

Volunteer Management Program

Managing Event Volunteers

Acknowledgments

This module has been written by Graham Cuskelly and Christopher Auld, both from the School of Leisure Studies, Griffith University, Brisbane. Particular thanks go to them for the considerable work involved in producing this publication. In addition, thanks are due to the reviewers, Dianne Cowan from the Australian Sports Commission; all the state departments of sport & recreation VIP coordinators; and all those people who generously devoted time and effort to provide feedback and comments on draft modules.

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ISBN 1 74013 024 3

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Introduction

For the most part the modules in the volunteer management program have concentrated on managing sport and recreation volunteers on a day-to-day and season-to-season basis.

Because of their temporary or infrequent nature, sport and recreation events present a different set of challenges, hence the need for a module that deals specifically with managing event volunteers.

Managing event volunteers is fundamentally different to managing volunteers in sport and recreation organisation settings. The difference lies in the nature of the commitment of event volunteers compared to organisational volunteers. The commitment of event volunteers tends to be short term, whereas organisational volunteers at either the policy or operational level develop relationships with their sport and recreation organisations over longer time periods (see the *Recruiting Volunteers* module). This may have an impact on the dependability of some volunteers, which may compromise the success of an event. A layer of complexity is added to volunteer management at events when policy and operational volunteers are scheduled to work alongside volunteers who have been recruited only for a particular event. Whatever the nature of their commitment, event volunteers are likely to perform better and be more satisfied when they are genuinely valued by event organisers.

The size and level of sophistication of different events varies considerably in a number of key characteristics. Events can be 'one-off', held annually or more frequently, conducted on a single day or over a number of days, staged in a single venue or in multiple venues, focused on one sport or recreation activity or involve a variety of activities, and can be for participants from differing age groups or ability levels. As discussed in the *Event Management* module, successful events can be exciting and benefit a wide variety of groups and people. However,

poor events leave a bad taste for all involved, and memories can be long. Events rely on the efforts of a lot of people and even relatively small events can be complex, requiring many workers, considerable resources, and a substantial amount of planning and coordination. In short, planning and delivering sport and recreation events requires involvement and commitment from a lot of people, most of whom are volunteers.

The human resource management (HRM) approach to working with volunteers in sport and recreation settings is discussed in detail in several other modules in this series (eg *Recruiting Volunteers*, *Retaining Volunteers*, *The Volunteer Coordinator*, *Volunteer Management Policy* and *Volunteer Management: A Guide to Good Practice*).

The purpose of this module is to:

