

Volunteering Community Reference Group

5 August 2025

Communique #18

The Volunteering Community Reference Group (VCRG) is convened by Volunteering WA (VWA) to provide community input to the Minister for Volunteering. This communique refers to the meeting held on Tuesday 5 August 2025. In attendance were:

Minister for Volunteering	The Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA
Ministerial staff	Jacob Mitchell, Policy Advisor
VCRG Members	Name
NFP volunteering sector	Craig Spencer, St John’s Ambulance, Chair
Volunteer Resource Centres	Vicki Pollard, Peel VRC
Corporate Representative	Heidi Madden, Chair, Corporate Volunteer Council
Research representative	Dr Megan Paull, Murdoch University
Emergency Services Volunteer	Phil Scanlan (Metro)
Individual volunteer	Esther Bliss (Regional) Dr Tina Firth (Metro) Sandra Prosser (Regional) Rahul Seth (Metro) Michael Wainwright (Metro)
Volunteering WA (VWA)	Tina Williams, CEO Dominique Hansen, Manager, Policy & Research
Department of Communities (Communities)	Karina Chicote, Director - Inclusion Policy
Guests from the Department of Communities	Louise Koyd, Acting Manager Strategic Policy – Youth and Volunteering, Strategy and Partnerships. Claire Harding, Principal Policy Advisor, Strategy and Partnerships, Inclusion
Guests from the Insurance Commission of WA	Janice Gardner, General Manager, Government Insurance, Selwyn D’Rozalio, Insurance Advisory and underwriting Manager, Jacqui Wates, Client Relationship Manager
Guests from the WA Police Force	Melissa Calabro A/Assistant Director (Information Management) Matt Corfias, Team Leader, National Police Clearances.

Apologies: Elizabeth Aason, Swan VRC; Esther Bliss (individual volunteer), Hannah Godsave, WALGA.

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.

1. Opening Comments from Minister Beazley

The meeting commenced with an opening statement by The Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA Minister for Volunteering and Minister for Youth about National Student Volunteer Week which combines two of the Minister's portfolios. The theme for National Student Volunteer Week "Powered by purpose" aligns well with the WA Youth Action Plan survey finding that Young People are strongly motivated to find their purpose. Minister Beazley also recently adjudicated debates in the Youth Parliament and was pleased to share that a number of these debates centred on volunteering.

2. Volunteer Insurance Presentation by Insurance Commission of Western Australia (ICWA)

The VCRG has had a longstanding interest in insurance arrangements for the 742,000 formal volunteers in WA, with key issues highlighted in the [Volunteers in WA – Mind the \(Insurance\) Gap!](#) paper, prepared by Volunteering WA in 2024. To deepen the VCRG's understanding of the different types of volunteer insurance arrangements in place in WA, ICWA was invited to attend the meeting provided a presentation giving an overview of the insurance coverage provided to volunteers of Western Australian government agencies through RiskCover, the WA government's Self-insurance scheme.

3. WA Police Force Presentation -Volunteer Screening

Melissa Calabro gave a presentation on the [Volunteer National Police Certificate Program](#), conducted in partnership with the Department of Communities, and involving a contract with Australia Post. Melissa noted that numbers of Volunteer National Police Certificates issued in WA have increased over the last 3 years. There is an online application process as well as a lengthier manual processing option for those without the requisite photo identification. There are plans to upgrade the online application process for volunteers in a year's time, while recognising the need to maintain the existing manual processing option.

4. Volunteering Experience by VCRG member, Dr Tina Firth.

Dr Firth spoke about her volunteering journey which started in high school where she completed 30 hours of voluntary work with the Salvos. Dr Firth's journey has included many longer-term volunteer experiences with Starlight, St John's Ambulance and Rotary. Dr Firth also spoke about her micro-volunteering experiences for UWA Prosh, Oaktree, Big Help Mob and Red Cross. Dr Firth explained the importance of her exposure to volunteering as a school student and the myriad ways that volunteering has shaped and improved her life, building confidence, communication skills, connection, empathy, perspective, gratitude, creativity and "teaching "more about leadership than any other job has."

5. Presentation by Dr Megan Paull- Ensuring Research is Contributing to the Development of Volunteering.

Dr Paull circulated a paper about the role of Research in supporting evidenced based, volunteering policies and practice in WA and Nationally. Dr Paull’s presentation highlighted the strengths of the highly collaborative WA Volunteering Research Community and the current work and opportunities for further research on volunteering in WA. Dr Paull invited VCRG members to put forward their research priorities to the Volunteering WA Research Committee.

6. Next VCRG Meeting

The next VCRG meeting will be held on Tuesday 4 November 2025 at 10am.

Special events 2025	
VWA State Conference	Thursday 6 & Friday 7 November
IVD Garden Party	Thursday 4 December
International Volunteers’ Day	Friday 5 December

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