

# Supporting Our Volunteers



## Isobel Redmond and the State Liberals

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### Introduction

The Liberal Party has a proud record of supporting volunteers in South Australia. When last in Government the Liberal Party:

- Appointed the first ever Minister for Volunteers in Australia.
- Established the Office for Volunteers.
- Dedicated the Adelaide Cup public holiday as a joint public holiday to recognise volunteers.
- Introduced and passed volunteer protection legislation.

This support of volunteers continued in Opposition when the Liberal Party moved 'good Samaritan' legislation. This was adopted by the Government and passed.

Under the Rann Government volunteer numbers are declining. South Australia has the lowest level of volunteers in Australia. Media reports have suggested that the lack of volunteers could put events at risk.

A Federal Government study 'Volunteering in Australia' in May 2008 showed the number of volunteers in South Australia dropped from 38% of the population in 2000 (under the former Liberal Government) to 32% in 2008- the Nation's lowest.

### Further Support and Protection for Volunteers

The Liberal Party will offer further support and protection to volunteers and volunteer groups by extending, to all donors of goods and services, greater protection from liability.

The Liberal Party supported the introduction and passing of laws that gave donors of food protection from liability as long as the donor did not know the food to be unsafe and was not reckless about its safety. The food donations had to be made without expectation of payment or other compensation and be given for charitable or benevolent purposes.

At the time of debating this legislation the Liberal Party moved amendments to extend this protection to donors of all goods and services, not just food, on the same basis, that the donor did not know the donated product or service to be unsafe and was not reckless about its safety.

The Rann Government opposed these amendments on the basis they wished to consult. They have since consulted and received only six submissions. The Rann Government remain opposed to this policy.



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The Liberal Party believe that Government should make it easier for people to help the community and make it easier for people and group to donate goods and services in support of our volunteers and charity groups.

The Liberal Party will introduce laws that exempt donors of goods and services from liability where:

- The donation is made without expectation of payment or other compensation.
- The donation is for a charitable or benevolent purpose.
- The donor does not know the donated product or service is unsafe and is not reckless about its safety.

## **Volunteer Support**

When the Liberal Party established the Office for Volunteers we also established the Volunteer Support Fund at \$150,000 in 2002.

After eight years of the Rann Government the Volunteer Support Fund is still at \$150,000, This gives an indication about how the Rann Government values volunteers.

The spending power of the Volunteer Support Fund has gone backwards each year for eight years of the Rann Government. While at the same time the public service wages in this area have increased from \$490,000 to \$820,000.

The Liberal Party will double the Volunteer Support Fund and adjust it each year in line with CPI.

## **Growing Volunteer Organisations**

Many volunteer groups have suffered a decline in volunteers over the years while others have seen an increase.

Under the Rann Government South Australia has the lowest level of volunteers in Australia. The Liberal Party wants to help volunteer organisations grow, and through them, grow volunteering.

The Liberal party will set up a programme of assisting volunteer groups to establish growth plans for their organisation.

As part of this process those that receive funding will be on longer term funding agreements than the current terms of one year. The Liberal Party accepts that for organisational stability and growth the one year funding agreements are too short to be effective.

The Liberal Party will offer up to three year funding agreements.