

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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Gold Coast Mid-Week Ladies Tennis Association Inc.

Submission written by Leanne Evans

Vice-President, Gold Coast Mid-Week Ladies Tennis Association Inc.

Member of the City of Gold Coast Volunteering Action Group

Chair, Gold Coast Regional (Tennis) Assembly

2018 Commonwealth and 2000 Olympic Games Sport Volunteer

Co-Founder and Founding Director, Buderim (Community Foundation) (2003-2012)

Senior Policy and Relations Advisor, Exercise & Sports Science Australia (2017 to 2023)

Executive Officer, Australian Womensport and Recreation Association (now Women Sport Australia) (2013 - 2016)

Former CEO, Australian Sports Foundation (1998-2000)

Former Deputy Director-General, NSW Sport and Recreation (1995-1998)

Introduction

This submission reflects the author's experience in various sport and community volunteering-involving, volunteering/management/governance/administration roles over many decades; and a peripatetic life living, working and volunteering in five Olympic/Paralympic cities with the 2032 Brisbane Games being the sixth Games she may be involved with.

For context, the Gold Coast Mid-Week Ladies Tennis Association Inc. has a Management Committee with six positions and other volunteers who serve on various sub-committees and help with events. The Gold Coast Regional (Tennis) Assembly comprises of 28 tennis clubs which deliver tennis related programs and activities for their members and the broader community. The majority of these clubs are incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* (Qld) and are volunteer involving organisations (VIOs). Volunteers perform a myriad of roles to support club activities, including those who volunteer as Management Committees members.

The recommendations below provide solutions to issues impacting on both VIOs and individual volunteers within tennis and the broader sport and active recreation sector. In particular, there are several recommendations supporting social legacies (sport volunteering/sport officiating/community foundations) for Queensland from the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games (the Games).

Recommendations supporting community sports coaches and general Games' volunteers are beyond the scope of this paper.

The submission includes responses and recommendations to the following Terms of Reference:

1. The current state of volunteering in Queensland and the value it contributes, including benefits to volunteers, organisations, communities and the State;

Recommendation 1: That Queensland Government investigate why volunteering and officiating in sport and physical activity is proportionately lower in Queensland than across Australia.

Recommendation 2: That Queensland Government consider initiatives to support the ongoing participation of young people as sport volunteers and officials to ensure the long-term sustainability of sport in Queensland.

2. The views of volunteers, prospective volunteers and the volunteering sector on the current barriers to volunteering, including excessive legislative and regulatory burdens and other restrictions adversely limiting active volunteers;

Recommendation 3: That the Queensland Government consider a campaign to attract more people to volunteer and officiate in sport.

Recommendation 4: That the Queensland Government commit to working with the Australian Government and other state and territory governments and the not-for-profit sector to develop a consistent national model for regulating not-for-profit and charitable fundraising activities.

Recommendation 5: That the Queensland Government commit to working with the Australian Government to explore options to ensure out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering are tax deductible.

Recommendation 6: That the Queensland Government support the Australian Sports Foundation via the Government's membership of the Council on Federal Financial Relations to approve 'Community Sport and Amateur Athletes' a charitable purpose as a revenue-neutral legislative change (as contributions to PAFs are already tax deductible).

Recommendation 7: That the Queensland Government continue to invest in volunteer education and training to equip volunteers in sport with the skills and knowledge to manage sport clubs.

Recommendation 8: That the Queensland Government provide technical guidance as to how State Sporting Organisations should implement the National Gender Equity in Sports Governance Policy.

3. The current experiences, motivations and challenges for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations and their recommendations for addressing challenges and improving the volunteering experience;

Recommendation 9: That any volunteer management system/passport supported by the Queensland Government offers data inter-operability and be funded in perpetuity.

4. The unique challenges experienced by people from diverse backgrounds, genders, age groups, abilities and locations, and opportunities to improve volunteering participation, accessibility and experience for these groups;

Recommendation 10: That the Queensland Government ensure that any volunteering plans developed for the Games address the needs of and are co-designed with volunteers from diverse backgrounds, genders, age groups, abilities and locations.

Recommendation 11: That the Queensland Government consider the issue of "double discrimination" in sport and facilitate volunteer opportunities that are inclusive of multiple and intersecting identities.

5. The extent, effectiveness and efficiency of current government support at all levels for the volunteering sector in Queensland and sustainable opportunities for improvement;

Recommendation 12: That the Queensland Government consider funding councils to provide an integrated grants search service or funding its own an integrated state-wide grants search service.

Recommendation 13: That the Queensland Government consider mapping evidence-based best practice national volunteer resources with a view to promoting them and contributing to their funding.

6. Opportunities for the Queensland Government to leverage all portfolios to support growth in volunteering across Queensland, including through hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games;

Recommendation 14: That the Queensland Government consider an investment in establishing an online sport volunteer registration tool as a permanent 2032 Legacy.

Recommendation 15: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners for regional per capita quotas for technical officials and sports specific volunteers across South East Queensland and gender equality and diversity targets for technical officials and sports specific volunteers (including people with disabilities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples).

Recommendation 16: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that needs analyses and implementation plans for technical officials and sports specific volunteers be developed as soon as possible.

Recommendation 17: That Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that specific investment programs be established or existing programs (including its own sport, tourism and major event funding) be amended to prioritise the recruitment, training and retention of more regional senior and diverse technical officials; and sports specific volunteers.

Recommendation 18: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that peak volunteer-involving organisations be involved and compensated at commercial rates for advice on and/or supported to tender for contracts for the planning and delivery of both the Olympic/Paralympic volunteer programme and any volunteering infrastructure legacy generated by the Olympics/Paralympics.

Recommendation 19: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that the knowledge transfer process include a Queensland mechanism to retain and use the Games volunteer database and training and management resources.

Recommendation 20: That the Queensland Government consider investing seed funding to support feasibility studies into the establishment of community foundations across Queensland.

7. *Opportunities to increase emergency response volunteering in Queensland, including how to optimise the engagement, support and integration of volunteers assisting with natural disasters and community recovery; (No Response)*
8. *First Nations peoples volunteering, including in remote and discrete communities, and the role of First Nations volunteering in Closing the Gap; (No Response) and*
9. Any other relevant matters, including academic and other diverse sources, and any relevant reports and reviews at the national level and across other states and territories *(No recommendations)*.

