



**More Than “Thank You”:**

**Recommendations For a Volunteer Recognition Program For the Victorian Emergency Services Sector**

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Sponsored by the Emergency Services Foundation

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## Supplemental Material-A: Author Contributions

	Dylan	Dan	Karen
<b>Chief Editor</b>			
<b>Abstract</b>			
<b>Acknowledgements</b>			
<b>Introduction (A Need for Volunteer Recognition)</b>			
<b>Background</b>			
The Psychology of Volunteerism and the Desire for Recognition			
The Demands Placed on Emergency Service Volunteers			
Occupational Trauma and a High Prevalence of Mental Health Problems in the Emergency Services Sector			
The Emergency Service Foundation (ESF)			
The Positive Impact of Recognition on Worker Wellbeing and Retention			
Ways to Recognize Volunteers: Two Major Forms of Recognition			
The Role of Leadership in Volunteer Recognition			
Current Formal Recognition Programs			
Current Informal Recognition Programs			
<b>Methods and Results</b>			
Roles and Experiences of Volunteers			
Importance of Volunteer Recognition			
Qualities & Components of a Good Recognition Program			
Determine Strategies Most Appropriate for and Welcomed by Volunteers			
Manager's Perspective			

Volunteers Perspective			
<b>Summary of Results</b>			
<b>Recommendations</b>			
<b>Reflection</b>			

\* Lighter shades mean worked on together

**Supplemental Material-B: Meeting/Interview Log**

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Organization, Position/Description</b>	<b>Meetings</b>
<a href="#"><u>Tony Pearce</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>IGEM</u></a> (Inspector General for Emergency Management)	10/4
<a href="#"><u>Martin McKinnon</u></a>	Personal Friend of Ms. MacKenzie Working to create a discount card program for volunteers	10/7 11/24
<a href="#"><u>Faye Bendrups</u></a>	Victoria SES Volunteers Association, President National SES Volunteers Association, Vice Chair	10/8
<a href="#"><u>Emma Atkins</u></a>	<b>Life Saving Victoria (<a href="#"><u>LSV</u></a>)</b> , General Manager - People	10/25
<a href="#"><u>Michael Downing</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Kellie Shewring</u></a>	<b>Victoria Council of Churches (<a href="#"><u>VCC</u></a>)</b> Workforce Manager CEO	10/25
<b>Dave Garner</b>	<b>Ambulance Victoria (<a href="#"><u>AV</u></a>)</b> , First Responders Manager	10/26
<a href="#"><u>Margaret McCarthy</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Red Cross Australia</u></a> , Coordinator Capability and Capacity - Melbourne	10/26
<b>Robert Wilson</b>	<a href="#"><u>St John Ambulance</u></a>	10/27
<a href="#"><u>Raelene Williams</u></a> <b>Roz Long</b> <a href="#"><u>Niki Habibis</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Leanne Blenkiron</u></a>	<b>Country Fire Authority (<a href="#"><u>CFA</u></a>)</b> , Volunteer Sustainability Manager Community Engagement Officer Training Coordinator Regional IMT Capability Coordinator	10/27
<b>Ben W Penrose</b>	Emergency Management Victoria Marine Search and Rescue ( <a href="#"><u>EMV MSAR</u></a> )	10/28
<a href="#"><u>Andrew Crisp</u></a>	<b>Emergency Management Victoria (<a href="#"><u>EMV</u></a>)</b> , Commissioner	10/29
<a href="#"><u>Priscilla Grimme</u></a>	<b>Victoria State Emergency Service (<a href="#"><u>VicSES</u></a>)</b> , Volunteer Support Officer	10/29
<a href="#"><u>Carina Newton</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ESF Scholarship</u></a> Alumni <b>VicSES</b> Section Leader - Work Health Safety & Wellbeing, North East (Hume) Region	11/2
<a href="#"><u>David Lawrence</u></a>	University of Western Australia, Associate Professor	11/4
<a href="#"><u>Marcus Warner</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ESF Scholarship</u></a> Alumni <b>VicSES</b> Deputy Controller – Bright Unit	11/5
<b>Sue Foley</b>	<a href="#"><u>Rotary Club</u></a>	11/24