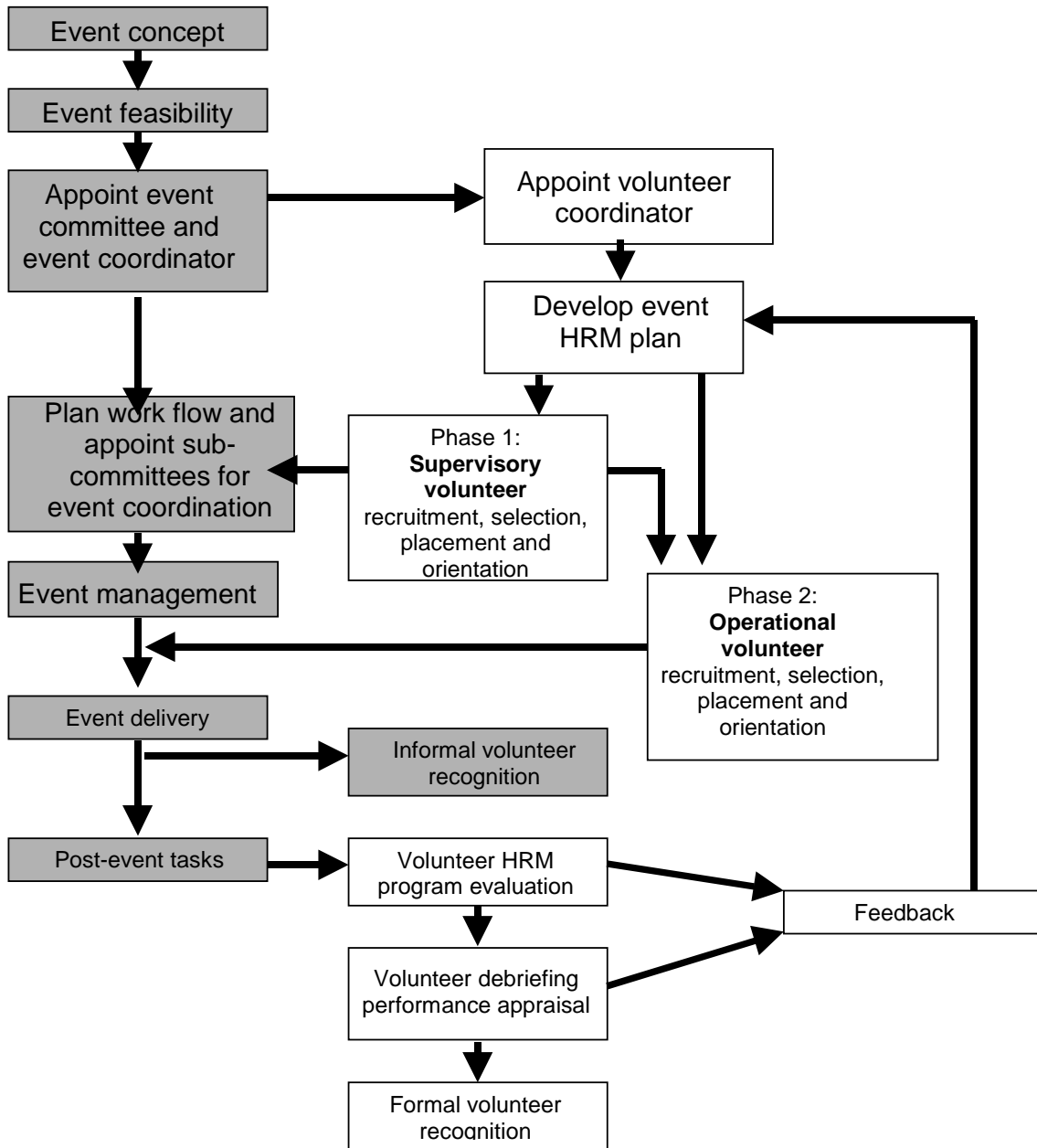
- explain the importance of human resource management planning in the successful coordination and delivery of events
- position human resource (volunteer) management and planning within the context of event management
- provide an overview of the major processes involved in managing event volunteers

The fit between event and human resource management

When planning for the management of human resources (volunteers) it is important to understand where and how such processes fit into overall event planning. Figure 1 provides an overview of the relationship between event planning and management and the process of human resource (volunteer) planning and management. The major steps in event planning (shaded in Figure 1) have been adapted from the *Event Management* module.

HRM planning has to be an integral part of the overall management of an event. As discussed in the *Event Management* module, an event committee is formed early in the event management process to set the strategic direction for an event and oversee its progress. The approach taken to HRM in this module assumes that the event committee has been established, that they have the skills and experience necessary to coordinate an event, and that they are fully committed to staging an event. Soon after the appointment of the Event Coordinator, a Volunteer Coordinator should be appointed to develop and implement the HRM plan for an event.

Figure 1 Relationship between event management (shaded boxes) and event volunteer human resource planning and management



Relationship between the Volunteer Coordinator and the Event Coordinator

The position of Volunteer Coordinator is comparable to that of a Human Resources Manager.

The Volunteer Coordinator does not necessarily supervise or manage volunteers directly, but manages the volunteer program and volunteer policies for the duration of an event. The Event Coordinator, through the event committee, works to ensure that an event is successful, and that strategic decisions are made in conjunction with the event committee. The Event coordinator has overall managerial responsibility for event volunteers but works closely with the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure that the HRM plan closely matches the needs of an event.

Span of control and division of labour

How are event volunteers best supervised, particularly when the number of volunteers begins to increase? As event planning gathers momentum and the date for staging the event draws closer, volunteers will be recruited in larger numbers. Assigning one person (eg the Event Coordinator or the Volunteer Coordinator) to recruit, monitor and direct large numbers of volunteers can be both inefficient and ineffective. Rather than one person being responsible for supervising all volunteers, it is better to have small groups of volunteers (work units) reporting to a number of volunteer supervisors. This means that each event subcommittee (eg marketing, finance, catering, facilities and equipment) should have its own supervisor, and volunteers engaged in tasks relevant to that subcommittee should report to that particular supervisor. The subcommittee supervisors are, in turn, responsible to the Event Coordinator (see Figure 2).

