

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

I am a long term volunteer, currently not working as a volunteer but as a paid casual worker at an organization I previously worked as a volunteer at. I worked as a volunteer in Tourism over many years since 1998 & now in Regional Qld after my move to the area just over 5 years ago. I was also able to secure volunteer work with the Salvos Drive for Life program & at the local Neighborhood Centre after the pandemic. I really enjoy volunteering. When I started in 1998, it was an offshoot of a Tourism course at the local TAFE & I quickly realized that doing something that had the ability to help people just because I could, with no monetary recompense, was great for the soul. I was unable to work in a paid or volunteer position for quite a while, due to family circumstances, but as soon as I was able, I got back to the volunteering. One thing that has held me back from volunteering is the travel costs in some cases. Living in a semi rural area approx 10kms north of our Regional City, petrol costs became a bit of a concern when the prices were over \$2 a litre. I would suggest, in an effort to increase volunteer numbers, that, if possible, the government look at a donation for volunteers maybe once a quarter, to receive a fuel voucher to help with travel costs. The many friends I have, both here where I now live & in other parts of Australia, who do volunteer work, usually have trouble covering costs to travel to their loved volunteer work. I would also suggest the State Government work with the Federal Government to extend credits for long term unemployed to volunteer more on the current system where they have to meet certain criteria every fortnight to claim their benefits. (I currently have family members who are long term unemployed) Again, transport is a major issue with unemployed people. There must be a system where it's not just the "elderly" & retired being the only pool that organizations can draw from for their volunteer workforce. The State Government must, on top of it's other concerns, must work with organizations who have large volunteer work forces, to increase awareness of the need for the general public to volunteer. Personally, I will be going back to volunteer work when my casual employment ends. I would, however, like to extend my thanks to all volunteers, Australia wide, for the unpaid, often unthanked, work that they do for whatever work they do. As with Truck Drivers, Australia would stop without volunteers.