### Supplemental Material-C: Organizations of Interest

Australian/International Organizations	Emergency Service Organizations within Victoria
❖ Red Cross	❖ Ambulance Victoria (AV)
❖ Special Olympics of Australia	❖ Country Fire Authority (CFA)
❖ United Nations (UN)	❖ Victoria State Emergency Service (VicSES)
❖ Peace Corps	❖ Life Saving Victoria (LSV)
❖ Smith Family	❖ Victoria Council of Churches - Emergency Management (VCCEM)
❖ Cal Fire	❖ Red Cross

**Supplemental Material-D: Forms of Recognition/New Ideas Masterlist**

Form	Examples	Informal/Formal/ Both?	Notes
Praise/thanks	Positive feedback from: - supervisors - peers - people affected by work	Both	Can be formal if published
	Acknowledgement of achievements/milestones (eg, verbal, posting names to website)	Both	Can be formal if published
	Certificates	Formal	
	Prestigious Awards	Formal	
	Banquets	Formal	Formal, but the social aspect is welcomed
	Memory items	Both	Depending on presentation method
Displays of respect/support	Being granted shared authority	Informal	
	Being involved in decision making	Informal	
	Opportunities for professional development	Informal	
	Freedom to pursue ideas for organization improvement	Informal	
	Lunch with leadership	Informal	
	Peer support (e.g., support after difficult shifts)	Informal	
	Check-ins from supervisors/leaders (e.g., consideration of personal situations, training progress, confidence in abilities)	Informal	
Learning about impact of work	Letters/cards from people they have helped	Informal	
	Published newspaper articles showing the impact of work as well as the sacrifices made	Formal	
	Stories on website defining the impact of work with interwoven volunteer appreciation	Formal	

	Updates from organization/supervisor (e.g., newsletters w/ # of people helped that month)	Both	
Improve Social Media	Verified	Formal	
	Stronger Advertisement	Formal	
Discount Program	e.g., Member Link	Formal	
	New Program	Formal	McKinnon
	organizations join and provide discounts as it is positive for business if they show support of the volunteering community	Formal	
Newspaper/Local Paper How has the volunteer work made an impact	Use of story telling with work of volunteers interwoven into the writing. Allows the volunteer to feel recognized while not being singled out.	Formal	
	Use of powerful images	Formal	
	Impact report emails could also be sent to volunteers highlighting the impact of their work	Informal	
	main message is to convey the sacrifice the volunteers make	Formal	
Supervisor training regarding recognition	regular individual meetings between supervisors and volunteers were appreciation can be expressed and volunteers can explain comments, questions, or concerns	Informal	
	Simple things managers can do to support wellbeing of volunteers	Informal	
School Children Appreciation	Card creation in class for volunteers	Formal	
	How these children have been impacted by the volunteer work	Both	
	Potential for children to make card for family members	Informal	
School presentations to student audience by volunteers	Students see the work of the volunteers	Formal	
	potential for recruiting	Formal	
	Opportunity for students to informally thank these volunteers	Informal	



	volunteers get a chance to show what experiences they must endure	Formal	
Involvement in parades		Formal	
Donate in volunteers name to charity	Organizations donate in the names of volunteers to organizations that they desire when they have performed outstanding actions or achievements	Formal	
Open House/Expo	Volunteers able to interact with community members in informal conversations	Informal	
	Fire Museum location	Both	fosters informal
	Families of volunteers able to interact as well	Informal	
	Deeper connections within the volunteer organization can be made	Informal	
Provide a Job Reference program	Volunteers will be able to gain valuable relationships with coworkers and become closer with one another	Formal	Social Aspect
	Will be used by Volunteers for paid positions and make it easier for them to find new jobs and meanings		
Sporting/ Entertainment events	season ticket holders able to donate tickets	Both	depends on framing
	public recognition events at games (create a structure for these organizations to contact and work with volunteer orgs easier)	Formal	

