

## Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

**Submission No:** 148  
**Submitted by:** Warren Kuskopf  
**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public  
**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

As an individual who currently holds an Executive Leadership position (Local Controller SES) within an Emergency Response organisation, I have concerns regarding the level of responsibility placed on volunteer executives, this includes the management of large numbers of volunteers doing very high risk tasks and jobs. Urgent response required to sometimes intense requests for assistance including; storm and flood damage, missing person search and rescue, and assistance at road accidents. Hours expected to work include 12 hour shifts sometimes in extreme weather conditions, and 24hour 7 day a week constant contact from members, paid staff, and other emergency agencies. Volunteer executives are also responsible for the recruitment and retention of volunteers, ensuring appropriate volunteer capabilities across the Unit (Local Government Area), and the many training courses that are mandatory or essential for volunteers to undertake and maintain to remain an active volunteer. Some Volunteer Executive positions across the State eg SES Local Controllers, are paid well, whilst other Local Controllers are not paid at all (this is arbitrary depending on the Local Government's initiative). Directives and demands (that are not urgent emergency requests) via email from paid staff are constant and voluminous (eg 28 emails from Saturday morning to Monday morning) and are sent at any time day and evening during any day of the week including weekends. Volunteers are expected to understand and be across all relevant legislation, policies, procedures, and doctrine at the same level of understanding of paid staff. I feel the line is blurred between what is expected of a paid staff person and what is expected of volunteer executives. Volunteers give willingly without any expectation of financial or other reward. The impact on the volunteer executive's family life, due to the responsibilities and time commitments placed on them, is often verging on overwhelming.