This introduces the ideas of span of control (ie the number of volunteers or work units supervised by one person) and division of labour (ie specialised roles for volunteers or work units). The Event Coordinator has a manageable number of volunteer supervisors reporting to him or her and in turn the volunteer supervisors have responsibility for coordinating a manageable number of volunteers in a defined area of specialisation. Dividing volunteer labour into manageable units improves the efficiency and effectiveness of volunteer supervision within defined areas of responsibility. A drawback of this approach is that it leads to an increase in the number of meetings needed to ensure that all aspects of event planning and preparation are well coordinated and all units are working toward the same objectives. There is no ideal span of control (ie ratio of volunteers to supervisors), rather it is dependent on the tasks performed and the objectives of an event. When work is repetitive, routine and not all that specialised, less supervision is required so it is possible for a supervisor to have a larger span of control. More complex and specialised tasks often require greater supervision, so it is better for event volunteers to be structurally closer to their supervisor under such circumstances.

At times the Volunteer Coordinator will need to balance the interests, needs and effort that volunteers are willing to contribute to an event with the demands and expectations of the event committee and the Event Coordinator (see 'Budgeting the volunteer effort' in *The Volunteer Coordinator* module). It is important therefore, that the Volunteer Coordinator is a member of the event committee. Having decision-making status in an event helps to ensure that the ideas and interests of event volunteers are given a voice. Because every event functions differently and has different human resource needs, the position and role of

Volunteer Coordinator may need to be adapted to suit the needs of a particular event and may well change as an event evolves.

Human resource management planning for events

In the context of event management, HRM planning is concerned with the demand and supply of volunteer labour. The volunteer program should be planned as an integral part of event organisation. However, few sport and recreation organisations have a formal system of HRM planning. Most do very little planning or tend to rely on informal systems and crisis management techniques. The purpose of HRM planning is to ensure that a certain desired number of persons with the correct skills are available at a specified time in the future.¹<<Stone, RJ (1991) *Human Resource Management*. Australia: Jacaranda Wiley, p 66.>> The benefits of HRM planning include more effective and efficient use of people in particular positions, and better performing and hopefully more satisfied event volunteers. Planning for short-term involvement of event volunteers allows the sport and recreation organisation to better prepare for the particular needs of volunteers, ultimately making for a better event.

The first major task of the Volunteer Coordinator, perhaps helped by a human resources subcommittee, is to develop a HRM plan for an event (see Figure 1). The process of HRM planning identifies what must be done to ensure the availability of the volunteers needed by an organisation to meet its objective in managing and staging an event. A starting point is to analyse the human resource needs of an event. One way to manage what can be a complex task, particularly for larger events is to allow the plan to emerge as the event planning process evolves. A suggested approach is to adopt a two-phase approach to volunteer recruitment and

placement by separating HRM planning into supervisory and operational level volunteers (see Figures 1 and 2).

The HRM plan and the policies designed to help implement this plan should be written down as a formal record. Many times sport and recreation organisations ‘reinvent the wheel’. Rather than starting from scratch each time a particular event is held, a record of past policies and practices will enable the sport and recreation organisation to keep building on its effectiveness and learning from previous mistakes. When the overall HRM plan has been developed, it should be formally presented to and approved by the event committee to ensure that those responsible for the overall strategic management of an event are aware of the approach to be taken in the area of HRM. Following approval by the event committee the plan is ready for implementation.

