FACTORs INHIBITING UNIONIZATION OF THE
VIRGINIA GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

by

Robert Craig Hoell

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Business Administration

APPROVED:

Jerald F. Robinson, Chairman

Kent F. Murrmann

Dane M. Partridge

June 2, 1993

Blacksburg, Virginia
Abstract

The study was an investigation into the motives, policies and practices of the Virginia Governmental Employees Association and the motivations, needs and desires of its membership. This was undertaken to determine the major forces which have prevented change in the operating practices or structure of the association.

The research questions examined factors unique to the VGEA: the climate for public sector unionism in the state, the membership’s needs and desires, and the practices and policies set forth by the VGEA. These areas represent the external environment, the perceptions of the membership, and the internal environment of the VGEA. A random sampling of the membership by survey was conducted to investigate the factors. Internal documents of the association were scrutinized in order to determine the factors that were specific to the association.

Both qualitative and quantitative data was incorporated in the analysis. The study utilized empirical research into unions and associations, a descriptive study of the VGEA itself, and an analysis of the membership’s responses to the survey instrument.

The analysis concludes by identifying those factors most prevalent in preventing the association from becoming a union. The lack of collective bargaining, the prohibition of striking and right-to-work laws are major factors in the external environment. Internally, the past practices of the association, its reliance upon lobbying and its lack of political action all prevent change from occurring. The membership is not reflective of state employees overall, and the association continues to work only for the needs of its membership.
Acknowledgements

My committee was more than helpful: their knowledge, insight and assistance made this thesis more than just a boring research process. Their input made it a learning experience, and made it much more bearable. Special thanks goes to Dr. Jerald F. Robinson, my committee chairman, who showed me the direction the thesis should take and how things can be accomplished. I look forward to continuing my research skills development with the entire committee as I pursue my Doctorate. They are each special in their own way, and I hope to learn more from each of them.

I would like to take the time to thank my wife, Jackie, for her love and support throughout my entire Master’s degree. Without her help, the trial would have even been much more difficult. She has helped me immeasurably, the least of which was to show me how to find more hours in a day. To my parents, my thanks for understanding how busy I’ve been, and for realizing that my time is valuable and how much more of it I wish I had, so that I could visit more often.

"...So the maples formed a union, and demanded equal rights. The oaks are just too greedy, we will make them give us light..."

- Geddy Lee, Alex Liefson, Neil Peart 1978
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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Introduction

For the past forty years there has been a decline in unionization. Unions have found their membership levels declining, from a peak of 35 percent of the nonagricultural workforce in the 1950s to less than 17 percent at the end of 1990.¹ Only the public sector showed growth in employee unionization. The public sector saw increases in the percentage of its workforce unionized, as membership growth shifted from the private sector to the public.² Accordingly, many unions turned their organizing efforts towards government agencies.³ Recent attempts to organize public employees saw state workers in Indiana courted by five different unions.⁴ Public employees became the fastest


growing and most receptive market and were seen by some unions as a way to supplement lagging membership.\textsuperscript{5}

Unionization within the public sector may take different forms. Public employees have formed independent unions on their own, with no outside affiliation or assistance. In many of these instances, pre-existing employee associations became active unions.\textsuperscript{6} Another form occurs when independent employee organizations merge with larger, national unions. An example of this occurred when state workers in Michigan affiliated with the United Auto Workers in 1985.\textsuperscript{7} A third type occurs when national unions attempt to organize a work group that has had no previous collective activity. A local government or a state agency that has not been unionized may be targeted in order to gain new members.\textsuperscript{8} In Virginia, state employees have had an employee association since 1959. There is no collective bargaining relationship and the association does not consider itself to be a union. The association seeks to aid

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\textsuperscript{6}Sar A. Levitan and Frank Gallo, "Can Employee Associations Negotiate New Growth?", \textit{Monthly Labor Review}, vol. 112, no. 7 (July 1989), pg. 5-14.


\textsuperscript{8}Jon McKenna, "Unions Branch into Unchartered Industries", \textit{Atlanta Business Chronicle}, March 26, 1990, pg. 10A.
\end{flushright}
and benefit its membership through lobbying state governmental bodies.

The years 1989 through 1992 saw the state, along with many others, stricken with severe economic problems. In order to compensate, many state budget cuts were made, both in personnel and supplies. State employees were dissatisfied with the cutbacks, and feared the loss of job security, yet no unionization attempts occurred. No new organizations actively pursued members, nor did current state employees or their existing association seriously consider the option of forming a union to counter the cuts. This study attempts to understand why the association took no collective action and changes in approach never occurred, in what could be seen as ideal organizing conditions. A framework was developed to investigate and understand the environments that the VGEA operated within, and the forces that kept the association from changing. During the research, internal and external factors that have affected the Virginia Governmental Employees Association (VGEA) and prevented it from changing the way it operates and inhibited its unionization were explored and defined. To accomplish this, the membership of the VGEA was surveyed, personal interviews were conducted with VGEA officials, and state and association documents were reviewed. The economic situation and legislative climate that confronted employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia were also investigated.
Budget Reduction Pressures

The state of Virginia in the period from 1989 to 1992 underwent drastic fiscal difficulties. Governor Douglas Wilder stated that it was the worst financial crisis since World War II. State employees were confronted with significant changes in their working environment. Entire agencies were eliminated, budgets were trimmed and wages were frozen. Employees were upset at the loss of job security, which had been a mainstay of public employment. Worse than the cuts themselves was the feeling by employees that the reductions were being made at the sole expense of state workers. In the fall of 1990, 61% of the cuts made in the state's budget were made at state agencies, and another 8% were taken from the salaries of state workers. Governor Wilder was, at the time, involved in a bid for the Democratic presidential nomination and he eschewed raising taxes. Cuts were made at the expense of state employees, instead of state residents. One author has noted that conditions "must be severe before a majority will support unionization as an option for improving

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[their] conditions." As the following timeline indicates, the conditions were certainly severe, and for an extended period of time. The time was optimal for the introduction of a union.

One specific example of the hardships felt by state employees was the freezing of wages. State employees had previously been given an annual job evaluation. Successful performance allowed employees to increase their pay one "step" within their pay grade. This step increase was equivalent to a 5% increase. On top of this performance increase, all state employees traditionally received a cost of living adjustment (COLA) increase on July 1. This COLA increased the pay grades and steps within the state’s compensation plan. As the budget crisis in the state worsened, both of these increases were eventually removed.

On July 1, 1988, state employees received a 3.5% COLA, along with the normally scheduled individual performance increases during the year. On the same date in 1989, the COLA was reduced to 3.25% in response to the sluggish economy. Performance increases continued to be granted. At the same time, it became obvious that the budget predictions were inflated and that the expected revenues were going to fall short.\(^\text{13}\) In order to recover some of


\(^{13}\text{Margie Fisher, "Services Unharmed by Cuts", Roanoke Times and World News, Dec 13, 1989, pg. 1.}\)
the lost funds, the state eliminated annual performance increases on June 16, 1990.\textsuperscript{14} To offset the loss, employees were given a larger COLA on the first of July for the same year. Due to the size of the increase, it was decided to grant a 3% COLA in July and the remaining 2% in December.

Between July and December, it became apparent that the state's revenue shortfall was much greater than expected; to grant the remaining 2% COLA in December would be impossible. However, since the raise had been passed by the legislature as part of the state's budget, it could not easily be revoked. To prevent any illegality, it was decided to grant the employees the 2% raise on December 1, 1990, with an immediate wage decrease of 1.960784\%. This amounted to a raise of 0\% for the majority of state workers, and for a small number, an actual decline. So, for the year of 1990, state employees only received a 3\% raise, as opposed to the increases of up to 8.5\% seen only two years earlier.

The employees fared worse in 1991. No COLA was granted and the performance increases were not reinstated. In their place was a pay for performance system that would be applied to all state employees on the same date. This new performance system called for the recognition of three levels of performance with three levels of pay increases. However, for the year 1991, no

\textsuperscript{14} State of Virginia, Incentive Pay Plan Update #1, April/May, 1990, (State Literature).
money was available to fund the new system. Employees, already disheartened at the lack of yearly increases, found themselves being appraised and evaluated by a new performance system, implemented during a budget crisis, that was unable to reward them financially. Besides operating with less staff and resources, supervisors were forced to evaluate their staff knowing that there would be no money for increases. The motions were followed, appraisals performed and filed, and no financial rewards were forthcoming.

On top of the wage freezes, state employees were faced with layoffs. While layoffs have happened before, this was the first time that seniority played no role in the decision of whom to layoff. Entire agencies and departments were eliminated, as opposed to simply laying off employees with the least seniority. For example, the geriatric wing of a state hospital was virtually eliminated in 1990 as a cost saving measure.\(^\text{15}\) In addition, many agencies froze all open positions and reverted the funds for use in other areas. Frozen positions were often lost completely, forcing the restructuring of departments and removing the hope that the vacancies could be refilled.\(^\text{16}\) The only saving

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grace was that the hiring freeze was not a state wide mandate.\textsuperscript{17} Agencies were able to fill vacancies at their discretion, in order to meet their most pressing needs. In this way, service to state residents would not be drastically reduced, and necessary services would remain in operation. This at least afforded state employees that lost positions the opportunity to be rehired.

As of May, 1992, it appeared as if the state’s employees would again be disappointed. No COLA was being planned, and it was doubtful that any money would be available to fund the pay for performance system. Also, a review of one agency’s 1992-1994 biennium budget proposal would lead to the conclusion that no money would be regularly set aside for wage increases until 1994.\textsuperscript{18}

The adverse fiscal conditions most certainly affected the state’s employees. Budgets for supplies and operations were also cut by many agencies. This forced departments that were already understaffed to provide service with fewer resources. Many employees found themselves faced with meeting the same job standards as three years earlier but with fewer human, material, and financial resources to do so. The conditions for change were certainly present, and employees appeared angry. There were some protests


at the state Capitol in Richmond, but nothing beyond staged demonstrations developed. Without the ability to bargain and to strike, workers found themselves in a losing battle. They had no control over events in their agencies and many feared for their jobs. But still, even in light of the conditions brought on by the budget crisis, the workers did not unionize. A strong set of factors surely existed to prevent unionization efforts.
Environments

There are three main environments within which the VGEA operates, each of which continues to affect its affairs. The association is constrained and limited by the boundaries of each and acts to balance itself between the forces of the opposing environments. For example, the VGEA has no influence over its external environment except for the voting power of its members. It cannot legally bargain collectively and state employees are prohibited from striking. So, while the membership may demand that the association storm the Capitol and demonstrate, the association leadership must decide whether or not this is actually in the best interests of the membership. The leadership is reluctant to create a hostile relationship with state legislators which may hamper future lobbying efforts. Hence, the membership is counseled into choosing another approach. This is an example of how the VGEA is forced to work within the restraints of the various environments. The three environments within which the VGEA operates are comprised of external laws and constraints; its internal policies and procedures; and the needs, wants and desires of its membership. Termed the external environment, internal environment and membership environment, the three interact and help determine what actions the VGEA can take in any given situation.