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Terms of Inquiry Topics

1. The current state of volunteering in Queensland and the value it contributes, including benefits to volunteers, organisations, communities and the State

Participation Rates of Volunteers and Officials in Australia and in Queensland

In Australia from July 2019 to June 2021, according to AusPlay™ (a large-scale national population tracking survey funded and led by the Australian Sports Commission [ASC]), there were an estimated 2.9 million adult volunteers (aged 15 years or over) in Australia volunteering at least once a year in organised sportⁱ.

In the same year, the same survey indicated there were 3.3 million volunteering in a non-playing role in any sport or non-sport related physical activity (e.g. gym/ fitness, bushwalking, recreational dance).

Volunteers in sport contribute an estimated \$4 billion of labour value each yearⁱⁱ delivering positive sporting experiences for the community. The author was unable to find any labour value figures for Queensland.

Fast forward to 2023-2024 when a new AusPlay™ baseline was established using a different survey methodology, Table 1 below outlines a comparison of the most recent data on sport and physical activity volunteers and sport officials in Australia and Queenslandⁱⁱⁱ. Unfortunately, this data cannot be directly compared with AusPlay™ figures from 2015-2023.

Table 1: AusPlay™ Estimated# Participation Rates of Volunteers and Officials in Australia and in Queensland (July 2023-June 2024)

		Any Volunteer [^] role in Australia	Any volunteer role in QLD		Officials in AUS	Officials in QLD
All persons aged 15 and over	Total	12.6%	11.0%		3.9%	3.3%
Males	Total	15.2%	13.3%		5.0%	4.2%
Females	Total	10.1%	8.8%		2.9%	2.5%
Age group	15-17	18.5%	6.9%		6.9%	5.3%
	18-24	15.8%	4.3%		4.3%	4.4%
	25-34	15.8%	3.9%		3.9%	3.1%
	35-44	15.6%	4.3%		4.3%	4.0%
	45-54	14.3%	5.5%		5.5%	5.1%
	55-64	8.5%	3.1%		3.1%	2.3%
	65+	6.1%	2.2%		2.2%	1.5%
All	Total	2,762,986	490,360		857,913	148,814
Males	Total	1,634,864	288,644		532,901	91,332
Females	Total	1,117,491	199,122		321,832	56,356
All - Age group	15-17	179,639	34,721		66,504	10,783
	18-24	372,433	69,526		100,751	21,577
	25-34	615,514	100,114		151,368	23,022
	35-44	578,859	103,642		160,392	29,450
	45-54	475,836	91,282		182,420	34,568
	55-64	261,134	45,408		96,415	15,369
	65+	279,570	45,668		100,063	14,044

Estimated number of participants is derived by extrapolating the results from the online survey to the target population and applying weights to ensure they are representative of the latest Australian Estimated Resident Population (ERP) figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

^ Includes adults involved in non-playing roles as a volunteer, or who considered themselves a volunteer even if they received some form of compensation (involved in sport or physical activities as non-players at least once in the past 12 months)

Table 1 highlights that there were just over 490,000 Queenslanders volunteering (including officials) and 148,814 officiating at least once in the past 12 months in sport or physical activities in the previous financial year.

It highlights that there are **proportionately**:

- fewer sport and physical activity volunteers and officials in Queensland than Australia
- fewer female volunteers and officials than males in Queensland and Australia
- more young people aged 15-17 as volunteers and officials in Queensland and Australia (presumably due the aging population) than volunteers and officials from any other age groups
- fewer volunteers and officials in Queensland and Australia in every age group (excepting officials in Queensland aged 18-24).

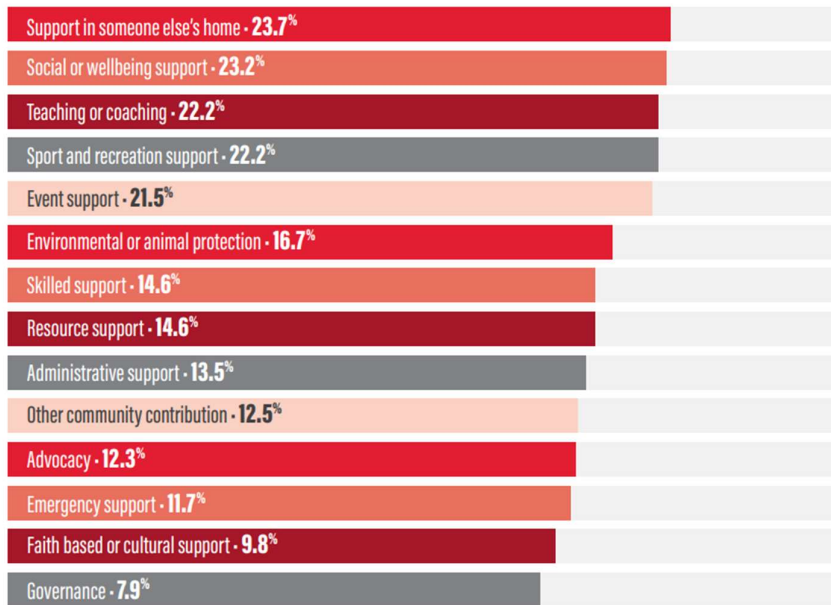
The highest numbers of Queenslanders volunteering in sport and physical activity are in the 35-44 age group (103,642) and the highest numbers of Queenslanders officiating are in the 45-54 age group (34,568).

The fact there are proportionately fewer sport and physical activity volunteers and officials in Queensland than in other states may be explained by broader volunteering trends. Australia's smaller states and territories (Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Tasmania) have higher proportions of people volunteering compared with people in Queensland and New South Wales^{iv}, partly due to South Australia and Tasmania being the oldest states in Australia with higher rates of volunteering among older age groups. There may be other reasons as why volunteering in sport is lower in Queensland than in other states that should be explored.

Scale of Volunteering in Sport Compared to other Sectors

The scale of the level of volunteering in sport compared to other sectors is exemplified in the most recent *State of Volunteering in Queensland 2024 Report*^v by Volunteering Queensland (VQ) in Table 2 below based on a survey in July 2023. Sport and recreation support volunteers (for example: coaching, officiating, organising, providing transport) comprise one of the most common forms of volunteering.

