findings tentatively underline the importance of a correctly managed recruitment process even in volunteer organisations, given the suggestion from the results that individuals do react when there is a discrepancy between expectations held at recruitment and reality. The present study also highlights the importance of organisational trust in volunteer organisations by demonstrating its association with satisfaction. Compelling evidence is also provided to suggest an association between organisational trust and recruitment expectations, offering information on one way trust can be maintained in volunteer organisations.

Most significantly, while contributing to the literature on volunteering organisations and volunteer management, the present study has cemented the fact that more organisational research is required in volunteer organisations. It is very clear that behaviours and attitudes of volunteers are not straight forward given the somewhat conflicting nature of the results of the present study, and in order for these behaviours and attitudes to be appropriately managed, much more extensive research is required to further delve into ways in which to suitably

manage volunteer activity. Subsequent to this, research will be able to more directly inform volunteer organisations with their policies regarding volunteer management. At this point in time, research that is able to assist in policy development for volunteer organisations is limited, particularly in comparison to what is found in the for-profit organisational literature.

### Study limitations

The central limitation of the current study is the small sample size. While initial response to the study was quite large (the phase one response rate was 48%), only slightly under 23% of the total surveys sent out were used for final analysis due to the drop out of a large number of participants between phase one and phase two (44% of individuals who completed phase one did not complete phase two). Despite the small sample size of the study, a number of significant results still arose from the testing of hypotheses, thus demonstrating the potential strength of the association between recruitment expectations, organisational trust, and a number of organisational attitudes and behaviours. As the overarching purpose of this study was to assess whether several outcomes confirmed in the organisational literature for-profit organisations could be transferred to a volunteer context, the results support that the ideas around recruitment expectations and organisational trust are appropriate for application to volunteers, thus should be considered further in a larger scaled study.

The small sample size also contributed to the inability in the present research to conduct a meaningful confirmatory factor analysis on the expectations scale used. While it is expected that scale items are associated with respective factors as they were obtained from validated organisational scales and produced reasonable internal consistency values in this study, it may have still been beneficial to confirm this with factor analysis. As it stands, however, the collection of data longitudinally means that claims regarding the directionality

of relationships can be more clearly and accurately substantiated than with cross-sectional data collection, thus giving the present study significant integrity.

A further limitation of this study is that data was only collected from one volunteer organisation, and because of this, the generalisability of the results is somewhat restrictive, and this may have contributed to limited variability in the results. However, it is expected that using a national emergency response organisation such as LandSAR means that the findings can at least be transferred to other volunteer emergency response organisations, including ambulance and fire fighting services.

Another limitation is that only two time points were used, and that the time points were only two months apart. As such, the effects of expectations may be somewhat unclear as this may not be a long enough period of time for the volunteers to register accurately whether their expectations have been met. This is because their actual volunteer involvement over two months depends on the activities of the organisation which is clearly variable depending on the needs of the organisation at the time. To overcome this, following the volunteers over a longer period of time and measuring more time points is recommended in future research to more clearly understand the effects of met/unmet recruitment expectations.

## Future research

Given that the emotional perception of breached obligations has been identified as a significant precursor to positive and negative behavioural and attitudinal outcomes, it is recommended that further studies include a measure of this when assessing the effects of the shift between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences. A measure of the subjective experience of expectation breach may in fact be more appropriate, given Robinson's (1996) assertion that it does not matter whether a shift occurred, but instead what matters is the

belief that it has occurred, whether valid or not. Future research could focus on both the actual shift as well as this perception of a shift, and whether there is any difference in their effects on the hypothesised attitudinal and behavioural outcome variables used in this study.

Results also indicate that organisational trust may be a much more complex attitudinal outcome than was initially expected. While this is not surprising, given the strong connection between organisational trust and charitable activity (Davis et al., 2003; Sargeant & Lee, 2004), it may be the case that the link between organisational trust and other positive attitudinal outcomes are more multifaceted than what is found in for-profit organisations. As such, the volunteer sector could benefit through research on what significantly contributes to trust development in volunteers. Furthermore, it may be the case that a more appropriate measurement tool of organisational trust in volunteer organisations could arise from these findings.

## Conclusion

This research was conducted with the primary aim of assessing whether the shift between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences has an effect on organisational outcomes, and whether organisational trust also plays a role on the levels of these same variables in volunteer organisations. While the present study may not comprehensively show that recruitment expectations and organisational trust significantly alter the organisational outcomes predicted based on existing organisational literature from for-profit organisations, it does suggest that they do have some impact. Furthermore, volunteer organisations indeed can benefit from the appropriate management of recruitment processes and organisational trust, albeit perhaps not to a degree as was initially thought. Further research is recommended using larger sample sizes to take into account the effects of the emotional perception of expectation

shift and the complex nature of organisational trust in the voluntary sector. Managing volunteers is an already complex task that is made more difficult by the lack of research attempting to clarify possible processes to manage their attitudes and behaviours in much the same way that for-profit organisations manage their employees. As the present study shows, the relationship between variables in volunteer organisations is not as clear-cut as would be desirable. Thus, in order for some clarity and valuable information to arise for volunteer organisations, they must be highlighted as appropriate and attractive places to conduct future research. This study simply scratches the surface of the impact of recruitment expectations and organisational trust in volunteer organisations, but does provide a foundation to suggest that they may offer implications for practice.