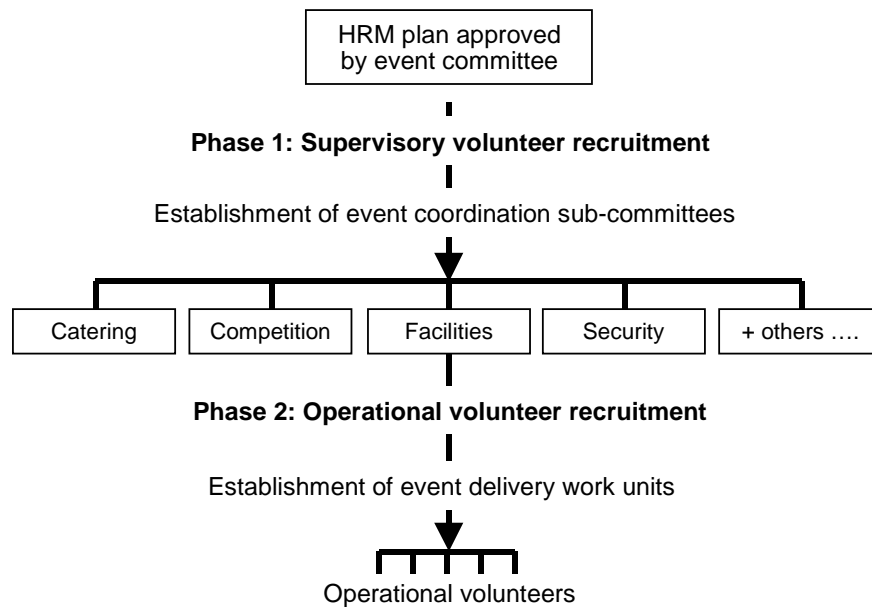
Phase 1 Supervisory level volunteers

The purpose of phase one of the HRM plan is to ensure that the required number of volunteers needed to establish the various subcommittees with responsible for the managing the key areas of event coordination (eg catering, competition, facilities and equipment, finance, marketing and communications, programs, results and awards, security, support services, transport and VIPs) are recruited and selected early in the planning of an event. Recruiting supervisory volunteers should be scheduled to start immediately after the event committee has approved the HRM plan (see Figure 2).

Phase 2 Operational level volunteers

During the early stages of event planning, the HRM plan for operational level volunteers could be written in general terms and include estimates of the numbers and types of volunteers needed to successfully stage an event. This part of the plan may not be implemented immediately because the exact size and nature of the event may not be finalised for some time. The operational level volunteers section of the HRM plan will need to be revised as the date of an event approaches (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 A two phase approach to event volunteer recruitment



The substantive differences between supervisory and operational level volunteers are that supervisory volunteers will:

- be required to have a long-term involvement in and be committed to an event
- need to be available to attend event coordination meetings on a frequent basis
- have higher levels of responsibility

- carry out more complex, difficult and time-consuming tasks
- need to be focused on the overall success of an event.

Before implementing the HRM plan the Volunteer Coordinator, Event Coordinator, and human resource subcommittee if one has been appointed, should familiarise themselves with the content in the other Volunteer Management Program modules. It is not the purpose of this module to repeat large sections of the content covered in these modules. The remaining sections of this module deal with implementing the HRM plans at events.

Job descriptions

Following the approval of the HRM plan but prior to the recruitment process, it is important to prepare job descriptions for volunteers. Because supervisory volunteers will fulfil more complex roles and will be recruited before operational level volunteers, it is important to develop comprehensive job descriptions for these positions. The Event Coordinator may also be involved in preparing job descriptions for key roles. This is to ensure that volunteers recruited to such positions have appropriate skills and experience as required by the Event Coordinator.

The job descriptions for operational level volunteers may be developed at a later date. It may be advisable to delegate the preparation of these to subcommittees who are more informed about the number and types of volunteers required in their areas of responsibility (eg catering, facilities, marketing and communication). The purposes of job descriptions, particularly for supervisory volunteers, include:

- describing the purposes of the jobs to event volunteers

- ensuring event volunteers and supervisors have a consistent understanding of event volunteer jobs
- describing the roles and responsibilities of event volunteers and their position in the event organisation
- informing volunteers of the benefits of being an event volunteer
- providing an opportunity to discuss any special needs or requirements of event volunteers
- enabling event volunteers and jobs to be matched more easily
- providing information for planning event volunteer recruitment
- providing a basis for appraisal meetings between event volunteers and supervisors or managers.

A well defined job description for event volunteers should contain:

- an appropriate job title
- an outline of the benefits of the job to event volunteers
- a brief description of the aims of an event
- the purpose of the job
- the tasks to be performed
- the name of the event volunteer's immediate supervisor
- the time the job requires, including the amount of time the job requires per day during the planning and staging of an event
- the qualifications, attributes and/or skills that may be necessary to effectively carry out tasks associated with the job
- any information that helps event volunteers decide whether to take the position, including special conditions such as a matters of confidentiality, special training or attendance at meetings, and security checks.

Job descriptions need to be based on the requirements of the job, rather than writing the job description to suit a particular volunteer. A well written job description should attract the appropriate people to fill the position, and can be used as an effective recruitment tool.

Volunteer recruitment, selection and placement

The processes involved in the recruitment and selection of volunteers were covered in some detail in the *Recruiting Volunteers* module. Volunteer placement has been added to this module because in most events there is usually a large number of positions to be filled, particularly at the operational level. In a formal sense, recruitment is the process of acquiring appropriately qualified and motivated volunteers to take on the jobs necessary to make an event a success. In consultation with the event committee and the Event Coordinator, the Volunteer Coordinator has an important role to play in the recruitment process.