Table 2: The ways in which Queensland people contribute to their community as a volunteer



The discrepancy between the AusPlay figures of 11% of the Queensland adult population volunteering versus the 22.2% of the Volunteering Queensland sample could be explained by the survey methodology, including different definitions for what constitutes sport volunteering. In respect to scale, 40,000 people were surveyed nationally for AusPlay. 1,516 people were surveyed for the VQ survey, noting quotas were also used to ensure a representative cross-section of Queensland residents across gender, age, and location.

Historical Trends about Non-Playing Sport Roles

Figure 1 below outlines the historical trends about non-playing roles from the AusPlay™ data between July 2019 to June 2023^{vi}.

Figure 1: AusPlay™ Non-playing Roles and Volunteering in Australia: Involvement by Type of Role by Year 2019-2020 to 2022-2023

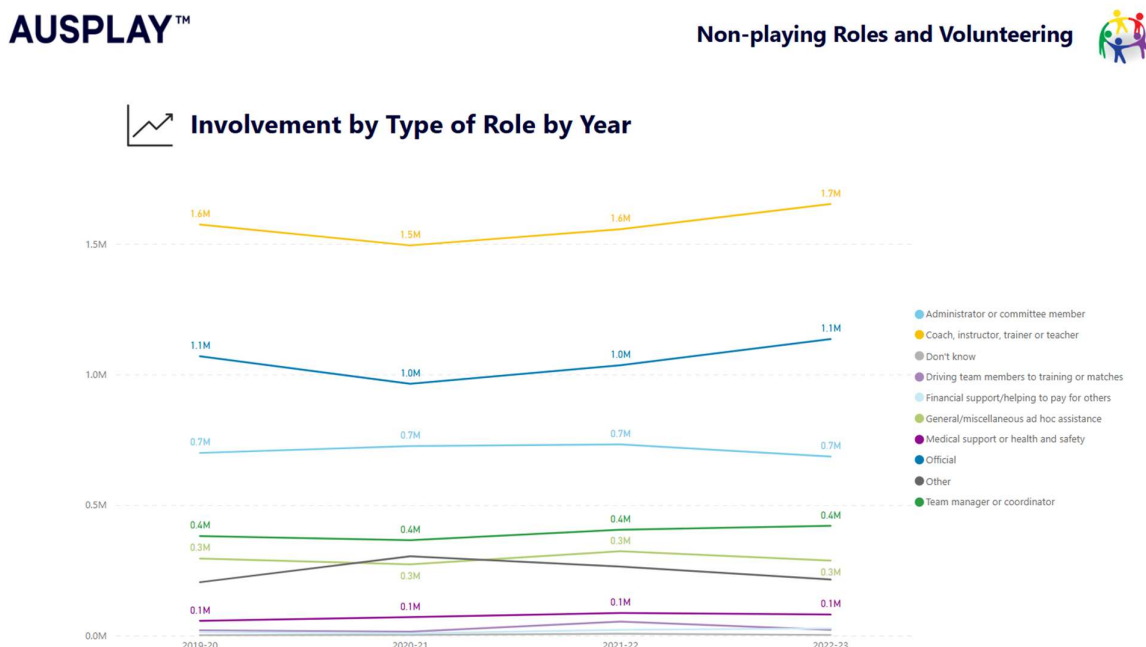


Figure 1 highlights the drop in officials in Australia during COVID-19 and the two-year period it took for numbers of officials to return to the same level as pre-COVID. Interestingly, COVID did not impact on the retention of administrators or committee members, presumably because they were still involved in the governance/operations of sporting organisations whereas in many states for varying periods of time, officials' roles were redundant due to COVID restrictions on playing competitive sport.

Over a longer four period 2016-2017 to 2020-21, Figure 2 below shows the proportion of Australians taking on non-playing roles was relatively stable, peaking at 17% in 2018/19 (for both women and men) and declining during COVID as per Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: AusPlay™ Non-Playing Roles 2016-2017 to 2020-2021



Between 2019 and 2021, there were an estimated 106,000 fewer Australians 15+ putting their hand up to volunteer in a non-playing role (a 3% decline)^{vii}. The roles that lost the most volunteers were officials and ad hoc helpers (carrying out tasks such as setting up, packing down, cleaning etc). In 2021 there were an estimated 75,000 fewer Australians 15+ putting their hand up to be officials and 73,000 fewer offering to do ad hoc tasks.

As to longer term trends, it will require more data over future years to confirm sport volunteering and officiating patterns, given the change in the AusPlay™ survey method.

Overall Volunteering Trends in Queensland

These trends in sport and physical activity would appear to be at odds with the most recent *State of Volunteering in Queensland 2024 Report* which showed the percentage of the Queensland population who volunteer has declined by 12% and the average number of hours per month dropped 13.5% as highlighted in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Volunteering comparisons between Queensland 2020 and 2023 and Australia 2023

	Queensland 2020	Queensland 2023	Australia 2023
Percentage of the population who volunteer	75.7%	64.3%	66.2%
Average hours volunteered per month	24.9 hours	21.6 hours	20.3 hours

Recommendation 1: That Queensland Government investigate why volunteering and officiating in sport and physical activity is proportionately lower in Queensland than across Australia.

Recommendation 2: That Queensland Government consider initiatives to support the ongoing participation of young people as sport volunteers and officials to ensure the long-term sustainability of sport in Queensland.

2. The views of volunteers, prospective volunteers and the volunteering sector on the current barriers to volunteering, including excessive legislative and regulatory burdens and other restrictions adversely limiting active volunteers;

Barriers for Sport Volunteers

In respect to possible barriers for sport volunteers, an Australian Sports Commission Community Perceptions Survey^{viii} of around 2000 people on volunteering in sport between February and May 2024, reported:

The experience of volunteering was similar for male and female volunteers. However, the accessibility of suitable support and more relevant resources was reported slightly more favourably by women (81%) than men (78%).

Volunteers still need more suitable resources with 20% of all respondents reporting either 'not very much' or 'no access' to suitable resources or support to execute their role.

Recognition remains a key factor in retention that continues to require priority with 89% of current volunteers reporting they felt recognised 'a lot' or 'somewhat' well recognised for their efforts compared to 78% of ex volunteers speaking about their past volunteering experiences.

