



20 May 2014

Guy Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier

Media release

Volunteers are the backbone of our community.

Tasmania's volunteers give freely of their time, money and effort to support the wider community.

Where would we be without our volunteers? Our volunteer ambulance officers, fire-fighters, the Salvos, the mums and dads that run our school sports and tuck shops, those involved in the arts and culture and countless many more are essential to our communities.

Tasmania's 130,000 volunteers contribute more than \$638 million dollars to the Tasmanian economy and represent 2.2 per cent of Gross State Product compared to the national average of 1.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product according to 'The Economic Value of Volunteering in Tasmania' report, funded by the State Government.

If volunteering was an industry, it would be Tasmania's eighth largest, employing more people than the agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining industries combined.

The State Government report which I launched at the opening of National Volunteer Week (May 12 to 18) found that, on average, one in three Tasmanian adults volunteer nearly three and a half working weeks of their time per year.

We punch above our weight and this is particularly so in the regional and rural areas. Tasmanians are doers and generous.

Our Government is keen to grow Tasmania's culture of volunteering. Encouraging volunteering is the way to go. The Good Book says, 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you'. And we want to see this spirit of service grow in our State.

Together with Volunteering Tasmania, I hosted a workshop on the challenges and way forward for volunteering in Tasmania with the Premier, the Hon Will Hodgman, as special guest last week. We listened and learned of ways to cut back red tape and help our volunteers. If you can think of ways to help our volunteers please contact us—we want to hear your ideas.

We should be doing all we can to support and promote both our volunteers and the growth of the self-sacrificing volunteer spirit in Tasmania. END

By Guy Barnett MP

Tasmania's Volunteer Facts:

- *Over 130,000 adult Tasmanians volunteer.*
- *Volunteers contribute \$638 million per annum to the Tasmanian economy.*
- *Over one third of adult Tasmanians volunteer an average 3.5 weeks per annum.*
- *Our volunteer industry is the eighth largest in Tasmania.*

FURTHER INFORMATION MATTHEW HOCHMAN 0439 682 359

***Please note: high resolution copies of the photos are available upon request.**