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## Appendix A

Volunteers have expectations about what the organisation they are volunteering to will offer, and what their volunteering work will be like. Please read the following job descriptors and indicate for each (by circling a number) the extent to which you expect your volunteering to LandSAR to be characterised by the job descriptor.

	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>
Variation in your work	1	2	3	4	5
Challenging work	1	2	3	4	5
Balanced workload	1	2	3	4	5
Interesting work	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to deliver a quality service	1	2	3	4	5
Career opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Training and education	1	2	3	4	5
Coaching	1	2	3	4	5
Professional development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Learning opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to utilise your knowledge & skills	1	2	3	4	5
Good operational atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
Cooperative colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
Support from other volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciation and recognition	1	2	3	4	5
Support from supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
Participation in important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
A fair supervisor	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback on performance	1	2	3	4	5

Clear and fair rules and regulations	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping you informed	1	2	3	4	5
Open communication	1	2	3	4	5
Ethical policies	1	2	3	4	5
Confidence in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration of your personal circumstances	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to schedule your own time away	1	2	3	4	5
Working at home	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to adjust volunteering behaviour to fit personal life	1	2	3	4	5
The ability to express your views	1	2	3	4	5
Influence over decisions	1	2	3	4	5
Consistently applied procedures	1	2	3	4	5
Procedures free of bias	1	2	3	4	5
Procedures based on accurate information	1	2	3	4	5
The ability to appeal decisions	1	2	3	4	5
Procedures that uphold ethical and moral standards	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation that treats you politely	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation that treats you with dignity	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation that treats you with respect	1	2	3	4	5
Thorough explanations of the procedures	1	2	3	4	5
Timely communication	1	2	3	4	5
Communication tailored to individuals' specific needs	1	2	3	4	5
A supervisor that serves as a role model	1	2	3	4	5

A supervisor that monitors performance for errors needing correction	1	2	3	4	5
A supervisor that is alert to failure to meet standards	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation where employees care for one another	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation where employees are always kept informed of what is happening in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation where employees continually search for ways to work more	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation where employees work well together in teams	1	2	3	4	5
An organisation where volunteers receive assistance to overcome any personal problems	1	2	3	4	5

For each statement, please circle the number on the right that most closely describes your opinion of LandSAR.

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
I expect that people at LandSAR will tell the truth in negotiations	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will meet its negotiated obligations to its volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
I expect LandSAR will be reliable	1	2	3	4	5
I expect to find that LandSAR succeeds by stepping on other people	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will try to get the upper hand	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will take advantage of my problems	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will negotiate with me honestly	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will keep its word	1	2	3	4	5
I do not expect that LandSAR will mislead me	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will try to get out of its commitments	1	2	3	4	5
I expect that LandSAR will negotiate joint expectations fairly	1	2	3	4	5

I feel that LandSAR will take advantage of people who are vulnerable	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Please read each statement below carefully, and then circle the number on the right that describes how accurately each statement describes you.

	<i>Very Inaccurate</i>	<i>Moderately Inaccurate</i>	<i>Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate</i>	<i>Moderately Accurate</i>	<i>Very Accurate</i>
I am someone who trusts others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who believes that others have good intentions	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who trusts what people say	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who believes that people are basically moral	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who believes in human goodness	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who thinks that all will be well	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who distrusts people	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who suspects hidden motives in others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who is wary of others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who believes that people are essentially evil	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who makes people feel welcome	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who anticipates the needs of others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who loves to help others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who is concerned about others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who has a good word for everyone	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who looks down on others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who is indifferent to the feelings of others	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who makes people feel uncomfortable	1	2	3	4	5
I am someone who turns my back on others	1	2	3	4	5

I am someone who takes no time for others

1

2

3

4

5

## Appendix B

Please tick the activities that you have been involved in while at LandSAR:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Been put on standby for a SAROP                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Been called out for a SAROP but not deployed             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Been deployed in the field during the initial response period | <input type="checkbox"/> Been deployed in the field during a multiday SAROP       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catering support  | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical support  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended an IMTEX   | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a SAREX   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended formal standards based training                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended informal refresher or continuation training     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support   | <input type="checkbox"/> Provided support or assisted an Incident Management Team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative work (e.g. filing)                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Helped coordinate communications                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):                                       |   |

## Appendix C

For each statement, please circle the number to the right that most closely describes your opinion of LandSAR and your experience with the organisation.