.... there is a significant gap in knowledge about volunteering opportunities among non-volunteers. Specifically, 89% of non-volunteers who are not interested in volunteering themselves wouldn't know where to direct someone interested in getting involved. Furthermore, 73% of non-volunteers who are interested in volunteering wouldn't know how to get started. Clearly, more work is needed to highlight the various entryways into volunteering opportunities.

The lack of knowledge about volunteering opportunities among non-volunteers is concerning and needs attention.

Further comments on resources are included in Topic 5.

Recommendation 3: That the Queensland Government consider a campaign to attract more people to volunteer and officiate in sport.

Regulatory/Legislative Barriers for Volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations

In relation to regulation, not every sporting body in Queensland is a state body nor incorporated in Queensland. For national bodies based in Queensland and other bodies which operate across the New South Wales and other borders, it would be ideal if fundraising rules could be streamlined and harmonised across jurisdictions.

There have been previous government inquiries which have recommended a nationally consistent approach to fundraising regulation including the Federal Select Committee on Charity Fundraising in the 21st Century^{ix}.

Recommendation 4: That the Queensland Government commit to working with the Australian Government and other state and territory governments and the not-for-profit sector to develop a consistent national model for regulating not-for-profit and charitable fundraising activities.

An often-cited barrier is the cost of volunteering. There is ample scope to reduce the costs of volunteering, for example, by making out-of-pocket expense incurred while volunteering tax deductible, a recommendation supported by Volunteering Australia^x.

Recommendation 5: That the Queensland Government commit to working with the Australian Government to explore options to ensure out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering are tax deductible.

Another barrier to sourcing funding for sporting organisations is accessing funding from philanthropic funds (i.e. Private and Public Ancillary Funds [PAFs]) as most aspects of sporting activity are not charitable.

The Australian Sports Foundation (ASF), Australia's leading nonprofit sports fundraising body, has a specific umbrella listing: item 1 Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) in the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (C'th) (Subdivision 30-B, s30.90) to raise funds for the development of sport at all levels in Australia.

Based on the results of a recent ASF survey of 2,984 clubs^{xi} which found

- *almost one in four small community sports clubs were contemplating closing*
- *68% of clubs had experienced increased running costs*
- *clubs want facilities, participation and volunteer support ahead of 2032*

the ASF is currently actively campaigning^{xii} for 'Community Sport and Amateur Athletes' to be included as a charitable purpose under section 12 of the *Charities Act 2013* (C'th). Elevating community sport as a charitable purpose would potentially unlock an additional \$103m per year in PAF Funding for community sport according to modelling commissioned by the ASF.

Recommendation 6: That the Queensland Government support the Australian Sports Foundation via the Government's membership of the Council on Federal Financial Relations to approve 'Community Sport and Amateur Athletes' a charitable purpose as a revenue-neutral legislative change (as contributions to PAFs are already tax deductible).

There are considerable bureaucratic and compliance requirements associated with running a community sport club. A *Volunteers in Sport Issues and Innovation Report* in 2008^{xiii} prepared for the NSW Government noted:

Increasing bureaucracy placed greater administrative burdens on volunteers as they tried to adhere to government policies, address accreditation requirements, and meet council regulations.

The solution proposed by the authors is still relevant in today's environment:

Appropriate volunteer education and training opportunities to overcome the increasing concerns amongst volunteers (and potential volunteers) that they lack the skills and knowledge to manage sport clubs...

Recommendation 7: That the Queensland Government continue to invest in volunteer education and training to equip volunteers in sport with the skills and knowledge to manage sport clubs.

In September 2024, the *National Gender Equity in Sports Governance Policy*^{xiv} addressing under-representation of women in sports leadership was released. The national policy is the first of its kind in Australia and is a collaboration between the Australian Sports Commission and the State and Territory Agencies for Sport and Recreation. The policy was developed on behalf of the Australian Government and is supported by all states and territories.

Despite almost equal sport participation rates between men and women, women are still underrepresented in governance and leadership positions across the Australian sport sector.

The Queensland Government's *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029 Sport and Recreation Strategy*^{xv} includes a target for 100% of funded organisations to achieve gender equity, through female representation on state level organisation boards of 50% or more. Queensland has retained its current timeframe to achieve gender equity on state level organisation boards by 2029.

Whilst this policy is supported wholeheartedly by the author, there is limited guidance on how this policy should be incorporated within the constitutions of State Sporting Organisations (SSOs).

There are many examples from State Sporting Organisations in other states where mandated gender equity clauses are included in constitutions e.g. Hockey Victoria^{xvi}. It is not clear whether there is an option to legally mandate gender equity provisions for Queensland SSO Boards or whether organisations will need to apply for exemptions to Queensland Human Rights Commission under the *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (the Act) or whether the Act will need changing to support the implementation of this policy.

Recommendation 8: That the Queensland Government provide technical guidance as to how State Sporting Organisations should implement the National Gender Equity in Sports Governance Policy.

3. The current experiences, motivations and challenges for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations and their recommendations for addressing challenges and improving the volunteering experience;

Volunteer Management Systems/Passports

There are challenges for all and particularly larger volunteer-involving organisations in managing the personal data of volunteers including their contact and next of kin details, training and credentials (including first aid/ Cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] courses and officials/coaches' accreditations), blue cards and other important pieces of information like drivers' licences.

In an ideal world, all of this data should be stored securely via a mechanism that offers inter-operability of data between government agencies (e.g. the Australian Government's Unique Student Identifier and the Queensland Government's Department of Transport and Main Roads drivers' licence).

Several national organisations including the Australian Sports Commission and Volunteering Australia are investigating or proposing the concept of volunteer passports. The key issue with any passport scheme is which organisation is best placed to deliver the solution, from both an ongoing resourcing and governance perspective.