Each environment imposes conditions and limitations on the actions taken by the VGEA. Also, the actions taken by the VGEA cause reactions in
the various environments. Figure 1 presents graphically the environments that the VGEA operates within, reacts to, and attempts to change. In the external environment, the state's laws and policies concerning public sector labor relations affect the actions the VGEA can take. At the same time, the VGEA takes measures to modify the external environment. It lobbies for changes in laws that affect its operations and for new laws, such as payroll deductions for association membership fees. The membership interacts with the organization itself in the same manner. The demands of the membership are met by the association's leaders, whenever possible. In turn, the VGEA influences the membership by guiding their decisions. The VGEA, located in the middle, is constrained by its own by-laws and operating procedures. It must operate within its self-imposed limitations, or else take action to change them. Finally, when input and output from each of the three environments are considered, a path of action can be decided upon. While the model is broad in its scope, it reflects the relationships the external environment, the VGEA, and the membership all have with each other, and the role that the association takes in deciding a course of action.
Figure 1 - Operating Environments
The Nature of the Problem

The question, then, is what has prevented the state employee association from "becoming a union". The impetus for change certainly existed, as evidenced by the state's fiscal difficulties and the resulting impact on the employees. Given the shift nationally in union membership from the private to the public sector and the state's economic situation affecting the employees, an outside union such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) might naturally have been interested in representing the state's employees.

Two options existed for the VGEA with regards to affiliation. First, an outside union could have attempted to take over the VGEA. The other option available would have been for the VGEA to instigate union affiliation. AFSCME or another union could have been contacted by the VGEA. The only difference in these two options is which party both desires and instigates the merger.

A third option for the association would have been to change its operating procedures and policies in order to confront the new challenges imposed by the economic conditions. The association could have shifted its reliance on lobbying to more active measures. For example, the VGEA could have developed a political action committee to support political candidates sympathetic to state workers. Or, a variation of a "corporate campaign" could
have been utilized to bring pressure against the state's elected officials. But no changes were undertaken in the basic operating tenets of the association.

In interviews, Joan Dent, executive director of the VGEA, made references to pockets of labor agitation within the state. Some small sections of the VGEA in a few state agencies had considered the idea of "becoming a union". Dent perceived the pockets as too small, however, to gain much momentum statewide. Daniel LeBlanc, president of the Virginia State AFL-CIO, commented that in his opinion the unionization of the state's employees could be easily obtained but that his organization had no effort underway to do so. Given both of these educated observations, there must be numerous underlying factors which prevented the association from changing.

Research Format

The first step in understanding the VGEA and its membership was to define what associations are, and are not. Distinctions between unions and associations are made in order to understand the underlying motives of the Virginia Governmental Employees Association and the actions it has undertaken to achieve its goals. In many instances, employee associations are seen as precursors to unions, and some often act like unions in their strategies and their motives. Hence, it is important to be able to distinguish between the different types of employee organizations.
The next step was to review published research concerning why employees choose to form and join employee organizations, to vote for union representation, and to engage in collective activities. This was used to understand the underlying motives of the VGEA membership and their propensities towards representation.

Once the basic tenants of public employees and their representation groups were defined, the research endeavor turned to the VGEA and its specific environments. The environments that the VGEA operates within and reacts to were identified, as were the various factors in each environment that have acted to prevent change from occurring.

Three distinct methods were used to uncover factors within the three environments. The first environment, Virginia's legal climate for public sector unionism, was investigated through a review of legal statutes and supporting literature. The next environment, the internal policies and procedures of the VGEA, was explored through a series of interviews and an extensive review of the VGEA's internal documents. Finally, the membership was surveyed to determine what factors in that environment contributed to the lack of change.

The first two environments were more easily examined than the last. Both the internal and external environments could be evaluated through conventional literary research techniques. In both, an historical framework was developed that allowed for easy presentation of the relevant factors. The third
environment, created by the needs and perceptions of the membership, involved a different technique. It was necessary to survey the membership and measure their attitudes towards representation and the role of the VGEA.

Outline of the Presentation

The study investigates the factors that have inhibited the unionization of Virginia’s state employee association, the VGEA. In the next chapter, other relevant studies are reviewed; the distinction between unions and associations is studied; and the reasons employees form and join unions are investigated.

Chapter 3 explains the methodologies used in analyzing the three environments and also introduces the survey instrument and its design.

The fourth chapter begins the investigation into the environments by examining the legal environment the VGEA operates within and analyzes the qualitative findings. Chapter 5 reports the quantitative findings from the survey data.

Chapter 6 concludes the study and interprets the qualitative and quantitative findings. It also offers implications for future research. Limitations of the study are also discussed.
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

Unions and Associations

The distinction between unions and associations often becomes blurred. The terms themselves are deceptive as they appear to imply two distinct things. In actuality they may be viewed simply as variations on a theme, or points on a continuum. For example, many state employee associations collectively bargain and sometimes strike, classifying them more as unions than as associations.

Burton and Thomason distinguished between unions and non-bargaining organizations by developing a spectrum along which employee organizations could be placed. At one end they placed unions and at the other they placed non-bargaining organizations. Also included on the spectrum between the two endpoints were bargaining associations. Since they developed no taxonomy to place employee organizations, bargaining associations simply existed somewhere between the two poles.

Unions were set at one pole due to their reliance on collective bargaining, endorsement of strikes and affiliation with the AFL-CIO. Non-bargaining organizations were at the other end of the spectrum. These organizations today are primarily professional, such as the American Bar

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Association or other types of organizations which also contain supervisory personnel. Also, these types of organizations apply work rules to individual members, as opposed to protecting individuals against the rules imposed by an employer. Instead of attempting to change the working conditions of an industry, these organizations set professional standards for their members to attain.

Between the two endpoints of the spectrum are bargaining associations. These are considered distinct from unions due to their reliance upon political action and the inclusion of supervisory personnel as members. Also, this type of employee organization places a lesser emphasis on strikes than unions, and is typically not affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

Burton and Thomason extended the concept further by including bargaining associations and unions in one group termed bargaining organizations. All others fall under the heading of non-bargaining organizations. The distinction between the two groups is based solely upon the ability to bargain collectively. Figure 2 demonstrates the spectrum hypothesized by Burton and Thomason. Within the group of bargaining organizations, Burton and Thomason drew further differences by examining the size of the membership, the numbers of employees represented and the coverage of the written contract.

In order to utilize the spectrum developed, further distinctions must be
### Figure 2 - Spectrum of Employee Organizations

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drawn between the types of employee organizations. One distinction might be based on the goals the groups pursue. An association may be defined as a "group of persons joined together for a certain object" whereas a union is an "employee association designed to promote employee rights and work-related welfare."20 Observing these basic explanations, a union is simply an association working towards the more specific goal of occupational terms and conditions. Unions, then, have more specific work-related goals than do associations. These goals are defined by the environment of the work place and look to effect change in that environment. Associations may, or may not, work towards similar goals, or may work towards goals not at all related to working conditions.

Researchers have developed other criteria to distinguish between types of employee representation organizations. Casey Ichniowski and Jeffrey S. Zax found that the approaches or tactics used by the two groups can also be used

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to distinguish them. As they noted,

"Collective bargaining is the principal activity of traditional unions. We define "associations" as unions that do not engage in collective bargaining."\(^{21}\)

This, then, differentiates them by their tactics. Applying this to the continuum developed by Burton and Thomason, "unions" refer to those employee representation groups that bargain collectively and "associations" refers to those that do not. The names of the groups are not as important as their tactics. Many associations can and do bargain collectively, as illustrated by the Michigan State Employees Association.\(^{22}\) This distinction is in agreement with the Burton and Thomason spectrum and its two groups, bargaining organizations and non-bargaining organizations.

Other research looks at the environments that the organizations operate within. While associations that represent employees tend to be concentrated within the public sector, unions are the dominant force in the private sector. But there are variations on this theme: public sector unions and private sector associations. A long time observer of public sector employee organizations has noted that when both groups bargain, there is no longer a distinction between:


\(^{22}\)Ichniowski and Zax, "Today's Associations, Tomorrow's Unions".

20
Another blurring of the two types of groups is the emphasis placed upon striking. The distinction based upon this tactic became muddied as early as 1946. At that time, the United Federation of Teachers in New York City struck to obtain recognition. This was a turning point for public sector employee organizations. Prior to that time, most groups in the public sector were emphasizing lobbying and not striking. In fact, early associations were often opposed to collective bargaining legislation and relied upon lobbying as their tool for change. After this confrontation, unions in the public sector began to emphasize collective bargaining. It became more difficult to separate employee organizations strictly on the basis of strike usage.

Other differences have also been theorized. Associations often have memberships comprised of all types of employees in an organization, whereas unions traditionally represent only non-supervisory personnel. In one

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24 Martin, "Employee Characteristics...".


representation election, a union made the point that an opposing employee
representation group should be thought of as an association and not a union,
since it was dominated by supervisors.\textsuperscript{27} Associations of public workers were
historically affiliated with either the Assembly of Governmental Employees (the
AGE, now defunct) or the National Education Association.\textsuperscript{28} In addition,
unions tended to consist of greater numbers of female, non-white, young
members, who held lower job positions and persons having lower levels of
seniority. The memberships of associations tended towards the inverse, with
higher proportions of higher ranked white male employees.\textsuperscript{29}

A recent development has brought a new form of employee organization
to light. Unions are attempting to increase their membership and revenue base
by offering "associate" memberships. These associate memberships are a way
for unions to enlarge their membership numbers by allowing employees in non-
unionized settings to join in a limited capacity. This hybrid form of unionization
allows unrepresented employees to join a union. The employee receives the
financial benefit of the union's group buying power through such things as

\textsuperscript{27} Martin, "Employee Characteristics... ".

\textsuperscript{28} James L. Stern, "Unionism in the Public Sector", in Public Sector
Bargaining, 2nd ed., edited by Benjamin Aaron, Joyce M. Najita and James L.

\textsuperscript{29} James E. Martin, "Demographic and Organizational Differences Among
Two Types of Unions" Proceedings of the 26th Midwest Academy of
Management, Kalamazoo, Michigan April, 1982 pg 172-183.
medical and dental benefits, life insurance, specialized charge cards with reduced interest rates and vacation clubs. The union will not, however, bargain for the associate members at their places of work. The group economic benefits provided are reflective of traditional union benefits and are tangible benefits to workers in non-unionized settings.\textsuperscript{30} Many state employee associations developed in support of these same benefits in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{31}

The types of employee organizations range from non-bargaining, professional organizations to fully proactive unions that bargain and strike. The types of employees that join and form each are distinct, as are the tactics that the organizations pursue. There are some differences in terms of what sector the organization is active in and what sort of employees are represented. The distinctions and differences noted will be used to evaluate the VGEA and the role that it plays.


Why Employees Join Unions

Following the distinction between unions and associations, the reasons why employees form and join them must be explored. There has been a long and continuous stream of research done on the joining behavior of individuals, but not nearly as much specifically within the public sector. In order to understand what has acted to prevent the VGEA from "unionizing", it is important to investigate what causes people to unite. Also, it will be necessary to consider the public sector and to determine if factors unique to this area affect the reasons employees choose to act collectively.

