

V O L U N T E E R
REPORT

FOR

Surf Life Saving
New Zealand

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was commissioned by New Zealand Search and Rescue (NZSAR) to ensure the sustainability of an effective and engaged volunteer workforce across the Search and Rescue (SAR) sector. It is one of four reports commissioned for individual agencies within the SAR sector.

It reviews Surf Life Saving New Zealand's (SLSNZ) strategic and operational volunteer engagement practices. It looks at current practice and identifies opportunities for developing a volunteer workforce to meet future needs. Assessment covers SLSNZ's strategy, culture, communications and access to tools, resources and training.

SLSNZ is the peak body representing surf life saving in the Search and Rescue, water safety, sport, charity and volunteer sectors. Its purpose is to "Lead and Support Surf Life Saving in New Zealand". The strategic focus is to support clubs to deliver core services to agreed standards, drive operational excellence, develop champions, engage communities and ensure sustainability and resilience.

Key motivators for members of SLSNZ are a love of the beach and water, community contribution, growth opportunities, friends, the family environment and fitness. These, along with the comprehensive training, sporting and leadership opportunities, provide an attractive offering for potential volunteers.

SLSNZ's Emergency Call Out Squads (SAR squads) are skilled, senior lifeguards whose depth of experience and range of skills make a vital contribution to New Zealand's Search and Rescue capability. There is a need to for the sector to recognise, position and invest in SLSNZ and its Search and Rescue capability as a core frontline SAR service.

The skills and experience developed through lifeguarding provide individuals with a solid foundation for working in any of the Search and Rescue organisations. A structured pathway to encourage SLSNZ members to transition into other SAR organisations would strengthen the whole sector.

Most volunteers have a long association with SLSNZ. With the general trend towards shorter-term volunteering, the challenge is to find meaningful opportunities for volunteers in support and shorter-term roles while maintaining a substantial core of volunteers prepared to make a longer-term commitment. The administrative and compliance requirements emerge as a dissatisfier for some members, which is amplified by SLSNZ's federated structure with each club being an incorporated society. A recognised strength of the club structure is the ownership and commitment of members and their connections within local communities.

Developing a volunteer strategy will enable SLSNZ to complement the comprehensive *operational policies* with *volunteer (people) management policies* to enhance the experience of volunteers and the operational effectiveness of SLSNZ.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the SLSNZ leadership team:

- Develop a volunteer strategy¹ and supporting plan with metrics to track progress
- Develop resources and provide training in managing volunteers, including how to manage performance and behavioural issues.
- Develop pathways to support transitioning between other emergency and SAR services
- Develop a quick and easy Health and Safety reporting method to encourage a culture of Health and Safety best practice
 - Develop a diversity strategy with a roll-out process to build understanding of the need for, and benefits of, diversity.

Opportunities for SLSNZ to strengthen volunteer support and management are outlined in the table 'Analysis of Current State and Opportunities for Enhancing Volunteer Management.'

ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

SLSNZ is the peak body representing surf life saving in the Search and Rescue, water safety, sport, charity and volunteer sectors. SLSNZ supports 74 clubs across New Zealand with around 17,000 members. Clubs are grouped for consultation and programme delivery purposes into local regions, and are supported by 37 staff. In addition, the Northern Region, currently constituted as a separate charitable organisation, has 14 staff supporting the clubs within that region.

Volunteer club lifeguards and seasonally employed lifeguards patrol 80 sites in summer and provide an Event Safety service in, or near, the water. As part of the lifeguarding services, clubs administer first aid and take preventative action. There are 14 Emergency Call Out Squads (SAR squads) that provide Search and Rescue services outside of patrol hours and areas. During the 2017-18 season, the 5,247 lifeguards conducted 1,052 rescues at patrolled beaches. SLSNZ lifeguards also participated in 333 searches and assisted 2,358² people back to safety outside of patrolled areas or in dangerous spots.

There is a need to recognise and position SLSNZ and its Search and Rescue capabilities as a first response and core Search and Rescue service. The skills and experience developed through lifeguarding provide individuals with a sound base for working in any of the Search and Rescue organisations. A pathway to encourage SLSNZ members to transition into other organisations could be developed.

Life Saving Sport provides development programmes and local, regional, national and international competitions. Through Life Saving Sport individuals often further develop the skills and fitness that enable them to be better lifeguards. Regionally run beach safety education programmes and national community safety messaging also assist New Zealanders to stay safe in the water.

¹ See Appendix Two for a definition of a volunteer strategy and the phases of development.

² SLSNZ (2018) Annual Report. Retrieved from www.surflifesaving.org.nz.

METHODOLOGY

The following process was used to review SLSNZ's strategic and operational volunteer engagement practices:

- Examination of organisational documentation and volunteer resources and policies
- Interviews conducted with SLSNZ management staff and ten SAR squad coordinators
- Information from the SLSNZ volunteer database was examined
- InvolveMe 360 (VNZ's digital organisational assessment tool on best practice volunteering) was customised to enable additional information to be collected for SLSNZ
- InvolveMe 360 was sent out to a cross-section of 1000 volunteers, including all SAR squad members with a return rate of 18 per cent
- Follow up interviews were held with the National and Regional Life Saving Manager(s) to discuss the information gathered.

The focus of the information gathering and analysis was on the management of the SAR Squads. Volunteer management and support practices were assessed through InvolveMe and current volunteer management related policies.

STRENGTHS

There are many effective volunteer support practices evident in SLSNZ. These include:

- A well respected brand that attracts volunteers
 - A committed, highly skilled volunteer workforce providing services across New Zealand
 - A small national team and four regional teams focused on supporting clubs, developing operational excellence, brand management and securing financial sustainability
 - Family culture that supports young people to become involved
 - An inclusive family environment in clubs that engage parents and their children, with many families having long associations across generations.
 - Children and young people often enter the organisation through its Junior Surf and sport stream, many transitioning to become lifeguards during their teens
 - The development pathway and training available to lifeguards provides youth with leadership opportunities and skills that can be used in a range of contexts
 - A sense of community amongst volunteers
 - Enjoyment of the social connections with the satisfaction of saving lives and giving back to the community
 - The strong ownership and community connections within clubs
 - The commitment of members: *“My passion for the organisation and the feeling of community that is instilled in the members of my club and its culture”.*
 - Strong relationships and partnerships
 - Strong relationships with emergency services, particularly in rural areas with other Search and Rescue agencies, for example in Northland where the SAR squad is collocated and works closely with Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ).
 - SLSNZ is part of the “wet sector” with Coastguard Rescue and Coordination Centre, coordinating and improving how these organisations work together.
- Recognition of the need to diversify membership e.g. the partnership with Ngati Porou enabling them to establish a surf club.
 - Some exemplary practices include:
 - The critical incident management procedures provide a model for the SAR sector
 - The introduction of online training for refresher theory models that reduce the time required for training and assessment
 - A tiered consultation approach for developing policy and implementing change. This enables an appropriate level of interaction for the size and impact of a proposed change and builds acceptance/ buy-in from clubs.
 - The use of local and national advisory groups accessing specialist expertise within SLSNZ.
 - A regional approach to enable the delivery of services. For example, clubs from the Capital Coast Region roster members for patrols at Foxtton Beach which lacks the membership to patrol the beach on its own, and clubs on Auckland’s east coast often volunteer for the west coast clubs where the patrol day is longer and more demanding.
 - Utilisation of beach user populations to identify and engage groups, such as the Indian Community using Piha and the Asian Community on Auckland’s East Coast.
 - A coastal risk assessment process leading to an evidence based lifesaving model being rolled out across New Zealand.

KEY CHALLENGES

Trends in volunteering

NZ and international trends show a shift to episodic and shorter-term volunteering, especially in younger age groups. With a high level of skill, fitness and recertification required for SAR squad roles, SLSNZ needs volunteers who will make an ongoing commitment and be readily available at short notice. This needs to be complemented by identifying shorter-term, episodic or support volunteer opportunities.

While membership numbers within SLSNZ are stable, it is the small clubs where pressures are most evident. Within these communities people often volunteer for multiple agencies, such as Coastguard New Zealand, St Johns and Fire and Emergency. One volunteer commented that *“At our club we don’t have a lot of active lifeguards or members, so it is the same people doing everything all the time.”*

NZSAR requires those directly participating in Search and Rescue Operations (SAROPs) to be 18 or older. This is the age at which young people start to drop out of lifeguarding. A more structured pathway for young people to engage in SAR squads would support retention and development of younger volunteers.

The geography and consequent level of risk in an area impacts the level of demand for water-based Search and Rescues. Recruitment of squad members is generally easier in areas with higher volumes of Search and Rescues operations, or where there are clubs with larger memberships.

Federated structure and its impact

The federated structure means that each Surf Life Saving Club is a separate entity with its own constitution and committee. This multiplies the resources needed to fulfil governance and reporting requirements. Comments in the free text questions in the InvolveMe 360 survey indicate that the rationale for administrative and compliance requirements are not well understood and are a dissatisfier for some.

This also creates challenges in ensuring consistency of practice and maintenance of standards, particularly in the areas of Health and Safety. New members receive a Health and Safety induction reflecting current expectations. Long serving members, however, have been used to operating within a culture where Health and Safety expectations were less rigorous.

Comments from respondents in the InvolveMe 360 Survey show that some volunteers view Health and Safety requirements as unnecessarily bureaucratic. One said *“Stop making stupid H&S polices for us to adhere to. We need to be safe, but the pendulum has swung too far.”*

Ensuring high standards of Health and Safety practice is a priority for the organisation. Considerable effort is being invested and culture change is occurring.

Data and information quality

The Patrols and Membership Database (PAM) is a central database for all Surf Life Saving clubs in New Zealand. It is used to log details of members (contact details, awards, memberships etc), and patrols and incidents. PAM holds this information securely, and this is used to gain an understanding of trends across the whole organisation. All clubs are expected to log their members, patrols and incidents onto PAM.

While this enables detailed member and activity information to be entered, data entry is undertaken at the club level. Individuals are responsible for updating their own information and patrol captains logging patrol and incident information. This is less of a priority for clubs and members than for SLSNZ staff who need the information for planning and policy development. There are gaps in the recording of personal details so reliable information needed for workforce planning, such as information for increasing diversity, is not available.

Diversity and SLSNZ's demographics

Based on the available information the demographic makeup of SLSNZ's volunteers does not reflect the diversity of the overall New Zealand population. The membership is predominantly Pakeha/NZ European. This contrasts sharply with the demographic changes in New Zealand's population. This is a concern, both for future recruitment of volunteers, and SLSNZ prevention education work, because Māori, Pasifika and Asian populations are over represented in drownings³.

With increased competition for volunteers, organisations that are monocultural can have difficulty retaining those from diverse backgrounds. Funders are also now putting increased emphasis on recognising diversity. Understanding of the culture, attitudes and perceptions of members towards diversity is the first step to identifying and addressing barriers to inclusion.

Community engagement is a core part of SLSNZ's strategy. Work is underway to understand what needs to happen to increase the diversity of membership and the proportion of women in the SAR squads. SLSNZ is identifying communities to work with, such as the Pasifika community who gather shellfish at Maraetai.

Fuller utilisation of the SLSNZ SAR capability

Personal connections seem to have a significant effect on the level of inclusion of SLSNZ in SAROPs. Where relationships are strong there is greater participation in SAROPs. Given the valuable complementary skills that SLSNZ bring, it is surprising there is not more inclusion. In a number of areas SLSNZ has not been invited to SAROPs or their inclusion is very recent.

It appears that some Police SAR Coordinators and other organisations in the SAR and emergency sector do not understand the specialist capabilities that Surf Lifesavers bring and where this adds value. An example is the Air Ambulance standard operating procedures in relation to the use of swimmers in rescue. These were developed without consultation with SLSNZ and required the use of lines attached to swimmers that are dangerous to both the swimmers and the helicopter. There are also examples of Police requesting the use of only one Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB), when the SLSNZ SAR policy guidelines requires two craft to be deployed.

SLSNZ has been proactive in engaging other SAR organisations such as Coastguard, FENZ and St Johns to find ways of providing support and working together. Its role as a core SAR service need to be recognised and fully utilised.

³ Water Safety NZ (2018) 2017 Preventable Drowning Fatalities. Retrieved from: <https://watersafety.org.nz/2017+Preventable+Drowning+Fatalities>

Funding

The bulk of SLSNZ funds come from contestable sources or sponsorship. NZSAR funding covers National SAR training (\$45,320) and SAR Management and overheads (\$156,616)⁴, but not equipment. SLSNZ receives more funding from High Performance Sport New Zealand to send 12 athletes to compete overseas than it does from NZSAR for providing a Search and Rescue service across the New Zealand 365 days of the year.