The Volunteer Coordinator will most likely have a direct role in the recruitment, selection and placement of supervisory level volunteers. The positions at this level are critical to the overall success of an event. The Volunteer and Event Coordinators have to have confidence that supervisory volunteers, among other tasks, will be capable of helping with the recruitment, placement, orientation and motivation of operational volunteers in phase two of the implementation of the HRM plan for an event (see Figure 2).

Supervisory volunteers will be placed in a position of having coordination responsibilities for one or more key areas of event planning and management (eg facilities, catering, marketing and communications). Some volunteers at this level may already hold a position on the event

committee. While this adds a layer of complexity to their role, it should not exclude an appropriately qualified event committee volunteer from taking on an additional role. The first major tasks of supervisory volunteers are to:

- meet with the event coordinator to be orientated to their role and its importance in the overall planning and management of the event
- in consultation with the event coordinator, determine whether they will coordinate their area of responsibility alone or whether it will be necessary to recruit additional volunteers to form a subcommittee.

Aside from assuming responsibility for a key area of event coordination, supervisory volunteers, in consultation with the Volunteer Coordinator prepare a detailed HRM plan for their area of responsibility. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for coordinating implementation of the overall HRM plan. However, it would be inefficient, if not impossible for the Volunteer Coordinator to assume sole responsibility for recruiting, selecting and placing all operational level volunteers even for a modest event such as a local community fete. Recruitment should only be initiated when specific jobs have been defined. The supervisory level volunteers should take on this responsibility and keep the Volunteer and Event Coordinator informed about their progress. The Volunteer Coordinator should only have to become directly involved if a crisis situation seems to be developing.

The timing of the recruitment process, particularly for operational volunteers, is a critical consideration. In general, the larger an event the sooner the recruitment process should start. However, because volunteering is a free-choice activity, the priorities and personal responsibilities (eg family and work commitments) of volunteers can change. If too much lead time is allowed, individuals who initially agreed to volunteer may drop out and the

recruitment process would need to be implemented again. One way to circumvent the problem of volunteers dropping out is to recruit more volunteers than the number called for in the HRM plan. This process is known as over-recruiting.

While personal contact is the most successful form of volunteer recruitment, some other methods of creating awareness of volunteer opportunities and recruiting event volunteers include:

- local newspapers: usually helpful with publicity if they can use a human interest story involving a local resident
- radio and television stations: often provide short community service announcements and are encouraged to provide community access
- local publicity: small posters in local shop windows can attract the attention of prospective volunteers
- local service clubs: Lions, Apex, Rotary and other service clubs are often willing to help run events.
- schools, TAFE colleges and university campuses: often these institutions are seeking opportunities for their students to get volunteer work experience
- Volunteer referral agencies: state volunteer centres can often help with recruitment drives.

Volunteer application forms and record keeping

It is important that prospective volunteers complete a volunteer application form. Such forms are a convenient way of gathering necessary information such as:

- personal contact details (name, address, telephone numbers, email address)
- preferred job during an event (list available jobs for volunteers to choose from)
- skills, qualifications and experience relevant to an event and/or specific jobs

- days and times available to volunteer during an event (list days/times for volunteers to choose from)
- availability for orientation and training sessions (list available days/times)
- shirt or uniform size (list sizes, colours, styles to choose from)
- interest in serving on an event committee or subcommittee
- interest in supervising the work of other volunteers
- other people they know who might like to volunteer for an event.

It is not difficult to develop a database of the information gathered from prospective volunteers to help with managing and coordinating volunteer orientation, placement and rostering for an event. The database can be used again as a basis for recruiting volunteers for future events. With a little more sophistication the database can be developed and used to record data in fields which detail the days, times and hours volunteered during an event (see 'Volunteer record keeping' in the *Retaining Volunteers* module).

Event volunteer orientation and motivation

Closer to and during an event, supervisory volunteers are responsible for training and motivating their volunteers see *The Volunteer Coordinator* and *Volunteer Management: A Guide to Good Practice* modules. Some practical considerations concerning the motivation of event volunteers are outlined in below.