The ASC's *Sport Volunteer Coalition Action Plan Year 2 Report*^{xvii} includes the key actions within the plan regarding a passport

- *Page 26: Exploring the design of a National Sport Volunteer Register/Passport through cross-sector engagement*
- *Page 27: Deliverable 4.3 Introduce a National Sport Volunteer Register/Passport to connect major sporting event volunteers with opportunities in community sport.*
- *Progress: The ASC have commenced the co-design of a National Sport Volunteer Register/Passport with engagement across the sport, government and volunteering sectors. The vision for the product is to make it easier for sporting organisations to engage volunteers, and easier for volunteers to connect to sport volunteering opportunities.*
- *Actions for 2024/25: Following the design phase, the ASC will test the concept with key stakeholders and explore options for future delivery.*

There are past examples like weVolunteer (<https://www.wevolunteer.org.au>), a temporary Volunteering Victoria passport initiative supported by the Vic Government and delivered with technology partner, MyPass. It was designed to bring together volunteers and local community organisations to help communities recover in times of need.

There is also a myriad of commercial tools in this space. The new Volunteering Gateway (<https://volunteeringgateway.org.au/technology/mypass>) established by VA and state volunteering bodies provides trusted recommendations on ten volunteer management platforms tailored to specific needs.

Ideally a national system would work best to minimise issues for cross-border volunteers.

There are considerable resources required to set up and customise a system so any investment in a system must be for the long-term.

Recommendation 9: That any volunteer management system/passport supported by the Queensland Government offers data inter-operability and be funded in perpetuity.

4. The unique challenges experienced by people from diverse backgrounds, genders, age groups, abilities and locations, and opportunities to improve volunteering participation, accessibility and experience for these groups;

Volunteering Plans

Other topics have covered some of the unique challenges by people from diverse backgrounds and opportunities to improve volunteering participation and accessibility.

Peak bodies such as the Queenslanders With Disability Network (QDN) have developed a specific resource to assist in legacy planning: *Game Changers: Developing an Inclusive Employment Legacy from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games*^{xviii}. This report includes a key recommendation that there are clear and measurable targets for 2032 volunteering and calls for the development of a Games disability employment and volunteering plan.

Recommendation 10: That the Queensland Government ensure that any volunteering plans developed for the Games address the needs of and are co-designed with volunteers from diverse backgrounds, genders, age groups, abilities and locations.

“Double Discrimination”

An overall comment is that consideration should be given to those who face “double discrimination”.

For example, women remain underrepresented in almost all aspects of parasport and there are issues of inequality and inequity faced by women with disabilities within parasport.

There are many examples of initiatives which connect women already involved in parasport through mentorship programs and sport-specific women’s events, however, researchers^{xix} have found that

the lack of a clear path to use these initiatives to advance women’s participation within the broader Paralympic Movement was disheartening.

Recommendation 11: That the Queensland Government consider the issue of “double discrimination” in sport and facilitate volunteer opportunities that are inclusive of multiple and intersecting identities.

5. The extent, effectiveness and efficiency of current government support at all levels for the volunteering sector in Queensland and sustainable opportunities for improvement;

Grant Searches

All levels of government provide a range of funding opportunities and resources for sporting clubs. Unfortunately for many sporting clubs, they need to search for government grants using three different mechanisms for the different levels of government:

- GrantConnect, the centralised publication of forecast and current Australian Government grant opportunities (<https://www.grants.gov.au/>);
- the Queensland Government Grants Finder (<https://www.grants.services.qld.gov.au/>) and
- individual local government websites or email alerts/newsletters.

There are solutions to supporting greater efficiencies in the broader volunteering sector and sport through grants search tools which allow for searches of grants from all tiers of government and other funders who require Deductible Gift Recipient status.

An example of best practice is the City of Gold Coast's initiative, which at the recommendation of its Volunteering Action Group, recently paid for a subscription to the Funding Centre's SmartySearch grants tool, offered as an extension to the SmartyGrants administration system used by over 700 funders across Australia (<https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/Services/Supporting-our-community/Community-group-hub/Community-grant-support>).

This integrated grants search service is now available at no charge for all City of Gold Coast not-for-profits and unincorporated groups.

Other government agencies using the SmartyGrants grants administration system could be encouraged to offer this service or similar services to their constituents with support from the Queensland Government. Alternatively, the Queensland Government could examine the feasibility of supporting a state wide grants search tool for all Queensland not-for-profits and unincorporated groups which searches all kinds of grants from different funders.

Recommendation 12: That the Queensland Government consider funding councils to provide an integrated grants search service or funding an integrated state-wide grants search service.

Resources

In respect to resources, there is duplication across the sport sector and the broader volunteering sector.

For example, the ASC supports sporting organisations to enhance the sport volunteer experience through the release of new resources and microlearning opportunities including the development of a Resource Hub (<https://www.ausport.gov.au/volunteering/volunteer-resource-hub>), a one-stop shop housing insights on how to recruit, retain and ensure positive experiences for sport volunteers.

The Queensland Government recently released the ClubIQ (<https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/club-support>) which provides free, easy-to-use resources for Queensland sporting clubs. These resources help club committees and volunteers deliver quality services to their communities and focus on 4 main areas:

- governance
- financial management
- planning
- volunteering.

Volunteering Australia has developed the Volunteering Resource Hub (funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services) (<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/#/>), a collection of useful, evidence-based and current best practice resources to support effective volunteer management.

Justice Connect's Not-for-profit Law program (<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/>) provides free and affordable specialist legal help with 300+ online resources, including fact sheets, guides and self-help tools and training for not-for-profit organisations. It is funded by the Australian Government Attorney General's Department and the Department of Social Services and various Victorian Government agencies and works with a valued network of over 10,000 pro bono lawyers who offer their time and expertise to assist not-for-profits manage their organisations.

There are numerous other national, state and local resources for volunteers and often, it is difficult for volunteers to choose the best resources to assist them in managing a specific issue.

In an ideal world, there would be a single trusted source for resources within the broad volunteering sector or a single sector or a single trusted source for a topic e.g. the Not-for-profit Law program for legal issues.

Recommendation 13: That the Queensland Government consider mapping evidence-based best practice national volunteer resources with a view to promoting them and contributing to their funding.

6. Opportunities for the Queensland Government to leverage all portfolios to support growth in volunteering across Queensland, including through hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

By way of background, an overview on the Olympic and Paralympic Responsibilities and Officials' Pathways is provided in Appendix A.

Appendix B provides details on officials in tennis and highlights similar participation patterns as to overall sport official trends and the shortage of tennis officials in the Gold Coast Region.