Beginning with the investigation of the individual employee, studies have found numerous reasons that explain why employees will join unions. For example, state clerical workers that had friends and relatives who were union members were more likely to join a union.32 In the same study, job satisfaction, higher educational levels and longer years of service were all found to act against unionization. Jarley and Fiorito found that job satisfaction was an important variable in the likelihood of unionization, but investigated such non-traditional job satisfaction measures as decision making and job content.33


study of male employees found that the traditional job satisfaction issues of job security, pay, the dangerousness of the job and the amount of independence the worker had were all related to unionization. Also, black male employees have been found to favor unionization more often than white male employees.\textsuperscript{34}

Socialization with other employees is often an important reason for an individual to join an organization. One of the earliest unions in the public sector was the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). This organization has its roots in social activities from the 1880s.\textsuperscript{35} A study done in Virginia in 1978 found that 7\% of IAFF members joined for social reasons, and another 37\% responded that social factors exerted a strong influence in their decision to join.\textsuperscript{36} The IAFF is still active in Virginia today, although it has no bargaining authority. It is predominantly a professional organization and attracts its


members on this premise.\textsuperscript{37}

Investigation has been made into the nature of public employment itself, and how it relates to unionization. Public employees have often been assumed to be different in their attitudes towards work. One study found that the understanding of profit inherent in private sector employees was lacking in public sector employees. This was replaced in the public sector by the attention given to service by public employees, thereby giving each sector an underlying work motive.\textsuperscript{38} Most studies have found the two sectors very similar. The work performed tends to be comparable with respect to its content. Employees involved in service in the public sector perform tasks inherently the same as service workers in the private sector.\textsuperscript{39} One major difference between the two areas is separating labor and management. Determining just who is the actual employer in the public sector is often difficult.\textsuperscript{40} The line of demarcation gets muddled and causes confusion when attempting to determine who to represent.

\textsuperscript{37}From a conversation with Alexandria Fire Fighter Ed Richardson, February 18, 1992.


\textsuperscript{40}Levine and Hagburg, Public Sector Labor Relations, pg. 65.
This is not true in the private sector, as the National Labor Relations Act clearly defines supervisors. In the public sector, supervisory personnel do not have the NLRA restrictions. They have been referred to as "middle men" that wish to have representation as employees and see themselves as supervisors only by their title.\textsuperscript{41} There is also a great variety in the types of unions and associations that represent employees in the public sector, with respect to supervisory personnel. Some refuse to represent supervisors, whereas others are willing to open their doors to any type of employee.

Generally, investigations into the distinctiveness of the public sector have shown most of the literature in the private sector to be applicable. Research has pointed to the service area of public sector as being more readily unionizable than its private sector counterparts.\textsuperscript{42} In fact, Hills found that non-union public employees in the service sector were twice as likely to join unions as private employees. Studies overall have found very similar results in interpreting the motives held by employees that join unions.

One major study looked strictly at public sector employees and characteristics that affected the decision to join unions. Hundley investigated


\textsuperscript{42}Stephen M. Hills, "The Attitudes of Union and Nonunion Male Workers Toward Union Representation", pg. 192.
three areas: Individual and Demographic Characteristics, Occupational Characteristics, and the Provisions of Bargaining Laws. Various elements from each area were identified and tested for their ability to explain the unionizing behavior of public employees. Findings supported prior research from the private sector. Hundley’s study further substantiated such research by finding that males and non-white employees joined unions more frequently than females and white employees. From the occupational viewpoint, police, fire fighters and teachers were more apt to belong to unions than other occupational groups. The findings from the legal area of Hundley’s research are directly applicable to the situation in Virginia. Right-to-work laws were found to have a negative impact on union membership, as did any legal provisions that prohibited collective bargaining.

Right-to-work laws are considered to inhibit unionization due to inherent sociological factors. “The demand for union services and hence the extent of unionization will be lower in right-to-work states because of the underlying negative attitudes toward unionism, not because of the right-to-work laws per se.” Southern locations, combined with right-to-work laws, have negative influences on the passage of mandatory and comprehensive bargaining laws for

43Hundley, "Who Joins Unions in the Public Sector?...".

public employees.\textsuperscript{45}

In a series of studies by Marc Singer, employees’ knowledge of right-to-work laws were investigated. The first study was done in Virginia and found that only 50.6\% of eight questions asked of 500 subjects concerning right-to-work laws were answered correctly.\textsuperscript{46} In two following studies, it was found that residents of other states were also poorly informed about their right-to-work laws. Arizona was found to have a slightly higher correct response rate (62\%) than Virginia residents.\textsuperscript{47} In the broader study, Singer investigated all 21 right-to-work states and found that "the average worker in a right-to-work state is either uninformed or misinformed concerning his/her rights."\textsuperscript{48}

In a study of public employee attitudes towards unions, Smith and


Hopkins looked at three variables that affect employees.\textsuperscript{49} The study examined the individual and their experiences, the work situation, and the employee reactions to the organization. Generally, the findings identified a closing of the gap between the attitudes of blue and white collar workers towards unions, a relationship between lower educational levels and the need to unionize, and that employees of lower economic status were more favorable towards unionization. Dissatisfaction with the job, previous negative experiences and less job autonomy were found to contribute to possible unionization. Smith and Hopkins also noted that many of the conclusions reached were the same reasons found in many samples of private sector employees.

Overall, there are few differences between the private and public sector with regard to the motivation for unionization. Employees with previous union involvement or knowledge will be more prone to join a union. Younger, non-white males with lower paying positions will also join, as will employees that desire more control over their jobs. Both white and blue collar workers join unions for the same reasons. Unsafe working conditions, the desire for job security, and general job dissatisfaction have also been acknowledged as motivational factors.

\textsuperscript{49}Russell L. Smith and Anne H. Hopkins, "Public Employee Attitudes Toward Unions", \textit{Industrial and Labor Relations Review}, vol. 32, no. 4 (July 1979), pg. 484-495.
VG EA Membership and State Employment

The VGEA has various types of members. These are defined in the By-Laws of the Association. The VGEA recognizes five different types of memberships: Active, Retired, Associate, Honorary and Life. Life memberships are awarded to outstanding active members for their continued contributions to the association. Only one Life membership is granted each year. Active and Retired memberships are available to employees in any state, county, city or town that are members of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Retired applies specifically to those employees who have retired from their positions under the VRS. Honorary memberships are reserved for business patrons who are "interested in supporting the State Employees Association concept."  

The associate membership category is somewhat unusual. This category is for state officials, with some restrictions. The by-laws, Section 1.3, reads,

"Any state official who is elected by the people or who is appointed directly by the governor, or representatives of supportive organizations, may upon payment of regular VGEA dues, subject to approval by the BOARD, become an associate member without privilege of voting or holding office therein, but with all other privileges and responsibilities of membership."

This is used infrequently, and only when there develops a political motivation to do so. As will be explained later, the VGEA does not actively support political

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candidates, so the honorary membership is the only way it can formally recognize a political figure as a friend of the association.

In a 1988 VGEA membership survey, the largest single group within the association were those employees who had over 25 years of employment with the Commonwealth. This group accounted for 25% of the membership and reflected the past goals of the organization to act as a watchdog for the state’s retirement program. The group with 16 to 20 years of experience accounted for 20% of the membership, and the 21 to 25 year group for 19%.

In contrast, according to a recent state publication, only 5% of the 100,000+ state employees had been with the state for more than 26 years. The VGEA reported a 25% rate in this area. The Personnel Communiqué also indicated that 61% of the employees were in pay grades 4 through 9. This translates to starting salary levels of $13,502 to $21,079. It also indicated that only 12% are paid above level 12, or $27,538. The study by the VGEA found that 43% of the membership was paid between $15,000 and $25,000 and that another 21% made between $25,000 and $30,000.

A review of the salary data for the year 1990 showed that the average state employee earned $22,770 per year and had been employed by the state

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for 6 years.\textsuperscript{53} Also, the pay grade with the largest proportion of employees was pay grade 7, accounting for 12.81\% of all employees.

More recent data for the state were obtained from the Department of Personnel and Training.\textsuperscript{54} As of July 1, 1992, state employees had an average tenure of 9.84 years with the state, with a median of 7 years. State employees were found to be an average of 41.48 years of age, with a median age of 41 years. These data reflect all classified state employees in service on July 1. Differences between these data and the data for the year 1990 reflect the early retirement program that the state instituted during the fiscal crisis.

The slightly higher rates of pay among the VGEA members correlates with the longer lengths of time the members have spent in service. The rates quoted for the Virginia employees are the bottom step of each of the pay grades. As the employee stays with the state, their pay is raised slightly each year, to a new step, based upon satisfactory performance. The seniority of the VGEA members accounts for the higher levels of pay being found in their study.


\textsuperscript{54}Judy Thrash, Compensation Management Analyst, telephone interview, July 21, 1992.
Summary

For the purposes of this study, three areas were investigated in this chapter. The first area reviewed explored the differences between various forms of employee organizations. The level of representation and the ability to bargain were found to be key points in placing an organization on the scale developed by Burton and Thomason. Distinctions between the various types of employee organizations were noted.

The second area explored the reasons employees join and form unions. Job dissatisfaction and job security were found to be two important factors in an individual’s decision to join. Also investigated in this area was the nature of public employment. In general, no differences were found in the joining behavior of private and public sector employees. Differences were found in the nature of the work, with an emphasis on profit in the private sector and on service in the public. Also, larger amounts of supervisory personnel joined unions in the public sector than in the private.

The third area investigated the demographics of state employees and of VGEA members. The data indicated that the membership of the VGEA is not reflective of the state’s employees. VGEA members are paid more and have longer lengths of service than state employees in general.

These three areas provide the framework for the rest of the study. By understanding the possible changes the association can undergo, it becomes
possible to analyze what, if any, change took place. Knowledge concerning the
desire for unionization, and some of the conditions necessary, makes it feasible
to analyze the likelihood that change would take place. In addition, an
understanding of the differences between VGEA members and average state
employees illuminates the paths of action the VGEA can choose from.
CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

A multi-step process was used to determine what had prevented the Virginia Governmental Employees Association (VGEA) from changing its form and tactics in response to changes in the economy. First, the relevant operating environments were identified. A variety of techniques were then utilized in analyzing the three environments. Both qualitative and quantitative tools were employed. Research questions were formulated for the investigation of factors in the environments.

Research Questions

Three primary research questions were developed to determine the various factors in the environments which may have inhibited the VGEA from changing its tactics, policies, procedures or structure. Each research question related to one of the three environments within which the VGEA operates: the state’s legal environment for public sector labor relations, the internal structure and historical traditions of the VGEA itself, and, finally, the desires of the membership.

Research Question One: What are the identifiable factors in the external environment which prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?
This research question was concerned with Virginia's legal environment. An historical survey of the legislation and policies affecting public sector labor relations in Virginia was utilized. Through a review of state statutes and court cases a picture of the status of public sector labor relations was developed. Factors in this environment were seen as possibly limiting the changes that the VGEA could make.

**Research Question Two:** What are the identifiable factors in the internal environment that prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?

The internal policies and procedures of the VGEA were investigated, through a historical perspective, to highlight relevant features of the association that may have acted to prevent change. Internal documents and publications were reviewed and association personnel were interviewed.

**Research Question Three:** What are the identifiable factors contained within the membership that prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?