Practical considerations in motivating operational level volunteers

Supervisory level volunteers need to be able to motivate operational level volunteers. While necessary for the smooth operation of an event, some of the tasks that operational level volunteers are required to perform may not be all that stimulating and can sometimes be unpleasant. Some practical ways of maintaining volunteer motivation and enthusiasm are to:

- understand each volunteer's reasons for volunteering and ensure that at least some of those reasons will be met
- provide an orientation to the organisation staging an event and to the event itself
- ensure that each volunteer receives a correctly fitted uniform and food/drink/parking vouchers where appropriate
- encourage teamwork and a sense of being part of a bigger picture
- be enthusiastic and encourage achievements at individual and work unit (team) level
- be supportive and empathetic when volunteers have genuine concerns
- ensure event volunteers are trained to do their job and know why it is important to the overall success of an event
- ensure that sufficient volunteers are rostered to enable jobs to be rotated and to allow volunteers to take adequate meal and rest breaks
- rotate event volunteers between laborious or unpleasant tasks
- ensure that event volunteers have a space allocated which is secure (for their personal belongings) and separate from public areas
- accentuate individual volunteer's strengths as well accepting their limitations in a non-judgemental manner
- maintain a sense of humour.

Orientation programs usually begin with large gatherings of event volunteers in which general information covering a broad range of topics relevant to the organisation of an event and volunteer policies are communicated. The volunteers might then be broken down into smaller specialist work units to be orientated to their specific areas of responsibility (eg competition, facilities, security, media). During the general orientation program, volunteers should be introduced to and welcomed by key people within an event organisation. The topics covered in a general orientation session might include:

- history and aims of the event, when and why the event began and for whom the event is conducted
- how the event is funded and managed
- staffing of the event, such as how many people there are, and what they do
- structure of the event organisation, including where event volunteers fit within it
- details about volunteer management policies.

Volunteer management policies

- Volunteer orientation sessions are a good opportunity to introduce volunteer management policies. The development of volunteer management policies is the subject of the *Volunteer Management Policy* module. Volunteer policies outline the volunteer rights and responsibilities and serve to clarify the expectations of volunteers. They are particularly important and useful for events that are run annually as they save the organisation from starting over, and as such should be documented and revised from one event to another. Volunteer policies should be prepared for all aspects of an event. Some areas of policy concern at most events include:

- Orientation and training: attendance requirements and expectations should be clearly spelled out
- Uniforms: a clear statement on the provision, wearing and laundering of uniforms; acceptable variations; ownership of uniforms after an event (eg uniforms can be an effective incentive and reward for volunteer efforts)
- Attendance and volunteer rosters: methods of rostering volunteers; hours to be 'worked'; recording attendance (sign-in and sign-out) particularly in relation to liability for injuries or accidents; a statement about organising substitute volunteers should also be included
- Out-of-pocket expenses: a statement about the reimbursement of expenses incurred during an event and the types of out-of-pocket expenses that are covered/not covered
- Car parking/transport: provided or not provided on-site or near-site; use of private vehicles for official event business; if parking is not available, who provides/pays for alternative forms of transport for volunteers
- Accreditation: requirement for volunteers who have first aid or other certification to have original copies cited and/or photocopied
- Workplace health and safety: statements in relation to relevant legislation and guidelines for providing a safe working (volunteering) environment
- Liability and negligence: for accidents, injuries and/or property damage
- Insurance: extent to which event volunteers are covered in the case of injury, accident or death to the volunteer or caused by the volunteer
- Food and drink: whether event volunteers are be provided with food and drinks; locations where food and drink can be consumed
- Rest breaks: for extended periods of duty, a statement about rest and toilet breaks

- Complaints and grievances: a statement about the procedures volunteers should follow if they have a complaint or grievance about their workload or how they are being managed (eg being harassed or subjected to unreasonable demands) and the processes that will be put in place to handle such matters.

Orientation is a useful time and place for event volunteers to get to meet each other, and therefore the session should include a social component. Sessions that follow initial orientation are more focused on specific training and are held at different times, often closer to the staging of an event. Training should serve as a means of support, helping to build skills, interest and confidence among event volunteers. Training should be planned in conjunction with the volunteers, paid staff and appropriate specialists. Specific skills, techniques and knowledge will be the core of a good training program, but a good program also enables event volunteers to:

- gather vital information
- ask questions
- express personal opinions, needs or concerns
- learn and develop confidence
- appreciate the responsibilities of the job and what is expected
- appreciate how they contribute directly to the success of an event
- provide input to assist in event management.

Orientation kits for volunteersⁱ<<Sixth Australian Masters Games (1997) *National Volunteers Orientation Kit*. Canberra: Author.>>

It is good practice to document vital information for event volunteers, particularly for large or complex sport and recreation events. The organisers of the Sixth Australian Masters Games produced a comprehensive *National Volunteers Orientation Kit* which was supplemented by a smaller pocket-sized guide for event volunteers. The kit included an organisation chart, list of key personnel and their contact details, and an orientation checklist, and covered topics such as volunteer rights and responsibilities, professionalism, uniforms and identification, rewards and recognition, volunteer roles, volunteer motivation survey, and a number of topics about the operational aspects of the games.

