

## **Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland**

<b>Submission No:</b>	170
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<b>Publication:</b>	Making the submission and your name public
<b>Attachments:</b>	See attachment
<b>Submitter Comments:</b>	

Committee Secretary  
Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee  
Parliament House  
Brisbane QLD 4000

## **Submission to the Inquiry into Volunteering in Queensland**

Dear Committee Secretary,

Brisbane Jets Swimming Club Inc welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee's inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. As a community-based swimming club, we completely rely on volunteers to operate and have firsthand experience with the challenges the volunteer sector faces.

### **1. Ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining parent volunteers**

One of our most persistent challenges is securing enough parent volunteers to effectively run our weekly club nights and fulfil the required timekeeping and officiating duties at swim meets. Despite repeated calls for help, the same small group of individuals continue to shoulder the burden, while many other members refrain from getting involved. This places an unfair workload on a limited number of volunteers and creates frustration among those who regularly contribute.

The reluctance of parents to volunteer is often attributed to various factors, including busy work schedules, family commitments, and a perception that volunteering requires too much time or effort. This results in a situation where our club is at risk of being unable to function effectively, as the success of our events and competitions relies entirely on volunteer participation.

### **2. Volunteer burnout and disengagement**

For those who do step forward, volunteer burnout is a significant issue. Volunteers who regularly commit their time to club activities express growing frustration with those who do not contribute, leading to disengagement and a dwindling core of active volunteers. This cycle not only affects morale but also impacts the sustainability of the club, as we continually struggle to replace those who step away due to exhaustion.

### **3. The burden on committee members**

Committee members face an even greater challenge, as they are responsible for the club's overall management and compliance with legal, operational, child safety, and financial requirements. Running a swimming club is akin to managing a small business, yet it is done entirely by volunteers, most of whom also have full-time jobs and families. The complexity and volume of work mean that most committee members experience burnout within two to three years, leaving the club in a constant cycle of trying to recruit new leadership while losing valuable corporate knowledge.

### **4. Lack of business and legal support for volunteers**

In addition to time constraints, many individuals who take on committee roles are not equipped with the necessary business, financial, or legal skills required to manage a club effectively. Traditional training solutions are often impractical, as volunteers are already stretched just to keep up with their responsibilities. Even flexible training options add to their burden. Instead, alternative ways to support volunteers should be explored, such as access to on-demand expert advice, simplified governance resources, or mentoring programs that provide guidance without requiring significant additional time commitments.

## **Suggested actions**

The following potential measures to support volunteer-run organisations like ours could be considered:

- Incentives for volunteering, such as discounts on membership fees, tax deductions, or recognition programs, to encourage participation. Additionally, incentives for employers to allow employees time for volunteering activities could be explored.
- Streamlined regulatory and administrative requirements for community sports clubs to reduce the compliance burden on volunteers.
- Access to professional support services, including legal, financial, and governance advice, to assist committees in fulfilling their responsibilities without excessive personal strain.
- Exploring alternatives to traditional training, such as mentoring, expert guidance, and simplified governance tools, to support volunteers without adding to their workload.
- Public awareness campaigns to reinforce the importance of volunteering and encourage broader community participation.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry and would welcome further discussions on how community sports clubs can be better supported to maintain and grow their volunteer base.

Yours sincerely,  
Brisbane Jets Swimming Club management committee