### Supplemental Material-E: Forms of Recognition: Organization Examples

Organizations	Formal	Informal	Other	Additional Comments
<b>Red Cross</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certificate of Merit Award</li> <li>- Red Cross Life saving Award</li> <li>- Marine Rescue Hero</li> <li>- Wilderness Rescue Hero</li> <li>- Transportation Safety Hero</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- personal appreciation by manager</li> <li>- personal phone calls</li> <li>- manager--&gt;volunteer relationships</li> <li>- Explanation on impact of work</li> </ul>		<p>The Red Cross is a model Organization strong forms of recognition both formally and informally.</p> <p>This organization is applicable as it is a emergency response organization that can be applied to the Victorian Emergency Service Sector.</p>
<b>UN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online Volunteering Award</li> <li>- Sheikh Isa bin Khalifa Award for Volunteer Work</li> <li>- International Volunteer day</li> </ul>	Unknown		<p>The UN provides a solid foundation for a formal recognition program although the extent of the UN's use of informal Recognition is unknown.</p>
<b>Special Olympics of Australia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Athlete of the Year</li> <li>- Young Athlete of the Year (16 - 26 years old)</li> <li>- Coach of the Year</li> <li>- Young Coach of the Year (16 - 26 years old)</li> <li>- Volunteer of the Year</li> <li>- Young Volunteer of the Year (16 - 26 years old)</li> <li>- Community Hero</li> </ul>	<p>- Managers and supervisors use a wide array of informal methods including but not limited to personal thank yous</p> <p>- this comes from both the volunteer managers and the athletes and others</p>	<p>This organization is model in the use of a new form of recognition. They use the method of showing the volunteers how their work has made an impact. On the website they have stories that show positive impact that the volunteer work has had</p>	<p>This organization shows strong forms of informal appreciation this comes from the athletes as well as others within the organization. Additionally there method of showing the volunteers how there work has made a difference is very successful as well.</p>

			on the athletes. The volunteers are not singled out but the appreciation is interwoven into the response.	
<b>Peace Corps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Incentive Rewards Program</li> <li>-Paul D. Coverdell Fellows Program</li> <li>-Sargent Shriver Award</li> <li>-The Loret Miller Ruppe Award</li> <li>-Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award</li> </ul>	Unknown		The Peace Corps have many forms of formal recognition that is publicized but has little to none public information shown of informal recognition. If able to speak with a representative, What is the retention rate of your volunteers like? Are the people returning older or younger?
<b>Volunteer Australia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Collaboration Community Impact Award</li> <li>-Employee Volunteer Program Award</li> <li>-Excellence in Grassroots Organisation Award</li> <li>-Inclusion Award</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-"Provide a warm welcome for each new volunteer</li> <li>-Ask volunteers for their opinions when developing new policies and strategies</li> <li>-Involve volunteers in morning teas and coffee breaks"</li> </ul>		Volunteering in Australia is vital to the sustainability of Australia and the emergency service sector, without volunteering natural disaster will go unattended. Volunteer Australia has multiple programs in place, however, they lack a strong informal approach, the informal category was just merely suggestion they had but had yet to actively implement
<b>The Smith Family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sponsors receive a profile written by their sponsored child</li> <li>-Tax deduction slip for any donations</li> <li>-Welcome Packet</li> </ul>	- Opportunity to write to their sponsored student		

## Supplemental Material-F: Interview/Focus Group Preamble

The purpose of this study, sponsored by the Emergency Services Foundation (ESF) of Victoria, Australia, is to determine possible forms of recognition that may help improve the wellbeing of emergency service volunteers. We are particularly interested in how volunteers feel about being acknowledged for their work and what forms of recognition they desire the most. Recommendations for a recognition program will be made based on the information gathered.

Study results will be published on our university website (WPI) and shared with ESF administration. If you choose to participate in this interview you are free to end the interview at any time and you can choose to not answer any questions. You will not be identified by name in the report, but by a pseudonym associated with your organization (ex. CFA Volunteer 1). If you wish to have your interview removed from our records after your interview, please contact us at the email address provided and we will do so.

By remaining on this video call, you acknowledge your willingness to participate in the interview, which should take approximately 1 hour. Audio from the interview will be recorded, but will not be available to anyone outside of our research team and will only be used for the sake of this study.

If you have further questions about this study or wish to read our final report, please contact us at [gr-ESFB20@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-ESFB20@wpi.edu) or our WPI faculty advisors at [ldh@wpi.edu](mailto:ldh@wpi.edu) (Prof. Lorraine Higgins) and [kumar@wpi.edu](mailto:kumar@wpi.edu) (Prof. Uma Kumar).

Thank you for your participation.