

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

Submission No: 320
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Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

My name is Eric Turner and I am making this submission with the help of the office of Tom Smith MP. I am happy for my submission to be publicised. I have been a volunteer with the SES and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service for over 30 years. I have volunteered to help disaster recovery after Cyclone Larry, after the fires in NSW and many other disasters including the recent floods in Ingham. I am a plant operator with Workpac at the Callide Mine. Every time that volunteers like me are called to help, we have to take annual leave. I believe that there should be a special leave type provided by employers for volunteer emergency workers. Army reserve workers get 2 weeks per year, jurors are able to take jury leave and new parents can take maternity leave. There are a lot of people who work in industry or labour hire who have valuable skills and would be happy to volunteer, but they can't get leave from work. When there is a disaster, the police and other government departments rely on volunteers like me. We shouldn't have to miss out on our holiday leave.