The desires and needs of the membership affect the actions that the association takes. Perceptions concerning the legal environment for labor relations contributes to the decision to pursue a benefit. The demographics of the membership also affect the strategies the association pursues.
The research into the external and internal environment was predominantly qualitative in nature. It relied upon the analysis of written documents and the use of personal interviews. A survey instrument investigated the membership, and resulted in data that allowed for statistical testing.

Through the investigation of the three research questions factors contained within each environment were distinguished. The research questions are summarized in Figure 3.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Research Question 1: What are the identifiable factors in the external environment that prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question 2: What are the identifiable factors in the internal environment that prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question 3: What are the identifiable factors contained within the membership that prevent the VGEA from changing from its present form?</td>
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Figure 3 - Research Questions
Design of the Study

The study relied upon two areas of data collection. The first area was qualitative in nature and relied upon interviews, documents and other literary sources. The second area was quantitative in nature, and utilized a survey questionnaire. The methods used in each area are discussed here.

The Qualitative Study

This area relied upon a combination of information sources. In order to understand the external environment, news reports and state documents were analyzed to present a timeline. This established that external pressures on the VGEA could have provided an impetus for unionization.

The external environment was also examined by a review of court cases and state legislation that related to public sector unionization. Landmark cases and key State Attorney General’s opinions were presented in an historical fashion, tracing the development of legal climate for unionization.

The internal environment of the VGEA was examined through the use of interviews and association documents. Internal documents, such as the Executive Director’s Handbook, were examined. Also, copies of all association publications were gathered in order to understand the history of the association. Interviews with staff and members were conducted, in order to further supplement the information garnered from the written sources.
The Quantitative Study

The major research instrument utilized was a survey of selected VGEA members. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to randomly selected members of the VGEA with pre-printed mailing labels being provided by the VGEA.\textsuperscript{55} The actual questionnaire is contained in Appendix A. The labels were generated by the Association by zip code. The Association keeps very little data on the members and groups the names and addresses of the members by their district affiliation. The labels were printed by choosing a block of names and addresses from each zip code within each district. The names and addresses within the districts are in no specific order.

The questionnaire, utilizing optical scanning forms (OPSCANS), was sent by mail. The respondents were asked to answer 29 multiple choice questions, and then respond to 5 open ended questions on the rear of the form, for a total of 34 questions. Since the survey was conducted anonymously, no attempt was made to check for non-response biases.

Instrument Development

The instrument went through four reviews, with testing being conducted

\textsuperscript{55}In return for this service, the VGEA was presented with raw data from the survey.
at each stage. A group of state employees at one large agency completed
draft questionnaires at various stages of the design process. After each review,
input was solicited to ensure that an understandable format was being
developed. Design changes centered around changing some questions from
multiple choice (self-coding) to an open-ended format, for ease of completion.

Focus of the Survey

Part One of the questionnaire was designed to ascertain what benefits
the members felt they were receiving from their VGEA membership. Questions
one through seven used a ten point response system to investigate the
members' perceptions at three different time periods, what they felt would be
most and least important to their co-workers, and what they perceived the
VGEA could provide. Questions eight through thirteen extended this idea, by
asking the respondents to rank various benefits according to the amounts of
time and money that should be spent on each benefit. The respondents were
asked to decide how much time the VGEA should spend on trying to obtain
those six benefits previously poled. As a test for this section, and to prevent
the respondents from simply ranking each benefit as a very high priority,
questions fourteen and fifteen asked if the respondent would be willing to pay
an additional fee for the highest ranked benefits, and how much they would be
willing to pay.
The last section of Part One asked the respondents to rank the progress the VGEA had made on items in the past year. A set of benefits was listed and the respondents were asked to pick which had the most progress and which the least. These questions, numbered sixteen and seventeen, were the last two questions designed to investigate the needs, desires, and perceptions of the membership.

Part Two of the instrument was designed to investigate the knowledge that members had concerning the legality of public sector unionism in Virginia. In accordance with the studies done by Singer, it was expected that the employees would not be aware of their rights and that large proportions of them would have misconceptions. Five questions were included about the legality of specific union activities that might be conducted by state employees. Only "yes" or "no" responses were acceptable. No option was given for "maybe" or "unsure". The logic behind this structuring was to eliminate response tendency bias. Since the respondents were both state employees and association members they should have known, or had perceptions of, the legality of the five issues. Also, members that truly did not know how to respond were free to omit an answer, as some of them did. It was expected that a majority of the respondents would answer at least some of the questions incorrectly.

The third and final areas of inquiry on the questionnaire were designed to gather basic demographic information on the membership: sex, race, pay
grade, and education level. Three additional questions concerned their involvement with unions: if they have ever been a union member; if a relative had been one; and finally if they would join a union if one were offered. Other information, such as age, job tenure and association tenure were asked in the write-in questions. These responses were then encoded onto the form manually.

The write-in question concerning job title was coded in one of four ways: as either supervisory, non-supervisory, educator or professional. This was verified with question 25, the respondent's pay grade. When discrepancies over what category to code a job title arose, titles above grade six (seven and above) were rated as supervisory, unless the job title was distinctly professional or educator.

Written comments, while not specifically asked for, were expected, given the large blank area on the back of the form. They were also recorded, in order to get a general impression of the willingness of the VGEA membership to speak out on issues of interest. All written comments are reproduced in Appendix B.

Survey Administration

The survey was mailed out on January 27, 1992 to 973 randomly selected VGEA members. Each envelope contained a tri-folded OPSCAN form
with questions printed on both sides, a letter from the Executive Director of the VGEA asking for the membership's cooperation and a self addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to complete and mail responses by February 25, 1992. The cutoff date for responses was March 7, 1992, and the data analysis began the following week.

Survey Response

The response to the survey was greater than expected, with a total of 53% responding (Figure 4). Of the 973 questionnaires distributed, 517 were returned by the cutoff date. Twenty-one were unusable, due to incomplete responses or physical damage to the OPSCAN form.

The first responses were received three days after the mailing date. Table I shows the daily response rate for the time period of the study and that the majority of the responses, or 64 percent, were received by the end of the second week. This implies that the membership was concerned enough to take the time to respond to the questionnaire and to return it quickly. Figure 5 illustrates the weekly responses to the mailing. No incentives were used for early responses. Those who did return their forms by the end of the second week were evidently interested enough in the topic to participate. This is substantiated by the large response rate overall. Due to the confidential nature of the responses, no attempt was made to study potential non-respondent
biases.
Survey Response Data
Return Rate for 973 Surveys Mailed

53.135%

Not Returned (456)

Returned (517)

Figure 4 - Return Rate
Figure 5 - Weekly Totals
Although the questionnaire did not specifically ask for written comments, 15 respondents took advantage of the blank space on the back side of the form to include comments. Some of examples of the types of comments received are shown here. The others are contained in Appendix B.

I feel VGEA is a very important "working" tool for state employees. I wish more employees would join VGEA as they seem to be the only ones really pulling for us.

- Program Support Technician, age 49

VGEA fulfills an appropriate role: that of being a lobbyist for state employees. I do not believe that public employees need a union to ensure adequate compensation and conditions of employment. The legislature has a responsibility to provide the 77,000 personnel in the system with a fair employment package.

- Associate Professor, age 62

There was a wide range of comments concerning the ability of the VGEA to
achieve objectives for the membership.

Summary

This chapter explained the questions of interest for the study. The procedures used to gather the data necessary for the study were also explained. Each of the three environments were studied via a specific research question. In order to answer the research question for the external environment, information was gathered through the study of published literature, such as news reports and state statutes. The internal environment was examined in like fashion, but utilized internal VGEA documents and discussions with VGEA members and officials. The membership area necessitated the use of a survey instrument, designed to answer the research questions about the membership. The process used to distribute the questionnaire was explained and the chapter concluded by discussing the response rate.
CHAPTER FOUR - QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

The External Environment: Virginia's Legal Climate

The first environment evaluated was the external environment. The VGEA was found to be limited by various state laws and policies, even though Virginia has no statutes authorizing or restricting public employee collective bargaining per se. Virginia is a right-to-work state and located in the South, two items that have traditionally been obstacles in the path of unionization. One study, however, has found these two factors losing their significance, based on union election certification data.\(^\text{56}\)

In 1981, McCollum found that "there (were) seven states, including Virginia, that (had) no standing authorization for any kind of public sector bargaining..."\(^\text{57}\) In 1992, Virginia still has no statutes affecting public sector collective bargaining. The Commonwealth has traditionally attempted to restrict its employees from joining unions, but this effort was eventually halted in the Federal courts on the basis that it violated an employee's first amendment right


of association. \(^{58}\) The atmosphere for labor unions in Virginia in 1992 has evolved from the fact that "Virginia's state government has been dominated for over fifty years by the Byrd organization, a political machine that has been at cross purposes with organized labor." \(^{59}\) The large trend of public sector unionization in the 1960s and 1970s was never in evidence in the southeastern states. \(^{60}\) What is surprising is the fact that despite the anti-labor forces in office and the lack of legislation, public sector unions did arise in the Commonwealth. In the early seventies, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Laborer's International Union of North America, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the Virginia Education Association all had bargaining agreements in Virginia. State employees were never unionized, nor was any attempt made. However, at least one installation did have employees represented in grievance hearings by a union. In the landmark case that dealt a final blow to organized labor in Virginia's public sector, Commonwealth of Virginia v. The County Board of Arlington County, the state Supreme Court ruled that the state's employers could not enter into collective bargaining


agreements with their employees, until such time as the General Assembly
authorized such agreements.\textsuperscript{61} This ruling, issued on January 14, 1977,
clarified the state's stand on public sector labor relations, which had been
clouded for almost a decade.

Prior to \textit{Arlington County}, the only other notable action by the state on
the issue was a series of opinions written by state Attorney General Andrew P.
Miller. In his opinions, A.G. Miller presented 5 points that dictated how unions
or associations could interact with the state. The points began by stating that
collective bargaining was strictly forbidden. In the second part of the opinion, it
was stated that "Public employers have the authority to meet with their
employees to discuss matters of mutual interest and adopt agreements
embodying the points agreed upon in discussions."\textsuperscript{62} This was immediately
followed by the next statement noting that the employer must retain the final
decision for any such agreements. In effect, the Attorney General was saying
that it was fine if employees wished to meet with their employers, and to talk
about various aspects of their employment, but that the power to make
decisions must remain in the hands of the employer. It was in this same
opinion that the state Supreme Court found the reason for striking of the

\textsuperscript{61}"Virginia Supreme Court Ruling That Public Employees May Not Enter Into
Bargaining Agreements With Government Employers", \textit{Government Employee

collective bargaining agreements that had been formed in Arlington County.

In Miller's opinion, it was stated that any employee could come forward and meet with their employer, and that this right could not be denied to any single employee or group of employees. The State Supreme Court found in the Arlington case that the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 2407 had been granted exclusive representation for the county's employees.\(^{63}\) Employees who were not union members were not being given the chance to share in the collective bargaining process. Hence, the agreements were considered null and void.