Squad members have to fundraise or provide their own personal protective and safety equipment at a cost of about \$1,000. This may be a barrier for younger members and many others. Because of the wide geographic areas covered by SAR squads, there is a need to keep their personal equipment with them for a callout. The squads have a very stable workforce with all members having 5 years or more service.⁵

The level of resourcing and equipment for squads is dependent on club ability and willingness to obtain funding. Consequently there is variation in communication tools, with some squads dependent on phone and text while others have access to the Police Wisper system which provides easier, better and more reliable coverage. SLSNZ has initiated a partnership with Coastguard and The Rescue and Coordination Centre to develop and roll out a national digital communication network for the wet sector. This is dependent on obtaining funding which has not proved to be easy.

Comments in the InvolveMe survey identify the costs associated with volunteering as a dissatisfier. Addressing these is recommended as a way of retaining volunteers. Availability of SAR squad volunteers during work hours is a challenge as it results in loss of income for those participating.

While Maritime New Zealand reimburses hours worked and gear, NZ Police tasked operations fund only equipment and incidentals such as fuel. This discrepancy in the approach to funding leaves SLSNZ and its volunteers to subsidise its Search and Rescue operations.

⁴ SLSNZ (2018) *Annual Report*. Retrieved from: www.surflifesaving.org.nz.

⁵ From InvolveMe Survey December 2018.

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY AND PLANNING

CURRENT STATE	OPPORTUNITIES
STRATEGY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and planning is a strength of SLSNZ. The current strategic planning process has identified many of the opportunities outlined in this report. The challenge is finding additional funding • Quality of data collected by clubs limits the ability for robust assessment of future workforce capability needs and risks. 	<p>Develop a volunteer workforce strategy and plan with metrics to track progress</p> <p>Establish information required for workforce planning and develop a 10 year workforce plan</p> <p>Identify opportunities and develop strategies for engaging volunteers in support roles</p> <p>Establish a standard set of data to be collected and work with clubs to develop an understanding of the importance of data collection.</p>
STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAR coordinators recruit into SAR squads from experienced lifeguards within local clubs • Practices vary from an invitation-to-join to lodging a vacancy via the National Lifesaving Manager • Recruitment of volunteers is a challenge in some rural areas with small population pools and competition from other emergency and SAR services • Availability of volunteers, especially in work hours or longer searches is a challenge • SAR squads tend to be composed of older, highly skilled senior lifeguards • The skills, confidence and community orientation developed through surf lifesaving develops a sound base for transitioning to emergency and SAR services. 	<p>Collect data on turnover of volunteers aged 17 to 24 to understand their reasons for exit and to develop strategies for retention</p> <p>Develop recruitment and informational resources to assist clubs with the recruitment of people from diverse backgrounds and support roles</p> <p>Conduct a needs assessment to identify opportunities for support and short-term volunteering and for those without a life saving sport or lifeguarding background</p> <p>Recruit to specific support roles and expertise e.g. administration, fundraising and specific projects e.g. surveys</p> <p>Create a pathway for experienced lifeguards of 17 and over to engage with and meet SAR recruitment requirements</p> <p>Facilitate, and communicate, the opportunities to re-join SLSNZ for those who leave between 18 and 30 years old</p> <p>Develop pathway to support transitioning between other emergency and SAR services.</p>

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

STRUCTURE

- Federated structure makes it difficult to ensure consistency of practice
- With 74 clubs, at an aggregate level substantial resource goes into reporting and governance
- In smaller clubs individuals often need to undertake multiple roles
- Strong ownership within clubs and community engagement.

Develop governance, leadership and volunteer management toolkits for clubs

Develop an induction process and resources for new committee members

Develop a governance and support model for SAR squads that sits alongside but independently of the club structure.

EXPECTATIONS OF PERFORMANCE

- High expectations of performance, as set out in policies and standards for service delivery
- Clear draft policy on 'Breaching Patrol and Lifeguarding Standards' by clubs reinforces expectations
- InvolveMe 360 results show concerns about addressing poor performance and exiting volunteers if required.

See opportunities above

Continue working with clubs on importance of standards for safety and maintaining SLSNZ's reputation

Develop procedures and provide training for managers and committee chairs on managing performance and behavioural issues.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Interclub engagement is strong e.g. clubs providing lifeguards to patrol at other beaches
- Strong relationships with other SAR services in smaller communities and where squad members work for, or with, other services e.g. Police, Fire and Coastguard. SLSNZ is proactive in initiatives these relationships
- Relationships with Coastguard are strong with joint training reported by a number of squads
- Variability in engagement with Police SAR Coordinators, with some regions not included in annual SAREX's and some operational procedures that conflict with SLSNZ safety standards.

Facilitate attendance at SAR and Police leadership programmes to strengthen connections across SAR sector

NZSAR address lack of consistency in Police support at a national level

Continue with developing strategic partnerships and operational working relationships with other marine and land based SAR agencies such as Coastguard, St John and FENZ.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

RECOGNITION

- The National Awards Scheme reflects high expectations, as do Regional Awards
- Squad recognition is dependent on coordinators as no resources are allocated
- InvolveMe feedback indicates that greater appreciation and a wider range of recognition practices would be motivating for volunteers.

Complement the National and Regional award schemes by developing a recognition framework that recognises:

- contributions on an ongoing basis
- achievement of milestones
- support roles
- motivations of different generations
- recognises shorter periods of contribution e.g. 5 years
- provides a range of small rewards to reinforce contribution
- recognises employer support

Provide leaders across SLSNZ with tools and/or training in recognition

Share stories of volunteer contributions and successes via social media to promote SLSNZ

Develop and promote an employer recognition programme.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- An organisational priority with clear policies and expectations
- Safety assessments built into operational processes
- Consistency is a challenge with varied appreciation of the value of Health and Safety processes. This is a cultural shift for many members
- The quality of information entry by clubs is inadequate for robust analysis
- Critical incident management procedures are an exemplar
- Medical director is working to increase consistency; work in developing a Health and Safety focused culture is ongoing.

Develop an online Health and Safety module as part of induction of all new members and as a refresher

Use volunteer best practice stories to promote the value of Health and Safety processes

Develop a quick and easy Health and Safety reporting method to encourage a culture of Health and Safety best practice.

