

Volunteering Community Reference Group

10 June 2024

Communique #13

The Volunteering Community Reference Group (VCRG) is convened by Volunteering WA to provide community input to the Minister for Volunteering. This communique refers to the meeting held on 10 June 2024. In attendance were:

Representing	Name
Hon Minister for Volunteering	Hon Don Punch MLA Tina MacDonald DPC
NFP volunteering sector	Craig Spencer, Chair
Volunteer Resource Centres	Vicki Pollard, Peel VRC
Individual volunteer (consumer)	Esme Bowen
Volunteering WA (VWA)	Tina Williams, CEO Meredith Blais
Department of Communities (Communities)	Sarah Emmitt

The Chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which we met, the Wadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and paid his respects to elders past and present.

The Hon. Donald Punch MLA, Minister for Volunteering and all members of the Group were welcomed to the meeting.

Minister Punch congratulated everyone for a very successful National Volunteering Week held in May 2024, with a number of activities held to celebrate the contribution of volunteers. These included the Volunteer of Year Awards, Volunteer Service Awards and Lotterywest grant funding for volunteer recognition events, administered by Volunteering WA.

A new inter-agency group has been formed for WA state government departments that engage volunteers. This group meets to track actions in the WA State Volunteering Strategy Action Plan, exchange ideas and discuss good practice approaches.

Minister Punch also noted the federal government announcement of further financial support to regional WA Volunteer Resource Centres, through \$1.7 million in funding.

Other topics discussed:

1. Volunteering data sets

The VCRG has previously discussed the pausing of the ABS “General Social Survey” (GSS) in 2020, which historically has been one of the primary data sources on volunteering.

It was encouraging to hear that the recent federal budget included funding for a restart of the collection of GSS data by the ABS, including volunteering data. The ABS are engaging on the scope of information to be gathered.

While it is intended that this data be published annually, data collection will not commence until 2025, with the first publication in 2026.

2. EoI for new members

The Department of Communities advised that the EoI process for new members of the Volunteering Community Reference Group has been approved by the Minister for Volunteering.

Applications will be open from 5 July to 9 August 2024. Existing members are encouraged to apply as the intent will be for a mix of existing and new members. Final decisions will be made on appointments by the Minister for Volunteering.

3. Forthcoming events

Special events 2024	
NSVW Inter Uni Beach Challenge	Saturday 3 August
National Student Volunteering Week	Monday 5 August – Sunday 11 August
International Volunteer Managers' Day	Tuesday 5 November
IVD Garden Party (Thank-A-Volunteer Day)	Thursday 5 December (TBC)

More information on the Volunteering Community Reference Group, including Terms of Reference and membership, is available [here](#).