

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

My team works closely with community sports clubs with their governance, operations and facility and club management issues. There are approximately 300 not-for-profit clubs on the Sunshine Coast. I won't talk statistics as these are easily sourced. There would be very few clubs who have not expressed their concern over a diminished number of volunteers, even pre-covid however, covid seems to have accelerated the decrease. The lack of volunteers has had impacts on club operations and puts pressure on existing volunteers having to take on more responsibility. Clubs have tried to incentivise volunteering by giving volunteers membership discounts, etc or penalising members for not doing a certain number of hours of volunteering which often leads to members opting to just pay the fine. We have had clubs who have already folded or about to fold due to a lack of volunteers. This is a real shame to the community. Clubs do better with volunteering when they are well-organised with job descriptions for different roles, embed succession plans, identify their adult memberships' career or skills base so they can be approached for relevant roles or tasks, break down roles or tasks so they are more manageable and less daunting, grow a positive club culture so members are more open to volunteering as a positive experience, embrace grandparents or people with disabilities, etc. Some clubs have to just give up and employ an administrator, canteen convenor or facility maintenance people which impacts on fees. One area of incentive would be to make volunteering hours tax deductible somehow, even at least allowing expenses incurred such as petrol, to be tax deductible.