

Question on Notice

No. 746

Asked on Wednesday, 23 May 2007

MR FENLON MP asked the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services Queensland, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth (**MR PIT**T)–

Will he provide a summary of the aims of the Queensland Government Policy 'Valuing Volunteers' announced during National Volunteer Week 2007?

ANSWER:

Volunteering is changing. While numbers of volunteers are increasing, the amount of time given to volunteering is declining due to a range of contemporary social and demographic trends, including an ageing population, the cost of volunteering, changing generational preferences and the increasing professionalisation of volunteering.

Not only do these trends affect volunteers and non-government organisations using volunteers, the Queensland Government volunteer base may also decline as a result of competition for volunteers, the cost of volunteer programs and contemporary volunteering patterns.

Valuing Volunteers: The Queensland Government Policy on Volunteering 2007 – 2010 will support a flexible and responsive community and government volunteer sector, able to meet the challenges of rapid change, through better coordination, relationship development, reporting and promotion of innovative models for volunteering.

Valuing Volunteers consists of three strategic goals developed to respond to challenges facing volunteering in the 21st century.

- *Goal 1: Supporting Volunteers and Volunteering* includes strategies that will improve the ability of government and non-government organisations to understand and tap into contemporary volunteering patterns and explore new partnerships to strengthen volunteering, philanthropy and social enterprise.
- *Goal 2: Building a Stronger Base for Volunteering* recognises that the Queensland community is diverse in many ways. As an inclusive activity, volunteering should reflect the diversity of the different backgrounds, values and aspirations within our community.
- *Goal 3: Strengthening Rural and Regional Volunteering* acknowledges the importance of volunteering to the sustainability of rural and regional communities. The issues affecting rural and regional volunteers are often exacerbated by distance and isolation.

A significant initiative from the policy is the establishment of the Office for Volunteering in the Department of Communities. The Office for Volunteering will support and coordinate appropriate cross agency issues and whole of government reporting and foster strategic partnerships across different levels of government and the volunteer sector.