LEADERSHIP

- A wide range of leadership opportunities and development is available for youth from age 14
- MOU with Duke of Edinburgh award enables youth to get recognition for training and service

Profile and promote effective leaders across SLSNZ

Provide professional development on managing and leading volunteers (including those in support roles)

CURRENT STATE

- The BP Leadership for Life programme provides training for 15 high performing members aged 18 to 35 per year
- Limited leadership development or tools/ resources for older adults
- Annual SAR coordinators meeting is valued.

OPPORTUNITIES

Explore how the Sports NZ 'Puna' resources can be used to provide leadership and governance development to a wider range of volunteers

Provide opportunities for SAR squad coordinators to engage and share good practice.

DIVERSITY

- Homogeneous membership with limited ethnic diversity
 - 91% Pakeha/NZ European, 10% Māori, 2% Pasifika, and 1% Indian and Asian⁶
- IN SAR squads males are overrepresented. SLSNZ is researching the reasons for this
- Despite an even gender balance across SLSNZ, women are under-represented in leadership and as IRB drivers.

Assess the impact of current attitudes, behaviours and unspoken norms within clubs and SLSNZ on diversity

Develop a diversity strategy with a roll-out process to build understanding of the need for, and benefits of, diversity

Engage with migrant, Pasifika and Māori communities to encourage children and youth to join the sport and lifesaving pathways within SLSNZ

Follow up with volunteers from under-represented groups who leave to assess the impact of the current culture.

RESOURCING OF VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- A very small national team and regional teams focused on supporting clubs and providing specialist services
- Policies and resources are available on the website
- Currently, policies are operationally focused, with few on people management
- Clubs fundraise to assist with costs; some have engaged communities to actively support them

SAR squads

- Aside from national coordination of SAR squads, funding for equipment and operating costs comes from Clubs
- Clubs are reimbursed for the use of rescue assets when tasked by external agencies. This does not cover the full range of work undertaken.

Develop a best practice repository for resources developed by squads

Develop resources and provide training in managing volunteers

Establish a repository for effective fundraising and event ideas and resources

Obtain funding to develop online resources for core compliance and people related processes (e.g. induction, feedback and recognising performance). This would increase consistency, capability and reduce time for learning and assessment

Develop an online induction module for new members.

⁶ Data from Community Sport VOP Study 2008, the total is greater than 100% as participants were able to identify with more than one ethnicity.

CURRENT STATE

OPPORTUNITIES

TRAINING

- Lifeguard development pathway builds the competencies required to become patrol leaders, instructors, examiners and squad members
- Training by squads varies, from members' individual training to maintain accreditation, to regular fortnightly training
- Time for SAR training can be an issue with considerable training required just to maintain swim times and lifeguards' recertification.

- Expand the use of eLearning and assessment to increase accessibility and reduce time required by volunteers and assessors
- Set expectations on minimum training of SAR squads
- Develop a repository for sharing SAR training activities developed by squads.

PUBLIC PROFILE OF VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION

- SLSNZ brand is well recognised and respected
- Most media commentary supports and recognises SLSNZ's contribution
- Female and young volunteers well represented in external communications.

- Generate more stories and links to stories about SLSNZ on social and traditional media
- Encourage clubs to generate success stories in their local media and share the links with the rest of SLSNZ.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Information on the website is accessible to both members and the public
- A consultative approach is used for policy development/review
- A wide range of social media is used
- InvolveMe results indicate the desire of volunteers to have more opportunities to provide feedback.

- Create opportunities and tools, both nationally and within clubs, to seek feedback from volunteers.

InvolveMe 360 Survey Findings

The InvolveMe 360 survey was used to provide information on SLSNZ's effectiveness in volunteer management as assessed across four domains: (1) strategy; (2) organisational culture; (3) communication; and (4) tools, processes, and resources supporting volunteering. It was customised for SLSNZ by including questions on the demographic composition of volunteers and factors that impacted their experience as volunteers.

The response rate was 18% with 179 people completing the InvolveMe survey. Due to the small sample size, findings need to be treated as areas for further exploration.

Overall the highest ratings were from volunteers, followed by board/committee members. Organisational staff and organisational managers gave lower ratings in the areas of tools and resources and communication. The lowest ratings were given by organisational managers. This is likely to reflect their knowledge of the overall organisation and recognition of opportunities for improvement.

The highest rating across all groups were for 'our organisation has high expectations of volunteers'.

Volunteers also rated SLSNZ highly on valuing volunteer engagement, training and support and the availability of equipment and resources.

Addressing poor performance with the ability to exit volunteers was the lowest rated practice across all groups, along with fair pay for volunteer managers. Ratings by Board and organisational and volunteer managers identified the need to recognise and address conflict. From a volunteer perspective, there is the opportunity for SLSNZ to provide greater appreciation and seek more feedback from volunteers on their experiences.

There were mixed views on the organisation's recognition and valuing of diversity. While overall volunteer ratings were high, almost 30% were neutral or disagreed.

Responses to SLSNZ Customised Questions

What keeps volunteers engaged with SLSNZ?

Key motivators reported are love of the beach and water, community contribution, growth opportunities, friends, the family environment and fitness.

"Being in and around the surf, giving back to my community, keeping fit and helping others."

"Helps me to feed my need to contribute and grow. Opportunities given to me through Surf are amazing and have taught me a lot as well as introduced me to a wonderful circle of friends."

"My passion for the organisation and the feeling of community that is instilled in the members of my club and its culture."

"Working with great people, love the beach environment, doing something for the community, good family activity with my wife and kids."

"A family environment/support where the opportunity to contribute to society's well-being aligns with personal health & fitness objectives."

"Surf Club is a key part of a small beach community. Also love what my family have gotten out of being involved in surf life saving, so happy to assist where I can."

Dissatisfiers

Dissatisfiers include administrative/reporting requirements, understanding of volunteer needs, resources and lack of recognition of SLSNZ.

"Increase in personal cost and the ability to recruit multiple people into key roles to spread the load."

"The over-bearing bureaucracy that SLSNZ is cascading down on clubs from their paid staff. They forget we are volunteers and want to have fun in what we are doing."

"SLSNZ's continuous drive to push more reporting / work / requirements on clubs and volunteers. The way they regularly fail in the use of change management tactics and lack of communication with members."

"The lack of understanding by management around the inputs of the volunteers."

"Working under predominantly volunteer Board members who don't have the time or know how to do a very good job."

"The lack of funding/equipment and I feel often the issues we bring up go unheard."

"Wishing there was more resource, more people to spread the load."