Because events vary so widely on a number of characteristics, it is not possible for a module such as this to deal with the complexities and contingencies of volunteer management during the actual staging of an event. Suffice to say that event managers who implement sound HRM practices, communicate effectively with their volunteers, and apply volunteer management policies in a fair and equitable manner, are less likely to encounter major human resource crises during the staging of an event. This is not to convey the idea that even very well managed events do not face problems from time to time (eg due to unexpected absences of key volunteers, poor coordination between operational volunteers). However, well managed events ensure that the position of Event Coordinator has sufficient power and authority to intervene and act decisively when a human resource problem occurs. Event organisers who openly and honestly value the efforts of event volunteers and take the time to listen to and act on their concerns, are likely to have better performing and more satisfied volunteers and a

successful event. The following section provides an overview of the HRM processes that should follow an event.

Event volunteer debriefing, performance appraisal and recognition

Immediately after the event has closed is an appropriate time to celebrate the staging of the event and to informally recognise the efforts of all event volunteers. Even though most volunteers do not seek recognition as their primary motive, volunteers can feel as though they have been taken advantage of if recognition is not built into the HRM process. Depending on the size of the event and the available budget, the post-event celebration might be as simple as an informal social gathering in which food and drinks are supplied, through to a more lavish or formal function. Event volunteers who are not rostered on during the closing session should be invited back to the event to enable them to participate in post-event celebrations. The purpose of a post-event volunteer function is to ensure that volunteers feel as though their efforts have been recognised and that they are valued by event organisers. Volunteers are more likely to feel satisfied and talk positively about their experience if they are invited to participate in a closing event. Besides celebrating the efforts of event volunteers, it gives them a chance to share common experiences and to provide event organisers with informal feedback about what aspects of the event worked well and those areas in need of improvement. Highly satisfied volunteers are more likely to volunteer for future events (see the *Retaining Volunteers* module) and are more likely to influence others to volunteer for future events as well.

In the weeks after the event has been staged it is good practice to debrief volunteers, evaluate the volunteer program, appraise volunteer performance and formally recognise the efforts of all event volunteers. Evaluation of the HRM processes used during an event provides a source of feedback to improve HRM planning in future events.

Volunteers are an excellent source of information about how well the event may be coordinated, managed and delivered. Debriefing event volunteers is a process of discussing their experiences and providing an opportunity for the open and honest exchange of information. All supervisory volunteers should be debriefed soon after the event. If there was a large number of operational volunteers then a sample might be selected to participate in the debriefing process. Debriefing information can be very useful both to the Volunteer Coordinator and to event committee members responsible for organising future events. The information gathered from debriefing interviews with event volunteers can be used to further develop and refine HRM processes and the planning, coordination and delivery of the event itself. Providing event volunteers with the opportunity to express their feelings and experiences might facilitate the retention of event volunteers because they:

- feel like they are valued and appreciated by event organisers
- see that the event organisers are interested in further developing the volunteer-event relationship
- feel as though they are participating in the evolution of an event
- see themselves as having a role in future events.

Debriefing can be either informal or formal. Interviews may be an appropriate form of debriefing in some situations, such as when a volunteer is leaving the organisation and specific reasons or experiences which may have contributed to dissatisfaction are sought. As

discussed earlier, the post-event celebration provides an opportunity for an informal debriefing. Ultimately, the commitment of event volunteers is nurtured through the debriefing process.

Volunteer program evaluation

A key component in evaluating the overall human resources program is to ascertain the level of satisfaction of volunteers. Find out whether there were aspects of the event or HRM processes that contributed to their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Volunteer program evaluation is frequently overlooked by event organisers, but can be as simple as administering and analysing a brief pencil and paper survey with some closed ended (limited range of responses) and open ended questions or conducting a limited number of interviews with event volunteers.

Volunteer performance appraisal and debriefing

The processes involved in volunteer performance appraisal are discussed in detail in the *Retaining Volunteers* module. Because of the short-term nature of events, implementing a formative (ongoing) performance appraisal process is difficult. When performance appraisal is conducted after the event, it is a summative (one-off) process that provides limited opportunities to further develop and train event volunteers. Realistically, a post-event performance appraisal might enable event organisers to identify those volunteers who were dependable and those who were not. Organisers should ensure that the names of dependable volunteers are retained on a database to be contacted for future events. And they should try to obtain further information from less-dependable volunteers to find out whether there were circumstances which may have negatively affected their performance during the event.

