

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

Submission No: 15
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public

Attachments:

Submitter Comments:

I am in my forties and have dedicated over 16 years to volunteering with an RSL sub-branch, serving in various board positions. Recently, I have also assumed the role of national secretary for a Women's Veterans group. In the past year alone, I contributed over 1,000 hours of my time and traveled 5,000 kilometers. My motivation for volunteering stems from the profound sense of fulfillment it brings, positively impacting both my physical and mental well-being. It is gratifying to assist others and give back to the community, particularly to those in need of support and care. I firmly believe that my lived experiences enable me to make a meaningful contribution, and if my volunteer efforts help even one individual or save a life, it is entirely worthwhile. The value of lived experience surpasses any formal qualifications. Additionally, I strive to set a positive example for my children, who have also begun volunteering at various organizations. It is essential to instill the importance of volunteering within the school system; educational institutions should implement programs encouraging students to engage with their local communities. Simple initiatives, such as writing letters or Christmas cards to residents in aged care facilities, can foster a spirit of giving. Furthermore, it is crucial to address the needs of individuals approaching retirement age, as older males face a heightened risk of suicide due to a perceived loss of purpose. Volunteering can provide a renewed sense of purpose and accomplishment. The rising costs of public liability insurance, driven by an increase in claims against organizations, pose a significant challenge. We should consider adopting a model similar to New Zealand, which has established a cap on claim amounts. The escalating costs of public liability insurance detract from essential funds needed to operate organizations and support community initiatives. While I recognize that this is a federal issue, it would be beneficial to have a system in place that allows volunteers to claim expenses such as time, travel, and phone usage on their tax returns. I suspect that the decline in volunteerism is not limited to Queensland alone.