"We seem to exist 'under the radar' compared to all the publicity given to say Rescue helicopter Service etc. Also far more liaison with Police would be helpful instead of mostly interfacing with them when it's a critical life/death situation."

What could Surf Life Saving New Zealand do to make it easier for Clubs and members to meet their Health and Safety responsibilities?

Making it easier to meet requirements, communication and providing more guidance and support to clubs were the common themes for Health and Safety.

"Have a H&S template/app/software that would make it easier. Put in the data and then it gives you the data and solutions."

"Provide access to approved and subsidised PPE; update and simplify RAMS; minimise the repetitive and unrequired information gathering."

"Giving clear instructions, and not going overboard with regulations."

"Depends what would work for each's clubs set up and how they need support. Perhaps easy online form or app for RAMS forms etc? More communication and clarity in this space?"

"Provided generic guidance to clubs as some clubs cannot afford H&S advisors to cover their legal requirements under the HSWA 2015. Also the lack of knowledge that the clubs have as to their responsibilities."

Improving the volunteer experience at SLSNZ

The things that would most improve volunteer experience at SLSNZ are better communication, recognition, resources and a lower cost of involvement.

"I know money is tight for SLSNZ but a lot of us burn a lot of our own petrol getting to patrol and helping out e.g. guarding at junior surf carnivals, I'm OK because I've got a job but lots of the young guards are students or in low paid jobs and doing it."

"Cover costs of involvement. Better communication of what is happening and changing in surf."

"Recognise more work of small clubs around NZ who struggle with resources but despite that do an amazing job. Recognise more rescues. Also provide more communication around PTSD and what is available to volunteers following traumatic events."

"It would be good to have more of a say in issues that directly affect us volunteers."

"SLSNZ provides full PPE and training to all refreshed Lifeguards every year. And thanks and recognition."

"Personal acknowledgement from senior management."

"Less health & safety better supply of gear for call out squad members."

"Communication? Recognition of hours contributed outside of patrolling hours?"

"A website that was fun and easy to use. The current one is neither."

What could Surf Life Saving New Zealand do to retain more of its lifeguards?

Appreciation, development opportunities, flexibility in utilising the capability of volunteers, reducing the cost of volunteering and keep it fun emerged as ideas for retaining lifeguards.

"Value them appropriately. It should not cost so much money to volunteer. It is becoming for a place an elite group of young people who can afford it."

"Membership appreciation, assistance with cost etc."

"Find sponsors to provide food to those on a patrol weekend, and get access to more regular perks."

"Continue to provide opportunities for development and training. Keep people wanting to come back so they can develop their skills. Also don't go so heavy on Health and Safety."

"Flexibility re patrols to retain/re-capture the more 'mature' clubbies with competing work/family demands. More scholarships, recognition of qualifications for CVs, etc for the younger ones entering the job market."

"Recognition of service, support older volunteers who start when older as difficult to qualify with 14 year olds."

"Don't over complicate the beach by being more concerned about arse covering policies and allow members to develop through experiences. If it's fun they stay."

"Organise life guarding social events for the regions. For example a pre-season and post-season social event for all the lifeguards, not just the ones who have competed and medaled. SLSNZ should fund this for example to get all 3 Gisborne guards together."

"Communicate with various clubs and get feedback from their members. From my experience, politics have played a major role in the loss of my clubs lifeguards and I feel like this could've been avoided if someone with more authority was advised of the issue."

What can Surf Life Saving New Zealand do to retain younger volunteers (those 17-24 years old)?

Recognition, development pathways, social engagement and the removal of cost as a barrier were suggested as strategies for retaining younger volunteers.

"Continue a development pathway that allows you to keep developing, instead of fully qualifying out at 18-20. Additionally the social environment for 17-24 year olds can be very different to that of 14 year old."

"Make sure they feel valid as part of the organisation and those who put in time and effort are acknowledged for it and also respected as an adult for those that want to get more involved higher up. Making it super easy to get back into volunteering after a break."

"Maybe more intermediate and advanced guard courses? It might help share the load between the guards that stay involved through hard-to-retain ages, as they shoulder much of the heavy lifting on patrol."

"More recognition for the commitment of being a volunteer, not just success in surf sports"

"Our lifeguards have to pay to be volunteers, they have to pay for their gear and clothing. The student lifeguards simply don't have the financial resources. They do have the time."

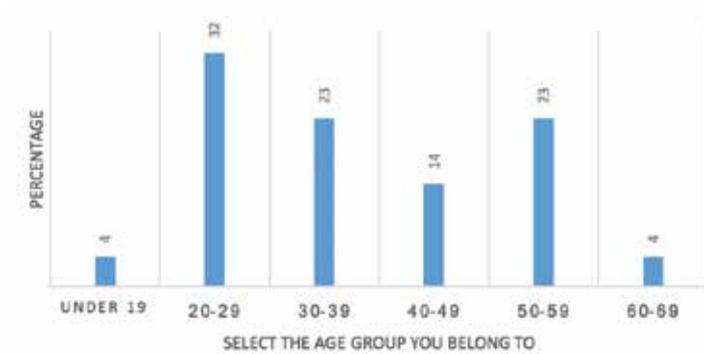
"Use social media effectively. Build social and family events around volunteering."

"Continue to embrace the social aspect. Cover volunteers' costs. Find strengths of volunteers and utilize them. Encourage people to stay involved. Make moving locations easier for people to stay involved."

"Organise inter club activities, make clear development pathways and ensure clubs are making guards aware of them."

