

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

Submission No: 42
Submitted by: Bloodbikes Australia
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I am founder of a National group of volunteers called Bloodbikes Australia. In 5 years our group has grown from one volunteer to 350 volunteers and attracting volunteers to Bloodbikes Australia is not a problem which appears to be the opposite to the general trend of volunteer recruitment. I believe this is primarily because of the lack of Red Tape and management structure that appears to be part of most other volunteering organisations. We have no hierarchy, we have one set of requirements and commitments, we ask for no money and do not have a bank account all volunteers look after all their own expenses. We have no schedule or roster for volunteering all volunteers can make themselves available or accept tasks when they want. This is all driven by a portal system similar to Uber. The closest way to describe our operation is we are the world's first volunteer franchise. Our "Rider Agreement" outlines requirements and qualifications and must be agreed to. Once that is done this can be compared to a franchise agreement, then each volunteer is an independent volunteer in control of their own availability and frequency of volunteering. We do have regional coordinators who have no official rank but offer a communication hub to volunteers. Our system works well, we typically have 2-4 inquiries for new volunteers a week. I believe that our model is transportable and responds to impediments to volunteering. Our greatest difficulty is getting healthcare providers to know what we offer and use our service. Because it is different this is uncomfortable for some in the healthcare sector largely because of the lack of flexibility. The established system when last resort medical transport is required outside the normal process is to call a taxi. This costs money and the taxi driver has no qualifications or experience in transporting anything medical. All of our volunteers carry and have passed a certificate in Blood Transport that is Nationally accredited. Since I started Bloodbikes Australia in Brisbane just over 5 years ago (21/9/2019) we have progressed from one to 355 fully qualified volunteers, we are in all states and territories, we have completed 9000 free deliveries and covered 90000klm for 72 healthcare providers. Having said that we have 150 volunteers ready available to help but are not utilised because the established method for last minutes deliveries is put it in a cab. Our average response time for an urgent job is 30 minutes from call to pickup which is much faster than taxis and our service, although not fully utilised, has saved the healthcare industry approx \$3mill. This however is not as important as the improved patient outcomes that have been achieved by the immediacy of our free service with qualified volunteers. I direct you to our website for more information and videos www.bloodbikesaustralia.com.au. I am happy to answer any questions or make personal submissions.