



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
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Submission Cover sheet

Inquiry into Unpaid Work

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SUBMISSION – INQUIRY into Unpaid Work in the ACT

Background

The community ‘reach’ of member organisations of the Community Sport Alliance of the ACT: 70,629 participants; 3,717 teams; 61,872 school program participants; 7,917 coaches and officials; and 180 employees (in 2022).

Opening Remarks:

Our group is strongly of the view that there are considerable social and economic benefits derived from the contribution of volunteers. The value by volunteers to the community sport and recreation sector, and to the broader community and its wellbeing, is primarily captured under three themes:

1. Encouraging social connectedness
2. Facilitating and nurturing physical activity
3. Enabling economic activity.

By strengthening an emphasis on volunteerism and the community sport sector has in the ACT, the ACT Government’s Wellbeing Framework (and its underpinning role in informing Government decisions) could have these two elements of society more widely acknowledged in driving the public conversations on the jurisdiction’s progress. The links and role that volunteerism and community sport play could be readily identified in at least seven of the Framework’s domains, i.e. Health, Education and Lifelong Learning, Social Connection, Economy, Identity and Belonging, Access and Connectivity, and Safety.

Recommendations:

1. Greater recognition by government and industries of the roles that volunteers perform for sport and recreation in the ACT community, such as:
 - supporting mentoring and integration programs for participation in volunteerism
 - greater prominence of volunteerism and community sport and recreation sector in the Government’s Wellbeing Framework.
2. Provide funding to the community sport and recreation sector to undertake their own research to quantify the volunteer contribution and the sector’s social and economic impact in the ACT>
3. Additionally, we support the recommendations proposed in the Volunteering ACT submission to this Inquiry.





The Value of Unpaid Work in the Community Sport Sector

Considering the issue of the unpaid contributions by volunteers to the community sport and recreation, the value of these contributions to the community and its wellbeing is primarily captured under three themes:

1. Encouraging social connectedness, in particular by way of:

- Engaging in an interest that ultimately focusses on contributing to the greater good of a team, club and/or community.
- Opportunities to contribute through myriad volunteering roles.
- Providing a sense of identity for others - through being in a group/team/club.
- Providing regular opportunities for sharing experiences and improving social outcomes.
- Offering opportunities for people to participate in community-based sporting activities in safe and respectful environments.

2. Facilitating and nurturing physical activity such as:

- Organising events, competitions, training programs.
- Acquiring increased competence of hand-eye co-ordination skills, thus improving overall physical literacy, through participation in sport.
- Fostering a sense of belonging and building confidence for citizens through sense of improvement and in undertaking physical activity, sharing experiences, setting goals, and encouraging decision making through teamwork and collectivism.
- Setting and attaining goals.

3. Enabling economic activity through:

- The creation of jobs related to community sports, including coaching, facility management, and event organisation.
- Skill enhancement and acquisition through roles that require decision-making, problem solving and leadership and strengthen the skills base of a community – e.g.
 - Leading volunteer organisations
 - Supporting the interaction and engagement of citizens in community-based activities
 - Managing and governing clubs (such as managing finances, conducting revenue raising events, convening meetings)
 - The coaching and managing of teams.
- Sports-related spending on local businesses, such as equipment suppliers, restaurants, food and beverage suppliers, community licensed clubs, and accommodation (for events).
- Reduction of long term reliance of citizens upon healthcare, thus enabling cost savings, through improved physical and mental health of participants.
- Enabling tourist visitations via the conducting of sporting tournaments and regular in-season competition events.
- **Cost savings to the community and to Government:**
 - sport-based volunteers enable sport and recreational organisations to reduce and minimise the operational costs for community sporting activities (and for professional events).
 - This allows these entities to allocate resources to other areas, such as equipment, facilities hire, and coach and player development.
 - In contemporary terms, this helps reduce the cost of living pressures to enable people to reasonably participate in sport and recreation.





Concluding Comments

Considering the issues more broadly for the purpose of public policy setting. Unpaid work by volunteers in the sport sector holds considerable societal and economic value, contributing positively to various aspects of communities and economies.

Measuring the Value

Quantifying the economic and social value of unpaid volunteer work in the community sport and recreation sector would be invaluable for the sector. It can then better understand its contributions to the cohesion of the ACT community and its impetus to the ACT economy.

In addition, Government should consider how it sets public policy and the role it has in facilitating and supporting, rather than overly regulating, the role that the NFP sector and community sporting organisations fulfil in the ACT community.

We believe that the societal and economic value of unpaid work by volunteers in the community sport and recreation sector is significant. Volunteers enhance community engagement, support youth development, promote physical activity, health and well-being, and contribute to the efficient functioning of sports organisations and events.

We would be willing to provide further detail to some of this pertinent information if the Committee wishes to seek further affirmation of our submission.

Yours sincerely

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Executive Officer

on behalf of members of the Community Sport Alliance of the ACT

Cricket ACT & Chair of Community Sport ACT – Olivia Thornton	AFL NSW/ACT – Michael Stanton
Basketball ACT – Nicole Bowles	Brumbies (Community Rugby) – Craig Leseberg
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