There are significant opportunities to leverage the 2032 Games to improve the overall numbers, seniority and diversity of Gold Coast and Queensland sport volunteers (particularly women, younger people and other diverse population groups) as

- technical officials and
- sports specific volunteers;

and grow the base of community volunteers in other sectors through sustainable volunteering legacies.

An Example from the 2010 Winter Olympic Games

VolWeb.ca was an online registration tool to connect volunteers with event organisations across the province of British Columbia. This online tool helped event organisers, from major sporting events to local festivals throughout B.C., to recruit and communicate with volunteers. Access to VolWeb.ca was free for both volunteers and event organisers, and registration was very simple.

VolWeb.ca was a major success because it led to a Games-related legacy. It was created after discussions concerning the lack of tools to ensure that the volunteer base from major events did not disappear when the event ended.

For instance, the Professional Golf Association (PGA) event “The Greater Vancouver Open” attracted thousands of well-trained and enthusiastic volunteers. However, when the event was dropped from the PGA tour schedule in 2004, the volunteer list disappeared and the collective know-how of this committed group of people was not passed on to other potential user groups in the sports, cultural and community event system.

2010 Legacies Now (an independent non-profit legacy established to create tangible community legacies for the province) filled this gap with the creation of a registered volunteer base that could be recruited for any event held in the province. In addition, VolWeb.ca was made accessible to communities across Canada to recruit volunteers for Games-related celebrations, such as the Torch Relay and other events. Post-2010, the 25,000 volunteers used by VANOC, were provided the opportunity to be transferred to VolWeb.ca, creating a Canada-wide legacy of experienced volunteers.

Recommendation 14: That the Queensland Government consider an investment in establishing an online sport volunteer registration tool as a permanent 2032 Legacy.

Building on the 2018 Commonwealth Games and the 2024 Paris Olympic/Paralympic Games

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Post Games Report^{xx} highlighted that for the first time at a major international multi-sport event, some International Federations (IFs) had an equal number of male and female technical officials.

At least six international sports federations achieved gender equity for international technical officials for the 2024 Games

- athletics^{xxi} - initial appointments for Olympic technical officials with no data available for the Paralympics
- canoeing (both Olympics and Paralympics)^{xxii}
- hockey^{xxiii} – technical officials and umpires for the Olympics with no Paralympic hockey events
- sailing^{xxiv} - Technical Delegates and Chief/Vice-Chief positions for the Olympics with no Paralympic sailing events
- tennis (both Olympics and Paralympics)^{xxv} and
- triathlon (both Olympics and Paralympics)^{xxvi}.

Women accounted for 50 per cent of the 45,000 volunteers at the 2024 Olympic Games^{xxvii}.

It is the author’s vision that these achievements can be further extended for the 2032 Games.

Despite these success stories, there is still an historical gender equity gap for technical officials according to the latest figures available from the International Olympic Committee’s Gender Equality & Inclusion Report 2021^{xxviii}:

- At Tokyo 2020, women represented 31% of Technical Officials
- At Rio 2016, women represented 32% of Technical Officials.

The IOC notes in this Report:

There are, however, many barriers to overcome in increasing the number of women technical officials. Most significantly, building the pipeline requires engaging all those involved in sport to take action to ensure that the pathways from the grassroots to high performance level are inclusive and supportive of women.

In fact, the review found that the status of the IOC's objective

to encourage IFs to transition to gender-balanced representation among their International Technical Officials (ITOs) at the Olympic Games

was that some progress had been made but significant work was required.

Recommendation 15: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners for regional per capita quotas for technical officials and sports specific volunteers across South East Queensland and gender equality and diversity targets for technical officials and sports specific volunteers (including people with disabilities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples).

Recommendation 16: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that needs analyses and implementation plans for technical officials and sports specific volunteers be developed as soon as possible.

Recommendation 17: That Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that specific investment programs be established or existing programs (including its own sport, tourism and major event funding) be amended to prioritise the recruitment, training and retention of more regional senior and diverse technical officials; and sports specific volunteers.

Legacy Plans and Opportunities

The author and the CEO of Volunteering Gold Coast (Mr. Brad Cooper) both attended the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Forum and provided input to the various surveys associated with developing *Elevate 2042^{xxxix}* (the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Plan).

It is pleasing that sports volunteering and officiating legacies form a key part of the Legacy Plan to be delivered by the Games Delivery Partners as follows:

Focus Area 2 - A high performance sports system (page 25):

A sustainable world class sports system.....

We are seeking sustained success and not just a single moment in time. To achieve this ambition will require an ongoing commitment to hard and soft infrastructure, access to training and competition venues, investment in the development of coaches and officials and extending the capabilities of the volunteer support network.

Focus Area 3 - Equity in sports participation (page 26)

Addressing wider inclusion in sport.....

There is also a need to set more ambitious targets and support the attraction or retention of female athletes and officials at all levels. Supporting the pipeline of female coaches, officials and volunteers will also be important to addressing the current disparities in participation rates. Similar strategies may also be needed to encourage greater inclusion for LGBTIQ+, older Australians and multicultural communities....

Creating more pathways for officials and volunteers who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (page 15) and opportunities for people with disability in sport as officials and volunteers (page 17) are also key priorities.

Similarly, the City of Gold Coast *Gold Coast 2032 Legacy Framework^{xxx}* supports greater participation of volunteers and officials to deliver on to themes:

- *Theme - Future Gold Coast: A reputation as an event-ready city*
- *Theme - Inclusive Gold Coast: Enhanced equity in sport*

Developing a broader base of locally and regionally based sports volunteers and technical officials and more higher-level technical officials will lead to better:

- economic outcomes (the Gold Coast can attract higher level sporting events and save money on importing officials from out of the region, often paid for through partnership funding from the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; and Tourism and Events Queensland)
- performance pathways (regionally based high performance athletes can access higher level endorsed events closer to home and have their results counted for world rankings).

To ensure that the proposed 2032 legacies can be successfully delivered, detailed needs analyses and implementation plans need to be developed as soon as possible, given in many sports, the lead time for developing an international technical official can take six-eight years or longer.

