




Speech By
Hon. Steve Minnikin

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

Record of Proceedings, 26 March 2026

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SMALL BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE**

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (3.23 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the committee's inquiry into volunteering in Queensland. At the outset, I want to reflect on a personal story from 12 years ago when I attended, very sadly, the funeral of my father. At the wake after his funeral, I was made aware of many remarkable stories of when he volunteered years earlier as a coach for the under-17s at Easts Carina. He obviously did that as a volunteer as a coach and manager, and I will get to many voluntary groups within the Chatsworth electorate.

Mr Mander: He was a very good player, too.

Mr MINNIKIN: He was a reasonable fullback in his day as well. I take that interjection from the Minister for Sport and Racing and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

When I met many of the grown men at the wake, they were moved to tears as they told me stories about the impact he had as a volunteer on their lives. In the 1970s Carina had its challenges socio-economically. I did not realise this as a kid at the time but when my dad was coaching the under-17s he would fill up the car and would go around and pick up all of the young blokes and take them to training. He would then take them back home because he knew many of them did not have dads of their own and the mums could not get them to training. He knew that if he did not do that they simply would not be able to play in a team. I also found out that a lot of them did not have the money for their registration so he covered that out of his own pocket. I am saying this because he was not alone in doing that. I am very proud of him and miss him to this day. In his time, he would not have been alone.

We simply cannot put a price on what volunteers do. We use that saying, 'They're worth their weight in gold,' and just one man can have a profound impact on kids. This was shown in these grown men, as they were when I saw them at the wake. They had tears streaming down their faces as they told me that they had travelled far and wide to attend his funeral. He had an impact, and he is not alone. That journey at that Clem Jones Centre in Carina continues. There are a multitude of clubs there—rugby league, swimming, water polo, track and field, and cricket. All of them at some stage need a coach and a manager, and the impact those volunteers can have on young people's lives cannot be measured. That is why I believe it was absolutely imperative that both sides of this chamber tried to work out what we can do to raise the profile of the impact of volunteers in this state.

Many of the contributions today have rightfully listed the different volunteer groups throughout their electorates, but I want to reflect on some things I found of particular interest in the report. The report stated that in 2022-23 economic figures Queensland's gross state product, GSP—that is, our total economic production for the state economy—was about \$505 billion, and the actual amount of

volunteer work that was assessed was \$117.8 billion. That figure of \$117.8 billion worth of labour costs through volunteers, when our GSP at that time was \$500 billion, absolutely says it all. They are indeed worth their weight in gold.

I have far too many volunteer groups to name in the 90 seconds I have left. I give a special shout-out to all of the men and women who continually give their time to train or manage the sports teams or work with the P&Cs in my mighty Chatsworth electorate. The Quota Club comes to mind. Quota is a small group of elderly ladies who are doing great things in the local community. I give them a huge shout-out because they get involved in fundraising for things that are often left behind. I want to acknowledge the great work of Quota, our Lions clubs, our Rotary clubs et cetera.

I also want to acknowledge, as others in this chamber have, the mighty men and women who volunteer for Meals on Wheels. It is unfair to single one group out, but when it comes to the spirit of what volunteerism is all about, I think it is encapsulated in the essence of Meals on Wheels. They provide life-essential food; that goes without saying. I have done the famous Green Meals on Wheels with the Carina Meals on Wheels. When you go there, you are not just giving people a hot cooked meal; you are giving them a connection and many of those elderly people are desperate for connection. I want to take these last few seconds to praise every volunteer in Queensland.