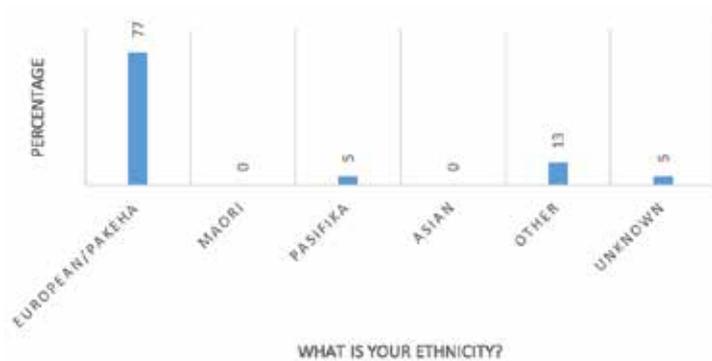
APPENDIX ONE: SAR SQUAD VOLUNTEER DEMOGRAPHICS AND PREFERENCES⁷

Age - SAR Squad volunteers



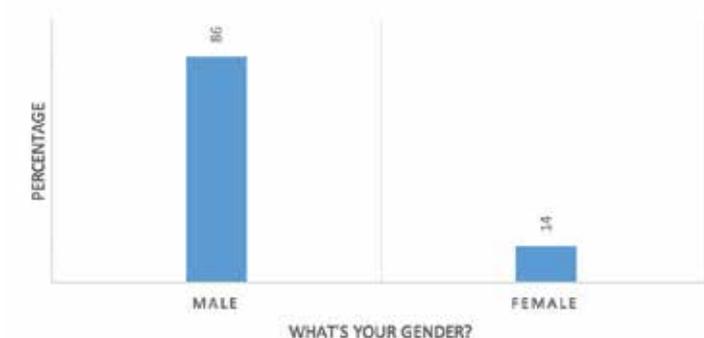
With the majority of squad members over 30, there is a need to develop an attractive pathway to develop and recruit younger members from the wider organisation.

Ethnicity - SAR Squad volunteers



The ethnicity of SAR squad members is predominantly Pakeha/NZ European. This reflects that the pathway into SAR squads is through lifeguarding and the homogeneity of SLSNZ's membership.

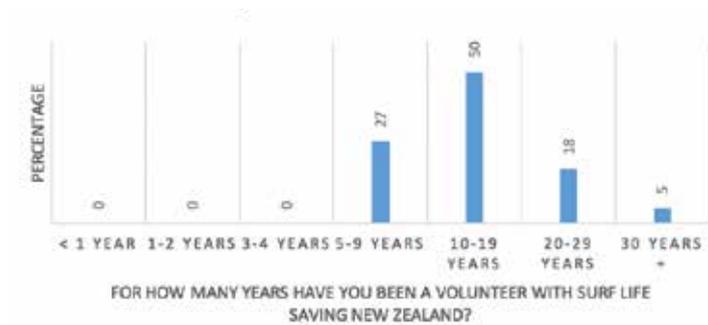
Gender - SAR Squad volunteers



Unlike SLSNZ membership, which has close to an even gender balance, women are under-represented in SAR squads. A survey is underway to find the reasons for this. Women are also under-represented as IRB drivers, which is a squad requirement.

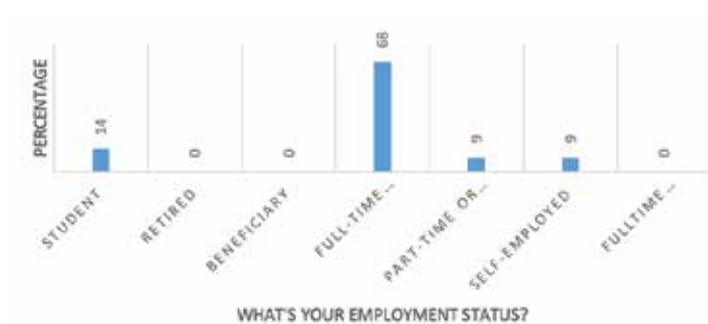
⁷ This information was collected as part of the InvolveMe 360 survey.

Length of volunteering - SAR Squad volunteers



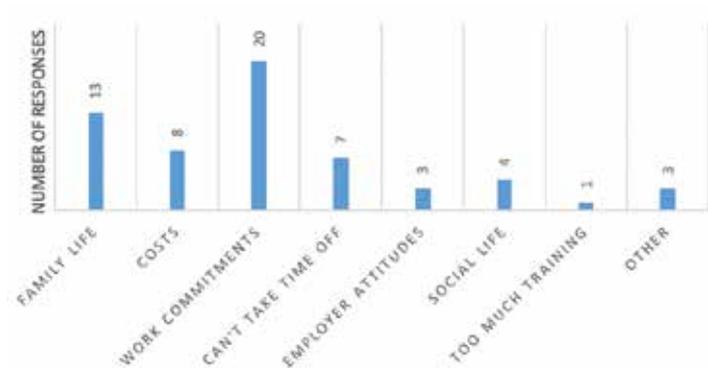
All squad members have five or more years' experience. To ensure adequate volunteer numbers in the future, succession planning is needed.

Employment status - SAR Squad volunteers



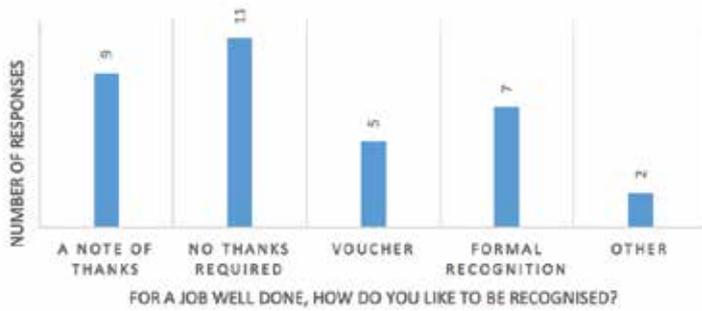
With the majority of squad members in employment or studying, availability during work hours can be a challenge. Work commitments, inability to get time off and employers' attitudes combine to compete with volunteering availability.

Factors competing with volunteering - SAR Squad volunteers



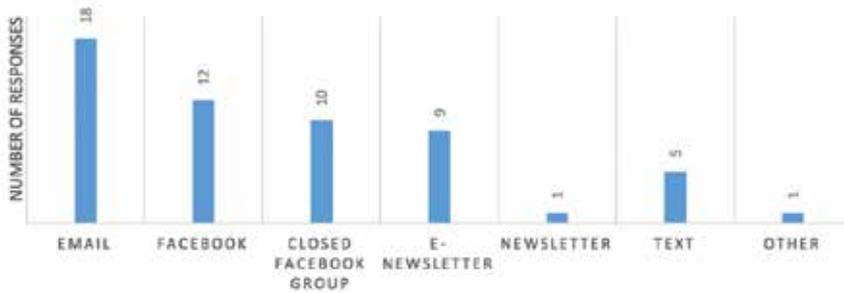
Work commitments, followed by family life, are the main factors competing with volunteering for SAR squad members.

Recognition - SAR Squad volunteers



While a third report they do not require thanks, there is a need to develop a range of recognition mechanism to meet different preferences as recognition is important to the majority of those surveyed.