Consideration also needs to be given to how the 2032 Games will grow the capacity of the broader volunteering sector and grow volunteers across all sectors. Past Olympic Games organising committees have often failed to engage with volunteer-involving organisations [VIOs] or expected these VIOs to shape volunteer policies and assist with recruitment without any compensation^{xxxi}.

For example, in 2012, the selection and training of volunteers was delivered by London Organising Committee and sponsored by McDonald's, an official International Olympic Committee sponsor. For Paris 2024, PwC France provided human resources management services for workforce planning of paid staff and volunteers. For the 2026 Winter Games, Randstad Italia will provide human resources services in the recruitment and training phase for both the workforce and the Volunteers Programme.

There are many opportunities for VIOs to be involved including being awarded contracts (instead of private sector providers) for the planning and delivery of both the Olympic/Paralympic volunteer programme and any volunteering infrastructure legacy generated by the Olympics/Paralympics.

There are issues with the ownership and usage rights to data and resources (such as the volunteer database and registration tool; and training and management resources) as part of the knowledge transfer process. Historically, these resources are on-sold as part of knowledge transfer to future Olympic Games.

A key learning from the 2018 Commonwealth Games was that the 2018 volunteer database was not developed in a way that data could be transferred to any peak volunteer body or government agency for ongoing use, partly because an appropriate framework could not be agreed upon by Volunteering Gold Coast and the Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC).

It is hoped that a more collaborative approach will see a framework covering permissions and European privacy laws be developed so that personal volunteer data can be transferred and volunteers engaged post 2032 to create a legacy for the broader community.

It is hoped that agreement is reached well before 2032 so that peak volunteering-involving organisations and/or an alternative entity servicing the Brisbane City Council, Sunshine Coast Council, City of Gold Coast are provided with contact details of the 2032 volunteers and permission to engage them at a minimum.

Recommendation 18: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that peak volunteer-involving organisations be involved and compensated at commercial rates for advice on and/or supported to tender for contracts for the planning and delivery of both the Olympic/Paralympic volunteer programme and any volunteering infrastructure legacy generated by the Olympics/Paralympics.

Recommendation 19: That the Queensland Government support and advocate to relevant Games Delivery Partners that the knowledge transfer process include a Queensland mechanism to retain and use the Games volunteer database and training and management resources.

Community Foundations as 2032 Social Legacies

The Olympic and Paralympic Torch Relays announce the Games and spread a message of peace and friendship between peoples across many communities.

Each Queensland community will establish a Community Committee to facilitate the torch being run through their community. These Committees provide an ideal vehicle to facilitate the establishment of enduring legacies and could act as incubators to establish new or help support existing community foundations (CFs).

CFs create opportunities for and offer support to frontline organisations, charities, and individuals in need by raising money, building and managing enduring community assets, and channelling funds where they are most needed via responsive, agile grant-making.

Set up properly, CFs can fund all forms of local community volunteering activities through offering locals a vehicle to give where they live and support the needs of their communities. CFs bring together donors from all walks of life to support local priority needs. Community foundations build permanent financial assets and are catalysts for place-based change, from rural areas to regional towns and major cities. Community Foundations Australia (<https://www.cfaustralia.org.au/>) is the peak body for Australia's network of community foundations.

CFs can be set up to fund sporting, environment, health, education, arts and other community projects. The Buderim (Community) Foundation (BF) (<https://www.buderimfoundation.org.au/>) on the Sunshine Coast is an example of a successful local community foundation that was incorporated in 2003 and which provides grants to fund local sporting and other community projects. Since that time, just under \$2.6 million has been accumulated in its two trusts (not including a separate named Charitable Fund established under the umbrella of the BF) and over \$940,031 worth of grants given to 105 community organisations in the Buderim Region for local projects. All of this has been achieved with support from an Estimated Resident Population of 37,438 (in 2023).

There is also scope to improve giving and/or add sport as a grant recipient category via the establishment of non-charitable trusts (Refer to the ASF's proposal in Topic 2 to define as 'Community Sport and Amateur Athletes' as charitable).

There are three other CFs in Queensland apart from the Buderim Foundation: Mackay Community Foundation, Red Earth Community Foundation (South Burnett, Cherbourg, and North Burnett regions), and the Nambour Community Foundation (formerly the Sundale Community Foundation).

There is merit on considering how Queensland towns and localities could be supported to establish community foundations as 2032 legacies.

Recommendation 20: That the Queensland Government consider investing seed funding to support feasibility studies into the establishment of community foundations across Queensland.

7. Opportunities to increase emergency response volunteering in Queensland, including how to optimise the engagement, support and integration of volunteers assisting with natural disasters and community recovery

No response

8. First Nations peoples volunteering, including in remote and discrete communities, and the role of First Nations volunteering in Closing the Gap; and

No response

9. Any other relevant matters, including academic and other diverse sources, and any relevant reports and reviews at the national level and across other states and territories.

Research and data to support this submission is included in the References at the end of the submission.

Members of the Committee are encouraged to read the Sport Volunteer Coalition Action Plan (<https://www.ausport.gov.au/volunteering/sport-volunteer-coalition-action-plan#The-Plan>) developed by the Australian Sports Commission and Sport Volunteer Coalition. The Plan highlights the strategic issues facing volunteers in sport.

The Clearinghouse for Sport (the information and knowledge sharing platform for Australian sport) offers a comprehensive evidence base for the topic of volunteers in sport (<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/kb/volunteers-in-sport>).

Appendix A: Background on Olympic and Paralympic Responsibilities and Officials' Pathways

The organisation of the Olympic Games is entrusted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to the National Olympic Committee (NOC) of the host city's country as well as to the host city itself. The NOC forms, for that purpose, an Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOG) which, from the time it is constituted, communicates directly with the IOC, from which it receives instructions.

For the 2032 Games, the Brisbane Organising Committee for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is the OCOG. The Games Delivery Partners include the Queensland Government, the Australian Government (via the Australian Sport Commission and other Federal agencies), Brisbane City Council, Sunshine Coast Council, City of Gold Coast, Council of Mayors (SEQ), Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia and the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee.

In respect to responsibilities, the International Sports Federations [IFs] are recognised by the International Olympic Committee as being responsible for the integrity of their sports at the international level. IFs appoint international technical officials (ITOs), the highest-level credentialled officials, to be responsible for the technical control and direction of their individual sports at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. IFs often have different pathways and levels of ITOs and costs associated with training. Some IFs like World Athletics offer ITO courses for free.