The Supreme Court's decision finally put to rest all arguments in the state in favor of the collective bargaining process. Miller had stated that "Absent express legislative authority to do so, public employees in Virginia cannot collectively bargain with their employers."\(^{64}\) The Court found that Arlington County's Board of Supervisors had overstepped the boundaries expressly granted them by entering into the agreements. The Board of Supervisors had concluded that since nothing was on the books preventing them from making


\(^{64}\)Andrew P. Miller, "Address by the Attorney General of Virginia", (Delivered at the Conference on Labor Management Relations in the Public Sector, Charlottesville, VA., October 16, 1975).
the agreement, that they could hence do so. The court felt otherwise, and stated that "There can be no question that Virginia long has followed and still adheres to the Dillon Rule of strict construction concerning the powers of local government bodies."\textsuperscript{65} The "Dillon rule of strict construction" refers to the idea that only those things clearly stated as being allowed could be done: if an action was not approved of or mentioned as being part of the local government's powers, then it was not. Exclusion of an idea was grounds for it being considered improper, or unapproved.

The court distinctly stated that "the issue of public employee collective bargaining is a political question that must be answered by the General Assembly and not the courts."\textsuperscript{66} Overall, the evolution of case law had made statutes unnecessary. Virginia's reliance upon court decisions developed a framework for handling public sector labor relations within the state, without the need for passing prohibitive legislation. This technique has proven successful, but as noted in one study, "States that have no laws and procedures are ill prepared to deal with the problems of labor-management relations."\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Commonwealth v. Arlington County Bd.}, 217 VA. 558,559 (January 14, 1977).

\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Commonwealth v. Arlington County Bd.}, 217 VA. 558,559 (January 14, 1977).

The Internal Environment: The VGEA

The second environment considered was that which the association imposes on itself through its constitution and by-laws. There have been various operating policies the association follows in order best to represent its members. The internal environment of the VGEA is controlled by its operations, as established by its constitution and by-laws. These items were examined and evaluated. Analysis was made of the role the VGEA plays in determining its own future, and the actions that it could take. However, the various operating tenants of the association could always be changed by the membership in the future.

Given the state's somewhat unusual climate, the VGEA has evolved in a controlled manner. The VGEA was formed in 1959 and is still active today in the basically anti-union climate present in the state. The VGEA in 1992 is an evolution from an earlier form that had its roots in the 1940s. In 1942, a group of state employees lobbied and gained the support of several state legislators to begin a retirement system. Ten years later, in 1952, the group felt that not enough protection was being offered by the system, and once again the state was lobbied to institute changes. As a result of this second effort, the Virginia Supplemental Retirement System was formed (now the Virginia Retirement System).

Subsequently, in 1959, the "Association of the Members of the Virginia
Supplemental Retirement System, Incorporated” was begun. The membership grew to around three hundred state employees by 1960. This early form of the VGEA existed primarily to act as a watchdog for the state’s retirement system. At the September 19, 1960 meeting of the Board of Directors, the association’s name was formally changed to the “Virginia Governmental Employees Association, Incorporated”. Things remained relatively stable within the association for the next four years or so.

By 1964, the membership had risen to 5100, and the association began to take a more active role in pursuing new benefits for its membership. As the association stated in its June 1984 issue of the Spectrum, the official publication of the association,

It was by this time that the Association had seen the need for expanding its legislative program to include more benefits for active employees as well as continuing to work for benefits for its retired members. State participation in hospitalization insurance for active and retired employees, increased benefits from group life insurance, credit for service lost during military duty ... are just a few of the many legislative proposals supported by VGEA that had their beginnings during this period. It was in the 60s that the groundwork was laid for the VGEA’s future role as a professional organization lobbying for state employee benefits.

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68 In April, 1988, the VGEA’s official publication underwent a name change from Spectrum to Commonwealth Connection.

69 “25 Years of Service to the Commonwealth”, Spectrum, Vol. 20, No. 2 (June 1984), pg. 3.
In some of the recent in-house VGEA literature, the VGEA has attempted to distill its current operating philosophies into a few paragraphs. In a pamphlet entitled "A Little Background About VGEA", the association states that:

VGEA is a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose purpose is to represent public employees on matters of employee benefit programs. It is the Association's goal to promote acquaintanceship, cooperation, efficiency and harmony among public employees and to support legislation considered beneficial and oppose legislation deemed detrimental to their welfare.

The Association is also available to serve in an advisory capacity to administrators of state agencies when deemed appropriate. It shall always be the objective of the VGEA to encourage high quality work performance and professionalism by all public employees.\(^7^6\)

This reflects the changes in the needs of the association's members from the 1960s. Also, 31 years of existence have allowed the VGEA to discover what methods are successful. The release also went on to state that the major growth period was in the early seventies. This coincides with the period in which public sector labor relations developed in Virginia, although the VGEA never entered into a collective agreement with the state. But the environment was certainly favorable to unions and associations, and the VGEA was able to benefit from it through an increase in membership.

The current form of the VGEA relies upon two techniques, lobbying and

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\(^7^6\)Virginia Governmental Employees Association, Incorporated, "A Little Background About VGEA", from Executive Director's Handbook. (Date Unknown). This pamphlet is contained in the handbook and presumably is for use by recruiters and other officials in the Association.
professionalism, to achieve new benefits for its membership. The VGEA acts in response to the membership’s desires and will involve itself in any activity that will benefit the employees. The association has lobbied for many different issues, such as a raise in pay, or against an issue, such as items in the state budget. As the benefits provided state employees have changed over time, the VGEA’s mission has also changed. Originally, the association was dedicated solely to monitoring the state’s retirement system. As compensation philosophies changed in the 1960s and 1970s, the state’s employees found that their compensation package consisted of more and varied benefits. In turn, the VGEA began to monitor these issues as well.

Eventually, as membership in the association grew, the VGEA began to lobby for specific issues that the membership desired, either as changes in present systems or the addition of new benefits, such as a dental option in the health care benefit. Over 31 years the association went from watching and informing to pursuing and supporting the needs of the state’s employees. As the association’s recruitment brochure succinctly states, "Every day, legislators and government executives make decisions that affect your professional life."
Shouldn't your voice be heard?®

The internal structure of the organization is designed to support its lobbying activities. A typical organizational system was developed that incorporated three levels of the association: the local level, the district level and the state level. The VGEA divides the state into eight districts, based upon geographic considerations. Within those districts are various chapters, which are determined by the number of state agencies and the number of state employees in each chapter's area. The details of these districts are contained within the association's constitution.

The association is governed by this constitution and its By-Laws. The first three articles of the constitution clearly define the purpose and objectives of the association, in more detail than was mentioned earlier. There are two very carefully worded sections in the constitution that act to differentiate the VGEA from typical public sector "unions" in other states. The first is Article III, Section 2, that reads,

The Association is never to be affiliated with any local, state or national labor union.

In support of this, one of the first points to be raised verbally at any recruitment

---

Virginia Governmental Employees Association, Incorporated, A Voice for Virginia's State Employees. This pamphlet is the VGEA's main recruiting tool and information kit, which also includes a mail-in membership application. An interesting recent development is that various agencies are now including this pamphlet in their new employee information packets. For example, Virginia Tech begun doing this in 1991.
meeting is the fact that the VGEA is not a union, but rather an association of concerned employees.\textsuperscript{72}

The second unusual statement in the association's constitution is contained in Article III, Section 3. Article III is titled Objectives, and Section 3 is written to express how the objectives will be obtained. Section 3 reads:

The methods of obtaining the Association's objectives shall be by petition, resolution or recommendation to the Governor, General Assembly, or any state official, committee, board, department or agency. Such proceedings shall be upon approval of a majority vote of the delegates to the annual meeting or called meeting of the Board of Directors. In no event shall a strike or threat of work stoppage be employed by the Association

With these two sections of the constitution, the association has differentiated itself from unions. It will neither bargain collectively nor engage in strike related activities. It prevents itself from becoming associated with a union, such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Even if a large union was to become active within the state and unionize employees, the VGEA would likely seek to remain an independent organization.

Article II, Purpose, and Article III, Objectives, sheds some light on how the association is able to achieve its goals. The association primarily achieves its objectives through lobbying various lawmakers in Virginia. The VGEA seeks to promote a professional, helpful form of association with the state. It is the

\textsuperscript{72}In almost every conversation held with VGEA people, whether they were members, paid staff or elected officials, this point was mentioned.
atmosphere in which the lobbying is conducted that allows for the success that the association feels it has achieved.

"The primary objectives of the association shall always be to encourage high quality work performance and professionalism by all state employees."\textsuperscript{73} The VGEA recognizes this, and is able to lobby for issues based upon the fact that it would be good for both the state and its employees. The association's leaders feel that by adopting such an attitude, the VGEA portrays itself as an organization of intelligent, concerned employees. This professionalism is the image of state employees held by various lawmakers in Virginia, and an image that the VGEA actively encourages. As evidenced in a recent letter from state Senator Hunter B. Andrews to his colleagues,

...the nature of the state work force itself has changed. The days of a largely clerical state work force are gone, if they ever truly existed. Today, approximately forty-eight percent of the state work force are employed in managerial and professional jobs. We now compete head to head with private sector firms for skilled employees such as computer programmers, chemists, engineers, and financial analysts, to name but a few.\textsuperscript{74}

In turn, the VGEA uses the image of the state employee as a professional to push for wages and benefits competitive with the private sector. The VGEA argues that this is necessary both to attract and retain the professional

\textsuperscript{73}Virginia Governmental Employees Association, Incorporated, Section 1 of Article III, By-Laws, pg. 4.

\textsuperscript{74}Hunter B. Andrews, in a letter to the Members of the Senate, July 27, 1990, pg. 1.
employee.

The professionalism view is necessary to support the decision not to use militant action to obtain results. Since the VGEA has neither the ability to strike nor to bargain, they must rely upon other avenues to further their goals. The only option left is to make requests of the lawmakers, in a professional and polite manner. It is hoped that by being seen as professionals the requests will be taken more seriously, and that by working in the best interests of both the state and the employees the requests will be answered.

Lobbying Efforts

In the lobbying environment, it is important to be precise and professional. The so called "lobbyist's third commandment" captures this need:

Be Courteous. Public officials and their employees and representatives are human and expect common courtesy. Plus, they may be more helpful if you treat them with respect.\textsuperscript{75}

The association uses its professional image as a tool to differentiate itself from the other lobbyists that demand time from the state legislators. The type of information they provide to the legislators is claimed to be very valuable. By working in the best interests of both the state and the employees, the organization is on the watch for possibly damaging issues. Abney's assertion

\textsuperscript{75}Steve Charton, "Thou Shalt Lobby", Association Management, August 1989, pg. 234.
that "Public lobbyists are informants and watchdogs, probably more than private sector lobbyists" is certainly true for the VGEA. The association, with its ties to the Department of Personnel and Training, and its history of overseeing the state's (Supplemental) Retirement Program, it is in a good position to aid and assist the legislators. This is more of the role the legislators would have the association take, as opposed to potentially boisterous demands for new services and pay raises. Employee associations, such as the VGEA, have traditionally provided assistance in the creation of policies and aided in directing public opinion. The association sees its role as one of aiding and persuading legislators towards decisions that are favorable to the membership.