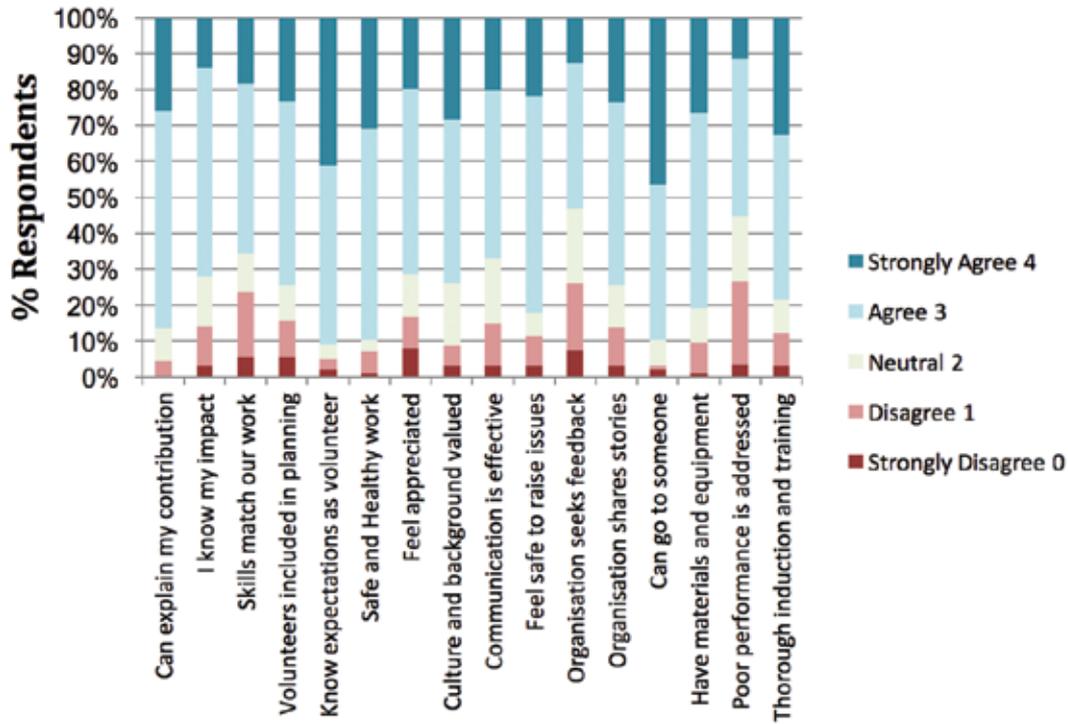
Preferred communication - SAR Squad volunteers



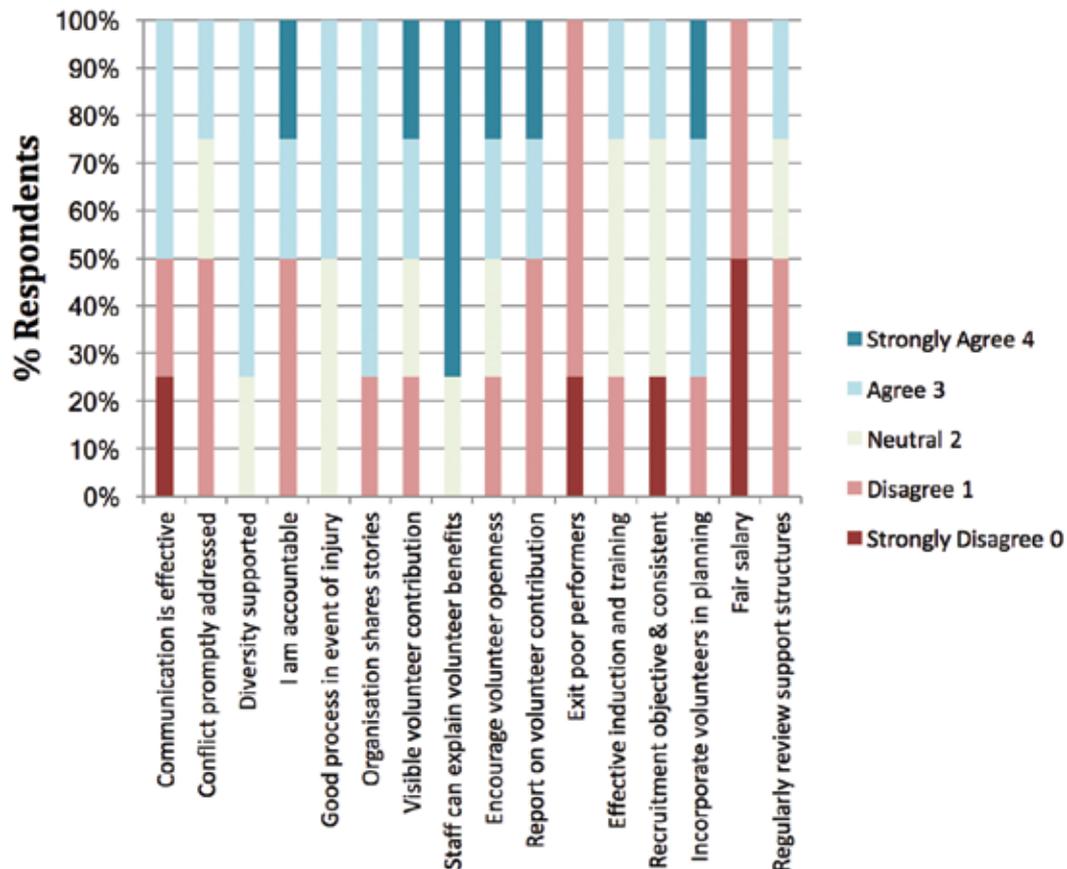
Email and Facebook are the preferred communication channels of those responding.

