

Volunteering Community Reference Group

4 November 2025

Communique #19

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 4 November 2025. In attendance were:

Dept. Premier & Cabinet	Name
Minister for Volunteering	The Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA
Ministerial staff	Jacob Mitchell, Policy Advisor, Rebecca Boteler, Senior Media Advisor
VCRG Members	Name
NFP volunteering sector	Craig Spencer, St John’s Ambulance, Chair
Volunteer Resource Centres	Vicki Pollard, Peel VRC, Elizabeth Aason, Swan VRC
Corporate Representative	Heidi Madden, Chair, Corporate Volunteer Council
WALGA Representative	Hannah Godsave
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)
Volunteering WA (VWA)	Tina Williams, CEO Dominique Hansen, Manager, Policy & Research
Department of Communities	Sue Fielding, representing the Director - Inclusion Policy
Guests	Kane Blackman, CEO Good Sammy and Chair of Volunteering WA Expert Reference Group –Volunteer Screening Angelo Barbaro, Executive Director, Regulation and Quality, Department of communities Priscilla Bignoux, Manager Strategic Policy – Youth and Volunteering, Strategy and Partnerships. Claire Harding, Principal Policy Advisor, Strategy and Partnerships, Inclusion

Apologies: Michael Wainwright (Individual Volunteer, Metro), Karina Chicote, Department of Communities.

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. Presentation by the Chair of the Expert Reference Group- Volunteer Screening (Kane Blackman, CEO, Good Sammy)

Kane spoke about the Purpose, Composition of the Expert Reference Group which has been meeting since August 2025. The presentation highlighted volunteer shortages faced by volunteer managers in WA and the costs to individual organisations of volunteer applicants dropping out due to the barriers posed by current volunteer screening processes. The Expert Reference Group seeks:

- An efficient and effective volunteer screening process that supports volunteering organisations to increase the number of volunteers including:
 - Free and fully digitised NDIS and WWC screening check application and renewal processes
 - One online portal for volunteers to apply for all types of volunteering checks
 - A well-resourced alternative application process for the digitally excluded and those who don't have the identity Documents needed for the online process.
 - Accurate de-identified data collection and reporting to assist in evaluation and to promote transparency.
 - A new portal that improves the user experience for volunteer-involving organisations e.g., allows bulk data entry.
- For government to fully fund the cost of free, streamlined, volunteer screening checks in the State Budget and Forward Estimates.

Kane thanked the Department of Communities for their engagement with the group and their valuable work to develop solutions to these important problems.

2. Screening Check Update - Angelo Barbaro, Executive Director, Regulation and Quality, Department of communities

Angelo Barbaro explained the fully digitised NDIS renewal process was up and running on the Department of Transport website and would be launched on 5 November. A formal communications strategy for the sector will follow.

Angelo thanked the Expert Reference Group for their recommendations for development of the new online portal. He explained many of the recommendations will be adopted either in stage 1 or stage 2.

Stage 1 involves full digitisation of:

- The Working with Children Check application process by mid 2026
- The NDIS screening check application process in the latter half of 2026.

Stage 2 will depend on the timing of receipt of anticipated additional Commonwealth funding for aged care screening checks. New funding will enable a move from the current "legacy system" to a new system which improves functionality for volunteering-involving organisations.

3. Youth Volunteering in Schools

The group discussed how to elevate the importance of youth volunteering within and outside a school setting. Three examples of volunteering programs run in or with schools were reviewed to explore the key elements needed for a successful program. The group also discussed the associated benefits for both student volunteers and the broader community.

4. Next VCRG Meeting

The next VCRG meeting will be held on February 2025 on a date to be confirmed by the Minister's office.

Special events 2025	
IVD Garden Party	Thursday 4 December (TBC)
International Volunteers' Day	Friday 5 December

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