Another lobbying technique employed by the association is a "grass-roots campaign". The association's newsletter, the Commonwealth Connection, and the local chapters are the starting points for these campaigns. An issue of importance will be raised, the names and addresses of key legislators distributed along with a set of guidelines for the writing of letters, and the campaign is underway. However, as James C. Lederer points out, "A grass-roots campaign ... will work only if your members perceive an urgent need for

\[ \text{References:} \]

their participation." The recent budget crisis in Virginia acted as the urgent need to begin the association's latest letter writing barrage. Unfortunately, the campaign did not have much of a visible impact on the members. At a local VGEA meeting in the New River Valley, members complained that they had written to many legislators and had only received form letters in return. While there was no sudden reversal of budget cuts, or inflows of new funds, the fact that replies were given indicated that the Governor and others had received and noticed the letters. The VGEA continued to press the membership to action, but after the initial flurry of activity, the barrage slowed to a trickle. It appears that the budget problems were significant enough to outlast the membership's attempt to overcome them.

As in any lobbying situation, the real power is in the votes that a lobbying group can claim. The VGEA calculates that each dues-paying member of the association represents three and a fraction votes. Therefore, a paid membership of thirty thousand or so would translate into one hundred thousand votes. In a state with a population of 5,346,797 people and approximately 2,770,000 registered voters, the VGEA's influence is relatively small, but still


79 Joan Dent, Executive Director, personal interview, October, 1991.
large enough to possibly make the difference in an election.\textsuperscript{80} This is particularly true in some of the smaller counties, where a large percentage of the populace may be employed by the state. The number of votes (3 and 1/3 per member) is based upon the amount of influence each member has over other members of the voting public. It is assumed that the members will be concerned enough about issues to convince their relatives, friends and co-workers to vote for certain issues and candidates. Public employees, even when unionized, know that they can influence their situation through strategic voting and add to their gains through this method.\textsuperscript{81}

Lobbying, then, is the only true power the association can use to press for its issues. As already noted, early public sector unions utilized it exclusively until they changed their tactics to collective bargaining in the early 1960s. In a study of public sector clerical workers it was found that unionized employees desired lobbying more than twice that of non-unionized employees.\textsuperscript{82} The VGEA has hired full time staff (one full time position and one half time position) to lobby state legislators for change. The infrastructure is in place and could


\textsuperscript{81} Reid and Kurth, "Union Militancy Among Public Employees: A Public Choice Hypothesis".

easily be utilized further if unionization were to take place.

Summary

Two environments were investigated in this chapter. The first, the external environment, was defined by the state’s climate for public sector labor relations. The lack of collective bargaining was found to be the most prominent factor in the environment. Also present was a restriction on striking by state employees, and a historical non-union atmosphere.

The second environment, the VGEA itself, was found to be constrained by the policies of the VGEA. Its own restrictions upon becoming a union directly affect the association’s ability to change. The only action available to the association is lobbying, and it must work to keep on good terms with various legislators. Any "grass-root" efforts would take time to develop, and would require a large amount of support from a large percentage of the membership.
CHAPTER FIVE - QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Survey Results

A 34 item mail questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 973 members of the VGEA. Survey responses were received from 517 members. Twenty one of the responses were not usable, due to damage to the OPSCAN forms. This resulted in data for 496 respondents. Since not all respondents answered all the questions, not all tables will show the same number of responses. The tabulated results to the multiple choice questions are shown in Appendix A.

Respondent Demographics

Of the 496 usable questionnaires returned, a profile of the VGEA membership can be developed. Three hundred three men (61.09%) responded to the questionnaire, and 188 women (38.91%). Four hundred seventy eight respondents (96.37%) characterized themselves as White and non-Hispanic, 12 as black (2.42%), 1 as Hispanic (.20%) and 2 Native American (.40%). The majority (283) reported their pay grade as being grade 10 or higher. With respect to levels of education, 386 of the respondents (77.82%) reported some form of education beyond the high school level.

Since the survey was anonymous, follow-up questionnaires or an
analysis of non-respondents was not available. Instead, it was possible to compare the demographic results of the respondents to information gathered by the VGEA itself in a recent questionnaire. The questionnaire, conducted in July of 1988, asked the members to respond to 38 items and to mail their responses back to the VGEA. The questionnaire was printed in the Association's newsletter and the November, 1988 issue contained the results of the survey, noting that over 600 members responded.\textsuperscript{83}

As seen in Figure 6 and Figure 7, and in Table II and Table III, there is some similarity between the sample generated for this study and the sample in the study previously conducted by the VGEA. The sample for this study contained higher amounts of older employees and employees that had been employed for more than 25 years. A possible reason for this may have been the printing of the mailing labels. Although the Association claimed that their database was in no specific order, the list might have VGEA members with greater years of membership listed first, and newer members later. This would cause the sample to be skewed towards older employees with greater lengths of state service. In general, the samples seem to be comparable in their reporting of the basic demographics of the membership.

\textsuperscript{83} "Membership Survey Results", \textit{Commonwealth Connection}, Vol. 24, No. 4 (November, 1988), pg. 8.
Figure 6 - Age Comparison Graph
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Respondent</th>
<th>Present Survey</th>
<th>Previous Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 26</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 35</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 45</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 55</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 +</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-Response Analysis
State Tenure Comparison

Figure 7 - Tenure Comparison Graph
### Table III - Tenure Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Present Survey</th>
<th>Previous Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 5</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 15</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 25</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 +</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specific Item Responses

Questions 27 through 29 asked the membership about unions. Seventy-two members (14.52%) had previously belonged to a union, while roughly 40% of the members had relatives who were union members. When asked if they would join a union, 168 members said they would do so if they had the opportunity while 308 said they would not. Of the responses to this question, 35.29% of the members surveyed indicated a willingness to join a union.

Answers to the write-in questions provided detailed demographic information about the membership. The largest group responding were supervisors, comprising 55.04% of the questionnaires returned (Table IV).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Number Received</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Supervisory</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>55.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>17.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Given</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results for the ages of the members are shown in Table V. A wide cross section of the membership was reached with the survey. However, a mean of 52.89 and a median of 53 indicates that the respondents are probably not representative of the state's work force.

**Table V - Age of Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number Received</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>15.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>15.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>15.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496

N  MEAN  MEDIAN
496  52.89  53.00
Table VI and Table VII show the data for the time spent with the state and with the VGEA, respectively. Job tenure statistics show that the VGEA represents members from among the most senior employees in the state. The average for length of VGEA membership is lower than state tenure, at close to 12 years.

The results from the survey illuminate some important factors. The membership does not appear to be comparable to the average state employee. The VGEA finds its members to be older, hold more senior and supervisory positions, and to have worked for the state for a longer period of time. Demographically, the majority of respondents were well-educated, white males with high pay levels. Roughly a third said that they would consider joining a union. And, given the response rate and the speed with which the questionnaires were returned, the members surveyed appeared to be concerned about their association and their employment. In addition, a union organizer might view the overall state employee group as quite vulnerable, based on this demographic data and attitudes towards unions.
Table VI - Respondents’ Length of Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Tenure</th>
<th>Number Received</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>18.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>12.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>496</td>
<td>21.64</td>
<td>22.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VGEA Tenure</td>
<td>Number Received</td>
<td>Percent of Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>38.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>13.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>496</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>10.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographic Differences

One area of investigation for Research Question 3 was the differences between the membership of the VGEA and state employees overall. As already noted, various differences exist. One example of this difference is the pay grades of VGEA members, as reported by the respondents, and the pay grades of state employees. Another distinction between the two groups is the difference in amount of time employed by the state. As shown in Table VIII, the means for the two groups are different with respect to the two examples.

### Table VIII - Demographic Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>State Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay Grade</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>6.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Tenure</td>
<td>21.65</td>
<td>9.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicated that the two values are different. VGEA members, as reflected by the sample, have, on average, a higher rate of pay than do state employees overall. State employees have been on the job for fewer years than VGEA members in the study. VGEA members, as represented by the sample, were in higher pay grades than the average for state employees, and had held state jobs for longer periods of time. Data which had previously been collected
by the Association had indicated differences might exist, and the data collected from the survey questionnaire supported this. This has repercussions for the association. Since it is representing a membership that is not a representative sample of state employees, it is unlikely that the present actions taken by the association will reflect the wants of all state employees. It can be postulated that the actions taken by the VGEA reflect the needs of a minority of state employees, not the majority.
Legal Knowledge

One aspect of research question 3 examined the knowledge that the respondents had about the legal climate in Virginia. Questions 18 through 22 were designed to query the membership on their knowledge of unionization and collective bargaining in Virginia's public sector.

The first question asked whether or not state employees could join unions. Only 79 respondents (16%) thought this was legal for state employees. The results for this area are shown in Table IX.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 18</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>82.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496

Question 19 questioned state employees about the right to strike. In fact, this is disallowed as part of the state's employment practices, and as a statute. Only a small percentage of the respondents answered this question incorrectly, as shown in Table X.
Table X - May State Employees Strike (Q 19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 19</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>97.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496

Question 20 asked whether or not state employees may enter into contracts with their employer, through a collective bargaining agreement. The majority of the responses were correct in indicating that this was not permitted. The results are shown in Table XI.

Table XI - May State Employees Collectively Bargain (Q 20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 20</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>90.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 496
Research by Singer found that the majority of Virginia’s residents were unfamiliar with various aspects of Virginia’s Right-To-Work laws. It can be reasonably argued that the membership is no more informed of its rights than are the rest of the state’s residents. Accordingly, misperceptions about what is legally allowed would restrict the membership’s options as to what change could occur.

**Membership Benefits**

The third area of interest for Research Question 3 was the benefits preferred by the members. The benefits contained in the questionnaire are shown in Figure 8. As shown in Figure X, the respondents chose benefit 7, a professional lobbyist, as the most important benefit the VGEA provided. The second most important advantage was retirement benefits. Table X shows the tabulated results for this question.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Benefit Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Better Wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shorter Working Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grievance System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>More Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Agency Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Professional Lobbyist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Retirement Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Social Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Purchase Discounts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 8 - Membership Benefits**
Membership Benefit Preferred

Figure 9 - Preferred Benefit Graph
### Table XII - Benefit Response Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.65%</td>
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<td>0.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>277</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>112</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the identifiable factors for this research question is the role that demographics played in affecting the choices of action available to the VGEA. When membership benefit preference is classified by the age groups, differences can be noted in the benefit preferred. As seen in Figure 10 and Table XIII, members up to the age of 60 have preferences that are relatively similar. Members above age 60 show a much higher percentage desiring retirement benefits.
Figure 10 - Age Group Benefit Preference
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>0 - 30</th>
<th>31 - 60</th>
<th>60 +</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>9.67%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.81%</td>
<td>1.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>0.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>5.44%</td>
<td>4.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>58.33%</td>
<td>63.14%</td>
<td>42.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>16.31%</td>
<td>39.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.91%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>1.51%</td>
<td>3.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

The final environment was examined in this chapter. Research question three, which had three distinct parts, was investigated through a series of statistical analyses. In the first area, the legal knowledge of the respondents was compared to a study of state residents. It was found that the members surveyed had were incorrect more often about what they could legally do, but were more informed about what they couldn’t do.