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
People at LandSAR tell the truth in negotiations	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR meets its negotiated obligations to its volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR is reliable	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR succeeds by stepping on other people	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR tries to get the upper hand	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR takes advantage of my problems	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR negotiates with me honestly	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR keeps its word	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR does not mislead me	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR tries to get out of its commitments	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR negotiates joint expectations fairly	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR takes advantage of people who are vulnerable	1	2	3	4	5
All in all, I am satisfied with my volunteering at LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
In general, I don't like my volunteering at LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
In general, I like volunteering at LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my time volunteering at LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy discussing LandSAR with people outside of it	1	2	3	4	5
I really feel as if LandSAR's problems are my own	1	2	3	4	5
I think that I could easily become as attached to another volunteer organisation as I am to LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5

I do not feel like “part of the family” at LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel “emotionally attached” to LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
LandSAR has a great deal of personal meaning for me	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I think that people these days move volunteer organisations too often	1	2	3	4	5
I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to their volunteer organisation	1	2	3	4	5
Jumping from volunteer organisation to volunteer organisation does not seem unethical to me	1	2	3	4	5
One of the major reasons I continue to volunteer for LandSAR is that I believe that loyalty is important, therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to continue	1	2	3	4	5
If I got another offer for a better volunteer position elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organisation	1	2	3	4	5
Things were better in the days when people stayed with one volunteer organisation	1	2	3	4	5
If I have my own way, I will be volunteering for LandSAR one year from	1	2	3	4	5
I frequently think of leaving LandSAR	1	2	3	4	5
I am planning to search for a new volunteering position during the next 12 months	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix D

Dear Land Search and Rescue Volunteer

I am a Master's student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Canterbury completing a dissertation on the role of organisational trust and recruitment expectations in volunteer organisations. Land Search and Rescue has expressed a desire to be involved in this research which is why you have received this pack in the mail.

If you agree to take part in this study you will be asked to do the following:

- Complete a survey (enclosed) about your expectations for volunteering at LandSAR, where you obtained information about LandSAR, a number of demographic details about yourself, and two brief personality measures.
- Approximately two months later, complete a final survey about your volunteer experiences at LandSAR and a number of attitudinal measures relating to these experiences.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you do withdraw, I will remove any information relating to you.

Your responses in this study will remain completely confidential, and your second survey will be matched to the first survey using a code that only you will be able to identify. All data collected will be securely stored in password protected facilities and locked storage at the University of Canterbury. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data collected.

The results will be used to inform recruitment processes at volunteer organisations across New Zealand and submitted for publication in organisational and/or volunteer specific academic journals.

If you have any questions about the study at any stage, please contact me at the email address provided above, or contact my primary supervisor Associate Professor Chris Burt ([christopher.burt@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:christopher.burt@canterbury.ac.nz)).

This project has been approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee, and has the full support of Land Search and Rescue New Zealand.

As a thank you, participants have the option to enter in a prize draw for one of two \$150 petrol vouchers after the completion of both the phase one *and* phase two surveys. A form for entry into this draw will be sent to you with the phase two survey.

*If you wish to participate in this study, please complete the consent form and the enclosed survey, and then return these two completed documents using the addressed, postage-paid envelope. If you do not wish to participate, please place all uncompleted materials in the postage-paid envelope and return to the researcher.*

## Appendix E

### Consent Form for New Volunteers at LandSAR

Please tick the box at the bottom of this page to indicate that you understand and accept the statements.

I have read the information sheet and understand what is required of me if I participate in the study.

- My participation in this research is voluntary and I am under no obligation to take part. My participation, or my decision to not participate, will not affect my relationship with LandSAR, and any data collected in the research will not affect my relationship with LandSAR.
  - I understand that all information collected will only be accessed by the researcher, and that it will be kept confidential and secure.
  - I understand that I will not be identified in any publications that draw on this research.
  - I understand that the project has been reviewed and approved by the Human Ethics Committee of University of Canterbury.
  - I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any opportunity.
  - I understand that I can get more information about this project from the researcher, and that I can contact the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee if I have any complaints about the research.
- I understand and accept the above statements, and agree to participate in this research.

Volunteer Signature

Date

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## Appendix F

Dear Land Search and Rescue Volunteer,

This pack contains materials for phase two of the study on the role of recruitment expectations and organisational trust in volunteer organisations. You will have received this pack whether or not you participated in phase one as we do not know who has participated in phase one and who hasn't. What follows are instructions regarding the completion of the second phase of this study.

This pack contains a phase two survey, an addressed postage-paid return envelope, a smaller blank envelope, and an entry form to enter a prize draw for one of two \$150 petrol vouchers. *If you have participated in phase one of this study, please complete this second survey and return using the addressed, postage-paid envelope.* If you did not participate in phase one of this study, please place all uncompleted materials in the postage-paid envelope and return to the researcher.

If you have completed phase one and phase two of the study, you have the opportunity to enter the prize draw to thank you for your contribution. You do not have to enter the prize draw, but if you do wish to enter *please fill out the entry form enclosed in this pack, and seal it in the smaller envelope, before placing it in the return envelope to return to the researcher.* All entries will remain sealed and separate from your surveys, and will only be opened if your entry has been drawn as a winner.

We would appreciate your response as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time.