National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) appoint national level technical officials in their respective sports for both Games. Local organising committees (i.e., the Brisbane Organising Committee) select and appoint non-technically trained sports specific volunteers, normally in conjunction with NSOs. General games' volunteers are also appointed by local organising committees and as mentioned previously are beyond the scope of this paper.

There are huge differences in the use of ITOs on a sport-by-sport basis for the Games. Athletics and swimming are two examples of sports where the proportion of national technical officials is higher than the number of ITOs. Other sports like racquet and combat sports have many more ITOs than national technical officials.

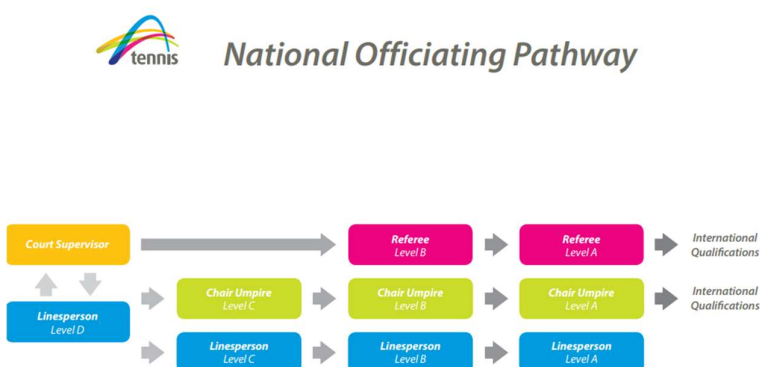
Many senior Australian officials are at the end of their officiating careers and many national sporting organisations (including Athletics Australia) are working on plans to regenerate their officials' workforces in time for 2032, as it can take up to two Olympic cycles (six to eight years) to qualify officials to an international standard.

Beneath the ITO levels, each sport in Australia has its own pathway and costs for training and accrediting national technical officials, though some national sporting organisations offer subsidies and/or courses for free.

In the sport of tennis, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) certifies Chair Umpires, Chief Umpires and Referees across three levels: Level 1 (ITF Green Badge officials), Level 2 (White Badge) and Level 3 (Bronze, Silver, Gold Badge).

Tennis Australia (TA) has positions of Line Umpires, Chair Umpires and Referees in its officiating pathway outlined here in Figure 3:

Figure 3: Tennis Australia National Officiating Pathway



The court monitor role offers a new entry level officiating pathway to assist with the safe and fair running of competitions. Court monitors assist court supervisors in observing the conduct of players and spectators during matches and then relay information to supervisors or referees to act.

A free Tennis Australia online community officiating program is also available for club volunteers to enrol and complete remotely to learn the basics of officiating. More details are available on the Tennis Australia website (<https://www.tennis.com.au/learn/ballkids-officials-coaches-and-volunteers/officiating/become-an-official>)

In other sports, a free Community Officiating Essential Skills Course (<https://www.ausport.gov.au/officiating/education/essential-skills>) provided by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) along with an Advanced Level Officiating General Principles course (https://www.sportaus.gov.au/coaches_and_officials/officials/advanced_officiating) aimed at officials who are typically operating at regional or state level competitions. To become an accredited official in many sports, volunteers may still need to complete additional sport specific training.

Appendix B: Current Situation – Officials in Tennis

In 2020, there were no qualified tennis referees at all on the Sunshine Coast, South and West regions. In an attempt to remedy this, Tennis Queensland launched an Australian-first initiative to attract and train more tennis tournament officials by offering a \$500 rebate for every volunteer who completed the course and supervised for at least six days in 2020 (<https://www.tennis.com.au/qld/news/2020/03/16/tennis-queensland-tackles-critical-shortage-of-officials>).

This initiative helped grow the officiating workforce in some areas but shortages still exist across the Gold Coast region and other Regions.

Currently, some Gold Coast tennis clubs are having to import tournament officials (mainly Level B Referees and Court Supervisors at a ratio of 1 Supervisor per 6 courts) from outside of the region (and pay for accommodation costs) to officiate at various sanctioned regional, state and national tournaments.

As late as December 2024, there were not enough local officials for the 2024 Queensland Junior Teams Carnival, which hosted 58 teams and 342 players from all Queensland regions, South Australia, New South Wales and Japan. Nine (90%) of the officials out of a total of ten officials (one Referee and 9 Court Supervisors) needed for the event required accommodation in peak holiday season (14-18th December 2024).

This workforce shortage is not a new issue nor is it restricted to the Gold Coast and it has the potential to impact on the viability and profitability of events and in extreme cases, the shortage could result in events being cancelled.

More recent national and state data on tennis officials, including court monitors and regional memberships (as at 20 March 2023) as provided to the author in personal communications are as follows (noting officials' figures are a proportion of the relevant population defined by the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics figures):

- Fewer Queensland (QLD) tennis officials than Queensland's share of the ERP population (as at 2022)
- Fewer female officials & fewer females pro-tour eligible vs. the population of women (as at 2021)
- Fewer officials identifying as living with a disability vs. the population living with a disability (as at 2018)
- Fewer officials identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander vs. population identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (as at 2021)

Another factor impacting on local recruitment and retention of officials is the introduction of Hawk-Eye technology (<https://ausopen.com/visit/tournament-info/electronic-review>) to conduct electronic reviews of disputed line calls at the Australian Open (AO), Australia's Grand Slam tennis tournament. This electronic technology has reduced the need for linespersons who previously needed to officiate locally and regionally to qualify to apply for an AO position.

As way to encourage and support younger tennis volunteers to officiate, in 2024, the Gold Coast Region introduced a Court Supervisor Squad Program, initially engaging 12 young members aged 12-18 years. This exciting program offers a unique opportunity for these participants to develop their skills both on and off the court in a nurturing environment. The initiative addresses a key need identified by clubs for more consistent supervision during the tournaments for juniors. By supporting host clubs as Court Supervisors, the squad aligns with the Region's Tournament and Competition focus on boosting participation, enhancing player experience, and fostering retention. Additionally, this program serves as a potential pathway for these young officials to advance to officiating roles at the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games, providing a forward-looking career trajectory in tennis.

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