In the second part of research question 3, the demographics of the respondents were compared to the state employees overall. It was found that the members that responded were not reflective of the "average" state employee. This should affect the decisions that the VGEA makes, since it is supportive of the needs of its membership.

The last analysis done for Research question 3 found that members with greater experience and tenure preferred different benefits than newer members. With regard to change, until the demographics of the association change, or the needs of the membership change, the VGEA will continue to pursue the benefits preferred by the majority of the members. This appears to be such items as retirement benefits and acting as a lobbyist for the members.
CHAPTER SIX - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Study

The most significant feature of this study was to develop an understanding of the various reasons the Virginia Governmental Employees Association did not change its structure or operating principles, even in light of pressing economic conditions during the 1989-1992 period. Through the investigation of the three environments in which the VGEA functions, factors were discovered that explain the VGEA’s choice of activities.

A scale, developed by Burton and Thomason, was used by which employee representation groups like the VGEA could be ranked, without regard for their official name. After reviewing the policies and practices of the VGEA, it was possible to locate its approximate position on that scale. The scale was divided into two parts: Bargaining Organizations and Non-bargaining Organizations. Given the actions pursued by the VGEA it could be differentiated from professional organizations on its handling of work rules. The VGEA works to protect its members from rules imposed by the state, rather than imposing new rules on its members. But, due to its lack of collective bargaining, it was included on the side of the continuum reserved for non-bargaining organizations. It is possible, then, to add a new type of organization to the scale: Non-bargaining Associations. This category would reflect
employee organizations that work to represent groups of employees in non-bargaining situations. As shown in Figure 11 the VGEA would be placed in this new category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Bargaining Organizations</th>
<th>Bargaining Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Organizations</td>
<td>Non-Bargaining Associations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11 - New Spectrum of Employee Organizations**

What has been arrived at is a differentiation of the two groups based upon their actions. Unions, in a traditional framework, actively pursue benefits for their members through collective bargaining. A contract is the final product of their efforts and serves to define the relationship between the employer and the union. The union solicits input from the members and then attempts to achieve as many of the goals as possible. Unions support employees in grievance procedures, and offer other counsel concerning situations in the work place. The union works to effect change in a bilateral situation comprised of the union and the employer. There are definite goals to obtain, usually in the form of wage increases or other economic benefits for the employee.
Associations can be seen at the other end of the spectrum. Most of the associations today are of a professional nature and extol the professionalism of their members. They utilize lobbying techniques and are often referred to as "special interest groups". Associations lobby government agencies or other third parties for changes in the environment in which the members of the association participate, whether it be in the workplace or elsewhere. Through the effective petitioning of regulatory agencies, changes may be secured for the members.

The new brands of associate memberships being offered by unions to non-traditional employees are not that different from the type of association the state employees in Virginia have created for themselves. There is no collective bargaining undertaken for associate members, and the only tangible economic benefit is group buying power. The VGEA could, for instance, simply disband and allow unions offering associate memberships to serve state employees. The only reason not to do so is the lobbying the VGEA conducts on behalf of the state's employees, and the relationship it has already established. With no collective bargaining, the employees must rely upon the persuasive powers of the VGEA's paid and elected staff to convince the state to change conditions in the workplace. This need could not be adequately met by associate memberships through an (inter)national union.

Next, the reasons employees join unions were investigated. Differences
between private and public employees and employment were explored, with no viable distinctions being realized. The nature of the state’s workforce and its similarities and differences with the VGEA were illustrated.

From here the study moved into a process of investigating the operating environments of the VGEA. Externally, the legal environment of the state was explored. The barriers to unionization in this area included the prohibition of collective bargaining and the state’s non-union posture. Internally, the procedures, policies and practices of the VGEA were investigated. Finally, the membership was surveyed to determine their composition, the benefits they desire from the VGEA, and their perceptions of the VGEA and the state’s legal climate for public sector labor relations.

Research Question One: External Environment

What has evolved in Virginia are measures on the part of the state to control public sector unionization. No measures were taken to draft laws to handle the rise of public sector unions. Instead, state legislators purposely avoided such action and turned to its court system. Through the cases brought before it, Virginia’s judiciary established precedents that prohibited collective bargaining by its employees, at both the state and local levels. This must be considered the major factor in this environment that acted to prevent the VGEA from "unionizing", or being taken over by a union. Public employees in Virginia
(still) are prohibited from collective negotiations with their employer. Given the current situation, employees would find no benefit in joining an organization (union) that could not bargain over the conditions of employment. Without a contract, there is nothing to "fight for".

Two other factors were also identified within this environment. Virginia has a "Right-To-Work" statute which categorizes the overall work environment as "anti-labor". The state also has a statute outlawing striking and work slowdowns by public employees. This effectively removes any power the membership could hold over the state. Being unable to withhold their labor, any organization must rely upon different strategies to benefit its members.

In summary, the significant factors in the external environment were the prohibition of public employee collective bargaining and work stoppages, and a strong "Right-To-Work" law. Taken alone, these factors may not be enough to prevent unionization or other change from occurring. Accordingly, other reasons must be present. A review of the other two environments highlights some of the other significant factors also working to prevent the VGEA from changing.

Research Question Two: Internal Environment

The internal environment was found to be regulated by the operating policies and practices of the VGEA. Its main effort was exerted in lobbying
Virginia's lawmakers. A structure that supports this action was consequently developed.

The VGEA clearly declares itself to be an association and not a union. The constitution and by-laws state this and even claim that the association will not advocate striking or other forms of collective work stoppage. This removes "power" from any threat it may make.

As a primarily lobbying body, the VGEA is relatively weak. It has no political action committees, nor does it support any political candidates. Instead, the overall lobbying philosophy is to ask politely for changes and hope that they will be granted. This causes the VGEA to consider carefully all "demands" it might make, in order to prevent creating bad relations with state officials. Since the VGEA can only ask for benefits for its members, care must always be taken to avoid angering any legislator.

Operating practices of the VGEA also inhibit change from occurring. Of the 21 questionnaires that were unusable, two were from spouses of deceased VGEA members. This indicates that the VGEA is unable to track its own membership. Also, the data the VGEA keeps on its members is inadequate to allow further growth. There are no data for agency or pay levels or tenure with the state. The only data kept are by name and address and, in some instances, the date the membership was started. Because of this, the VGEA is forced to conduct surveys of its own members to examine the current
demographics of the association. The last time this was done was in November, 1988. Without knowing the composition of the membership, it is impossible to know what the members will want in the future.

With these factors present, in addition to the external legal environment, change is certainly unlikely. But, it must be noted that all the internal factors could be changed. The by-laws and constitution could be changed by the members, if such change was perceived as necessary. The next area of concern, the membership, investigated the effect the members have on the ability for the VGEA to change, and helps to explain why changes in the internal environment never came about.

Research Question Three: Membership Environment

Three areas were investigated within the membership environment. The legal knowledge, the demographics, and the benefit preferred were all examined. Various results were found and an analysis of the results is presented here.

For the first area, legal knowledge, it can be seen that VGEA had a high percentage of incorrect responses to the question about joining a union. This implies that the members are not well informed about their legal rights to join a union. Working for the state may tint their view, whereas being a citizen employed in the private sector provides more information about the legality of
unionization. Also, this indicates that the VGEA makes no effort to inform the membership of the legal environment for public sector labor relations. Confusion in this area would lead to a lower percentage of employees desiring to join a union, especially if they perceived such action as illegal or in some other way prohibited. If the members perceive that they will lose their jobs for joining a union, then they will not support any actions that would change the VGEA in that direction.

This area also found a difference between the survey responses and Singer's on the legality of striking by state employees. This is probably due to the fact that the strike issue is covered in the State Employee Handbook. It seems obvious that state employees would be aware of job conditions that directly affect them, just as they would know how the state's pay grade system works. Outsiders, such as those sampled by Singer, would have a more limited knowledge on state employee working rules and regulations.

The second area of investigation was the demographics of the respondents. It was found that VGEA members had a higher average pay grade than did state employees. This was not unusual and unexpected, since the VGEA contains a higher percentage of older state employees. Also, VGEA members had a higher average pay level, as noted when the VGEA's survey data was compared with the state's compensation data. Another factor that may have caused an upward shift in pay grade is the high amounts of
supervisory personnel within the VGEA membership. These employees have usually progressed to a supervisory position through their advanced tenure with the state, resulting in higher pay levels.

Investigation of the demographic responses found that VGEA members had been employees of the state for longer periods of time than had total state employees. Once again, the demographics of the membership are reflected in these findings. In order to reach the higher pay levels, it is necessary to remain employed with the state. This causes the members to have, on average, longer lengths of service.

These two factors can play a major role in inhibiting change. Employees who are nearing retirement, or who have worked for a number of years, will be more risk-averse than newer employees. They will have invested more time and effort in their careers. Also, the time spent will have taught them the ins and outs of the state's employment system, thereby allowing them the benefits of experience and seniority. They will prefer to remain in a system that they already know, rather than change.

Also, by realizing that the members are not representative of state employees as a whole, the reason only certain benefits are pursued becomes more evident. The VGEA will work towards the needs of the majority of its members, which tend to be older employees that are closer to retirement. Unless this group changes its needs, or the composition of the group were to
change, the VGEA will likely continue to pursue the same benefits as it always has, and not run afoul of perceived needs by the membership.

The final analysis for research question three looked at the benefits the respondents desired from the association. Older, more experienced respondents with greater lengths of membership prefer different benefits than newer members. Younger, newer, less experienced members were choosing benefits with lower numbers, such as higher wages and shorter working hours.

Since the VGEA works in a democratic way, it will work for the benefits preferred by the majority or its elected leadership. There is some question as to whether or not the VGEA is actively pursuing membership-driven goals, or if members join because they desire the benefits that the VGEA works for. In either case, a majority of the members preferred the benefit of a professional lobbyist, followed strongly by need to pursue retirement issues. These are the benefits the VGEA have traditionally provided, and, apparently, will continue to provide.

This is a major factor in understanding what prevents change from occurring. Since the VGEA works to meet the needs of the majority of its members, and given that a majority of its members prefer a set of specific benefits, then the VGEA will continue to work for those benefits. Those desiring the different types of benefits that would require the VGEA to change its operations are in the minority and will not have their needs addressed by the
association.
Summary of the Factors

Various factors are at work within the membership to keep the VGEA on its present course. The members are not representative of state employees. There is confusion over the legality of possible change. The benefits preferred vary both by age and by the type of employee. The present association is unable to meet more than the needs that have historically been pursued and would even be unaware of any changes in the desires of the membership. In general, change would be unlikely as the majority of the membership seems to desire the actions the VGEA is presently taking and the current benefits being pursued.
Limitations of the Study

Reflection on completed research always highlights errors of omission and commission. One problem was noticed as the surveys were being received. Some of the members of the association took advantage of an early retirement program and no longer work for the state. Because of this they were unsure how to answer some of the questions, especially those that asked about their job titles and pay levels. This problem could have been overcome by indicating that the respondents use information about either their present position, or the position last held, in order to answer the questions.

Another limitation was the failure to ask directly about collective bargaining. While the majority answered that they would not join a union, it would have been useful to survey the members about their desire for collective bargaining. A question of this nature would have shed more light on the VGEA's lack of change.