APPENDIX TWO: INVOLVEME 360 VOLUNTEERING EFFECTIVENESS GRAPHS⁸

SLSNZ volunteers

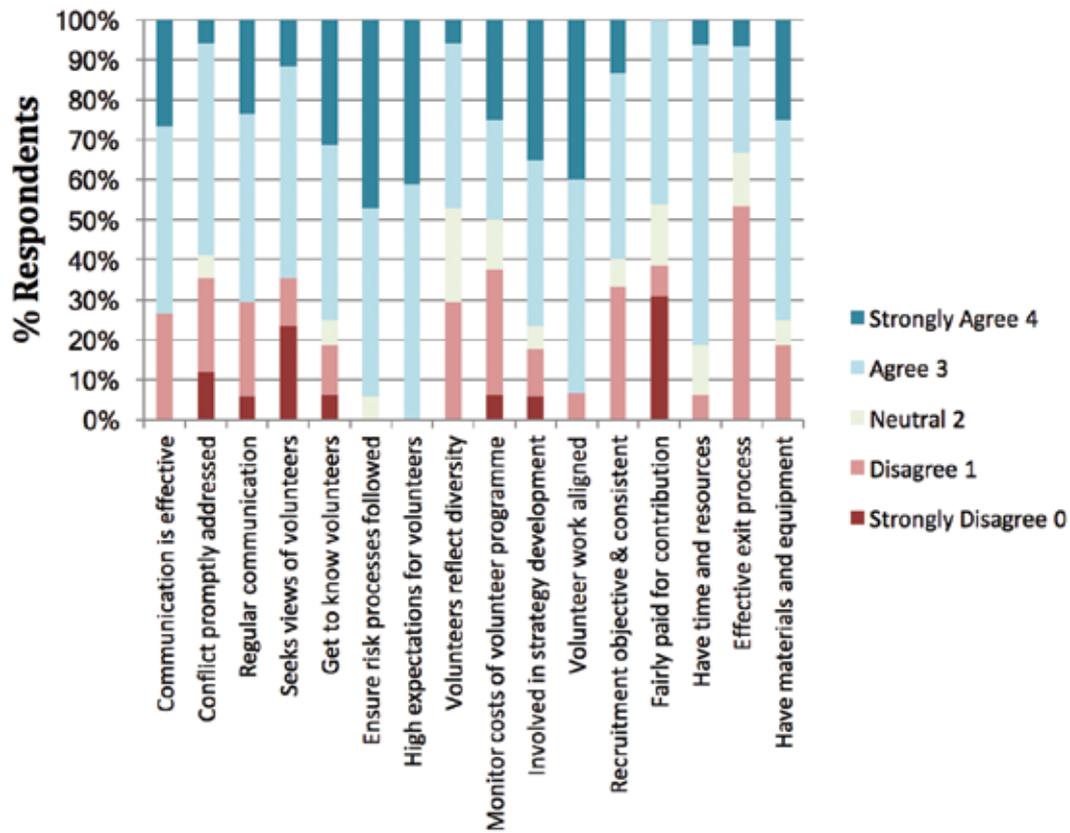


SLSNZ organisation managers

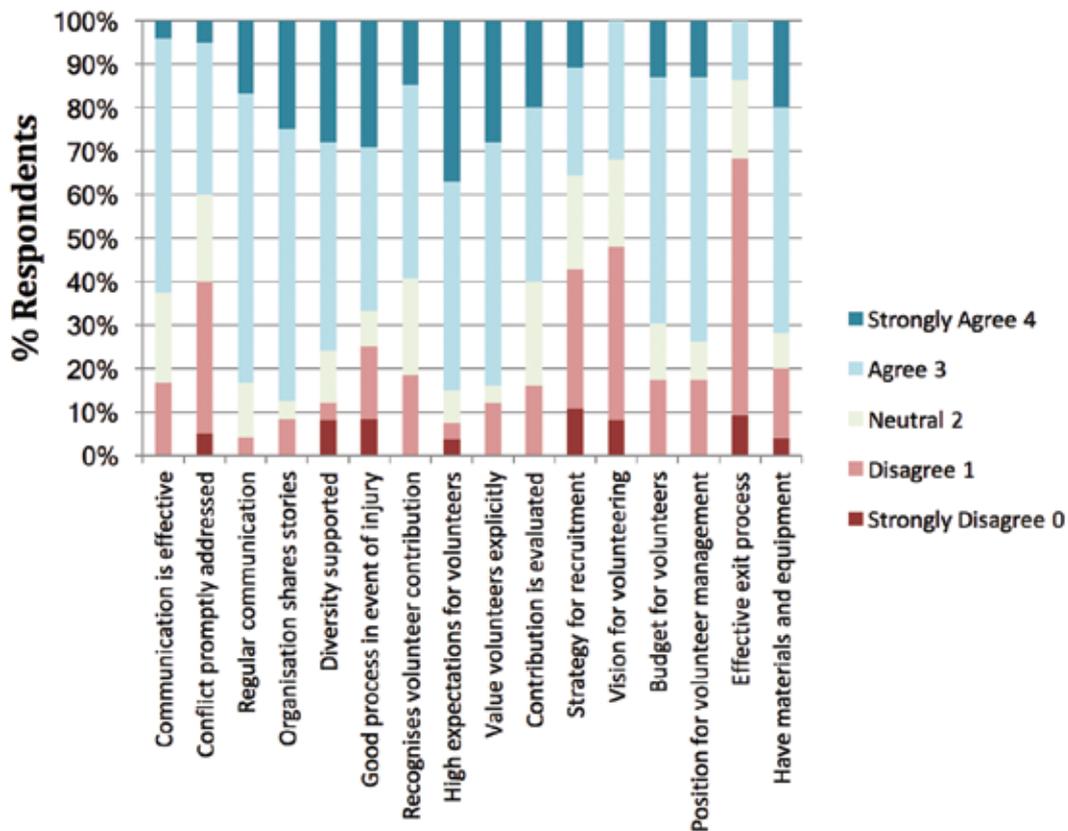


⁸ Volunteer graph includes all volunteers surveyed, not just SAR Squad members.

SLSNZ volunteer managers



SLSNZ committee members



APPENDIX TWO: WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER STRATEGY?

A volunteer strategy outlines an organisation's vision for volunteers and shows how volunteers contribute to the achievement of its mission and strategic goals.

Developing a volunteer strategy provides a framework to build a strong and sustainable volunteering culture within the organisation. This enables the organisation to align the involvement of volunteers with its strategic direction. A volunteer strategy communicates the ethos for volunteers and clarifies why the organisation involves them. It outlines the goals for engaging, developing and supporting volunteers and how the organisation will achieve these goals.

Having a volunteering strategy raises the profile of volunteering and keeps visibility of the needs of volunteers in ongoing strategic conversations. It can enable an organisation to respond to trends in volunteering, to identify future opportunities and to promote best practice in the support and management of volunteers.

Developing a volunteer strategy involves:

- Collecting robust data on volunteers
- Establishing strategic goals for volunteers that align to your organisation's strategic direction
- Identifying where the organisation is now
- Conducting a gap analysis
- Developing a strategy and supporting plan to close the gap between current and future states.

This report was produced by Volunteering New Zealand.
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