The study is also limited by its scope. No attempt was made to investigate employee associations in other states, nor was any other association in the state of Virginia surveyed. Comparing the VGEA to other associations, both within Virginia and externally, would have allowed additional comparisons and conclusions to be drawn.

A major limitation is the sample itself. With no population data to compare to, it is impossible to tell if the sample is truly representative of the
Association as a whole. Even the Association’s own survey suffers from the same response-bias problem. Since the Association does not keep the data necessary to provide a description of the full membership, the only option was to make a comparison to the Association’s own survey. While this does not solve the problem with response bias and the issue of non-respondents, it at least provides some indication that the sample is somewhat reflective of the membership overall.

In addition to the possibility of a non-representative sample, there were problems with the true randomness of the sample. The Association provided labels in as near a random fashion as was possible. While not truly random, the sample was at least stratified by geographic locale. Again, the data kept by the Association and the database used limit the ability to draw a random and representative sample. While this can not be corrected, it is important to mention it as a limitation of the study.
Conclusion

This study looked at numerous factors within the state of Virginia that shape its employee association. The study is significant because it identifies numerous factors in three different environments that inhibit change. No single issue prevents this; instead, it is a combination of issues that prevent change.

In general, Virginia’s employees will never unionize unless conditions within the state and the association change. If collective bargaining was to be allowed then change might be a possibility. What would be necessary is some form of unifying motivation that would transcend the differences among the work force. A strong positive, or negative, action by the state could have this effect, such as a collective bargaining statute, or massive layoffs.

Also, from what has been learned about the composition of the VGEA and the benefits desired by the members, change within the association seems unlikely. A majority of the members want a lobbyist in Richmond who will protect their retirement and other experience related benefits. The historical image of the VGEA as a retirement watchdog is still the form of employee association preferred. The types of benefits that could be brought about through collective bargaining, such as wage and security issues, are preferred by a minority at present. With the current members desiring what is presently being offered, there is no need for change, even in light of the economic situation.
In order to change, the association would need to attract more and different types of members, and then work towards satisfying their needs. With a larger membership the association could apply additional lobbying pressure. Also, its lobbying techniques would need to be different in order to effect change. Political action committees would need to be utilized. Alliances would need to be formed with other associations within the state, such as the Virginia Education Association. Without collective bargaining, the only pressure that could be applied is political. A larger base of voting members would allow pressure to be brought on legislators.

In conclusion, the association never changed because there was no perceived need for change, and there was no other form for the VGEA to change into which may have fit the environments identified. The members prefer lobbying and retirement benefits. The association could never cross the division between non-bargaining and bargaining, since it was not a legal alternative in the state. The only option left was to pursue different benefits for the members, but the members didn’t desire this. When the factors from each environment are considered, simultaneously, it is obvious that change was, and will continue to be, unlikely.

Future research should focus on some of the internal aspects noticed in the study. For instance, deceased state employees are still on the mailing list for the association, as are members that no longer pay dues. This indicates
that the organization is not even aware of who its members are, much less what they desire. Another possible study might want to consider how the organization would change in response to changes. For instance, a new organization called VASE, the Virginia Association of State Employees has begun forming. Will the VGEA change its operating policies in order to maintain its membership levels? Also, what would occur if the external environment were to change? All of these issues would change the balance between the three environments examined in this study, and would obviously affect the VGEA in some way.
APPENDIX A

Survey Instrument
Instructions: Please use your own opinions to answer these questions. Use a number two pencil and fill in the dots in the answer columns that match the question number. Fill in the dots completely. Make sure to answer the questions that are on the back of this form also. All answers will be kept confidential. Please mail the completed form by Monday, February 25, 1992.

For the next seven questions, numbered 1 through 7, please use the following choices:
1. Better wages
2. Shorter working hours
3. A grievance system
4. More respect from your supervisor
5. A way to become involved in running your agency
6. A professional lobbyist in Richmond
7. Retirement Benefits
8. A way to become more involved in your community
9. Social Activities
10. Discounts on travel, vacations, cars, etc.

1) When you first joined the VGEA, what was the most important benefit it provided for you?
2) What do you feel is the most important benefit you receive from your VGEA membership today?
3) What do you feel will be most important benefit to you from the VGEA in five years?
4) Which of the items would be most important to the other people you work with that are not presently VGEA members?
5) Which of the items would be the least important to the other people you work with that are not presently VGEA members?
6) Which of the items is the probably the easiest for the VGEA to provide for you?
7) Which of the items is probably the hardest for the VGEA to provide for you?

The VGEA faces many issues each day that affect the members. Please rank each of the following issues on a scale of 1 to 10 on how much time and money the VGEA should put into the issue. Use 1 to for the least amount of time and money and 10 for the highest amount of time and money. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than other issues</th>
<th>about the same</th>
<th>More than other issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8) The lack of pay raises in the state
9) The state’s retirement fund
10) The state’s grievance procedure
11) Working conditions at your agency
12) Involvement in election of state officials
13) Obtaining discounts or special purchases for VGEA members

The next two questions ask you how you answered the last 7 questions:
14) If you answered “10 - More than other issues” to any of the above, would you be willing to pay extra dues to work on the issue? 1) Yes 2) No
15) If you answered “Yes” to the question above, how much extra per year would you be willing to pay for the items?
   1) $1  2) $2  3) $3  4) $4  5) $5  6) $6  7) $7  8) $8  9) $9  10) $10 or more

For the next 2 questions, use the following answers:
1) The lack of pay raises in the state
2) The state’s budget problems
3) The state’s retirement fund
4) The state’s grievance procedure
5) Working conditions at your agency
6) Involvement in election of state officials
7) Group discounts, on vacations or other purchases
8) Which of the issues above do you feel the VGEA has made the most progress on in the past year?
9) Which of the issues do you feel the VGEA has made the least progress on in the past year?

The next area is designated to investigate the effects that laws have on state employees. Think about what state employees are legally allowed to do. Please answer with a (1) for Yes and a (2) for No
18) In private companies, workers can join employee representation groups like the Teamsters or the AFL-CIO. Do state employees have this right? 1) Yes 2) No
19) Are state employees allowed to strike? 1) Yes 2) No
20) Are state employees allowed to negotiate a contract or bargain for wages with the state? 1) Yes 2) No
21) Does Virginia have any laws that allow state employees to do any of the things in the last three questions? 1) Yes 2) No
22) Does Virginia have any laws that prohibit state employees from doing any of the things listed? 1) Yes 2) No

The following questions ask you about yourself:
23) What is your sex? (1) Male (2) Female
24) What ethnic group do you belong to?
   (1) White (Not Hispanic) (2) Black (Not Hispanic) (3) Hispanic
   (4) Asian or Pacific Island (5) American Indian or Alaskan Native (6) Other not listed here
25) What is your pay grade? Use 10 if your pay grade is 10 or higher
26) What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
   (1) Some High School (2) GED/Equivalency Degree (3) Technical Training (4) High School Degree
   (5) Some College (6) Associate Degree (7) Bachelor Degree (8) Some Graduate School
27) Have you ever been a member of a union? (1) Yes (2) No
28) Have any member of your family or close relative been a union member? (1) Yes (2) No
29) As a state employee, would you join a union? (1) Yes (2) No
Please write your answers to these three questions. Do not fill in any dots on this side.

What is your age: ________________________________

How many years have you worked for the state: ________________________________

How many years have you been a VGEA member: ________________________________

What County is your Office located in: ________________________________

What is your Job Title: ________________________________

Thank you for filling out this survey. If you would like to participate in a personal interview with Robert, please write your name and phone number in the space below. Your answers on the questionnaire are strictly confidential and your name will be in no way associated with your answers. Thank You!

Name: ________________________________

Phone Number: ________________________________
### TABLE 11
**Questionnaire Responses**

**Response Data**

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APPENDIX B

Written Comments

As was noted earlier, some respondents included written comments on the back of the survey form. While these were not requested or analyzed as part of the study, they have been included here to provide further insight in the membership. A wide variety of opinions were provided, both for and against the VGEA, the thought of unionization, and the state's policies in general.

Comments Received

VGEA is vital if salaries and retirement benefits are to be maintained and improved. I would not have my Va. retirement benefits today without VGEA. It is the spokesman for state employees and our main contact with the legislature and state government.

- Area Forester, retired, age 70

I do not feel than any state, city, county, town or any other organization that receives their pay from tax payers should be allowed to join any union. Other states that permit this has seen schools and other services shut down completely.

- Electronic Technician, age 68

The problem with VGEA is that membership is not encouraged (In fact, information is not provided) by management or administrators to employees.

- Associate Professor, age 63
For my first 24 years as a state employee, I wouldn't have even thought state employees needed a union. Philosophically, I'm anti-union, and think unions are as detrimental to society as they are beneficial to their members. However, Virginia's government has become so blatantly political and corrupt under the past three administrations - and employees have been so abused - I'm beginning to think a union is the only way for employees to be able to bargain for fair treatment from politicians, administration officials, and especially agency administrators (in general, though not at my present place of employment).

- Information Officer B, age 63

The present states grievance procedure is in my opinion a waste of time and only protects the management staff.

- Field Operations Supervisor, age 63

Did not answer 1-3 (questions on why people joined the VGEA and the benefit they find most important) because no answers applied. I joined VGEA and continue to belong on principle of support to professional organization and for information.

- No Job Title given, age 62

VGEA presently acts like its more company oriented than membership oriented. Needs to be more vocal for state employees. This is a major reason employees don't join.

- Compliance Supervisor, age 59

I want to see VGEA work for: Pay raises, early retirement incentive, better retirement benefits, better hospital allowances for retirees, full life insurance coverage until 70 for retirees, shorter work hours, merit pay.

- Buyer Specialist, age 56

Union? No way! Why would I want 2 masters instead of one? Unions are all eventually crooked. VGEA has generated a lot of talk and no results since I joined.

- Senior Secretary, age 56
VGEA - P.S. Thanks for help in getting 2% raise.
   - Coordinator, age 55

All of your answer choices were positive. As a VGEA member, I sometimes wonder about my continued membership. Given the relatively minute dues paid, I guess the old saying "You get what you pay for" very much applies.
   - Resident Engineer, age 55

Information on discounts on vacations, travel, cars, etc. needs more advertising and a better procedure for delivery when requests are made to VGEA - especially involving info on purchase of cars.
   - Extension Agent, retired, age 51

Your questions seem geared to the interests of a 1950s or 1960s blue collar work force and did not address current topics such as quality management, flattening organizations, discontinuous and rapid change, information technology or white collar productivity.
   - Fiscal Director, age 38
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VITA

The author was born on June 2, 1963 in East Meadow, New York. He was graduated from A.G. Berner High School in Massapequa, New York, in June of 1981. He then attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and was awarded the Bachelor of Arts degree in English, with a minor in Theatre, in December of 1985. As a graduate student he presented his research at the Industrial Relations Research Association's Annual Meeting in January of 1992 and had an abstract printed in the meeting's proceedings. He has twice received the Lt. Col. William A. Trice scholarship. He has also received a Graduate Research Development Project grant from the Graduate Student Assembly. He received the Master of Science degree in Business Administration from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in June of 1993.

[Signature]

Robert C. Hoell

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