Sample questions for volunteer program evaluation

On the following scale, please rate your overall level of satisfaction with volunteering for this event (tick one box):

<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
very		neither		very
dissatisfied	dissatisfied		satisfied	satisfied

Do you intend to volunteer for this event next time it is conducted? (tick one box)

yes no not sure

What do you think was particularly good about how you were managed during this event?

What aspects of the management of event volunteering could be improved in future events?

Formal volunteer recognition

One of the final tasks of the Volunteer Coordinator and the event committee is to formally recognise the contribution of event volunteers. Volunteer recognition and its importance in volunteer satisfaction and retention is discussed in the *Retaining Volunteers* module as are some of the literally hundreds of volunteer recognition ideas. Recognition programs do not have to be complex to establish and administer, but they are an essential component of effective human resource management.

Feedback and documentation

Feedback from the volunteer program evaluation and debriefing sessions should be documented and used to revise and refine the HRM plan for future events. This is an excellent opportunity to update any documentation associated with HRM and planning, including job descriptions, orientation and training programs as well as volunteer management policies. Waiting until the HRM planning processes is initiated for another event may result in similar mistakes being repeated and little progress being made from one event to the next.

Summary

Human resource management is an integral part of the event management process and vital to the success of all sport and recreation events, irrespective of the size and nature of a particular event. Many of the principles of volunteer management, discussed in the other Volunteer Management modules, have to be applied differently to event volunteers because of the

temporary or infrequent nature of events and the large number of volunteers needed to deliver events. This module recommends a two-phase volunteer recruitment process to coincide with the planning and coordination of an event and actual event delivery. Supervisory volunteers should be recruited early in the event planning and coordination process, whereas operational level volunteers may not be required until the date of an event draws closer. Supervisory level volunteers are usually required to carry out more complex and time-consuming tasks and have higher levels of responsibility than operational volunteers. Clear and concise volunteer policies are important to the fair and consistent management of event volunteers. Recognition activities, both informally at a post-event celebration and more formally, are important components of successful event volunteer HRM programs. It is important that information gathered from debriefing and evaluation procedures is used to review and revise HRM plans and event volunteer policies.

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Glossary

Commitment. The extent to which an individual volunteer identifies with and involves themselves in an organisation or event.

Debrief. A process of gathering information in order to assess the success of an event.

Dependability. The extent to which a volunteer turns up for and completes tasks that they have been rostered for and agree to do.

Event Coordinator. The person responsible for the planning, coordinating, monitoring, communication running and evaluating of an event.

Event Committee. The committee which oversees an event. The event committee normally develops and ratifies the policy and aids and supports the event coordinator. The event committee is also the liaison with the owning body for an event.

Human Resource Management (HRM). A process in which the needs and expectations of individuals are matched with organisational needs and expectations.

Human resource planning. A process of analysing current needs and projects future needs for volunteers in relation to existing and planned programs, services and events for a sport or recreation organisation.

Job description. A brief document that specifies the title, line of responsibility, duties, conditions and specialist skills or qualifications required to fulfil a particular voluntary position.

Operational level volunteer. A volunteer whose primary responsibilities are face-to-face program delivery or activity leadership.

Orientation. A program for new volunteers that introduces key aspects about the organisation, its key personnel (paid staff and volunteers), its policies and procedures, and day-to-day routines.

- Out-of-pocket expenses.** Approved expenditures incurred by a volunteer in the conduct of their volunteer work which are reimbursed by a sport and recreation organisation on production of a valid receipt.
- Over-recruiting.** The deliberate process of recruiting more volunteers than the number required in a human resource plan to ensure that an event is not compromised by volunteers who fail to show up for their rostered shifts.
- Performance Appraisal.** A process used to evaluate the job performance of volunteers and provide them with feedback and support.
- Policy/management level volunteer.** A volunteer whose primary responsibilities are policy development and decision making within board or management committee meetings.
- Recognition.** Developing an organisational culture that genuinely values and respects volunteers as well as acknowledging their efforts on a regular basis.
- Recruitment.** A process designed to attract new volunteers to sport and recreation organisations.
- Retention.** Maintaining the services and commitment of existing volunteers.
- Rewards.** A process that formally recognises the efforts of volunteers through the award of a tangible token, object, symbol or commendation.
- Screening.** Processes used to verify the background, qualifications, skills and experience of individuals prior to their appointment to a volunteer position.
- Selection.** The process of choosing the individual who best meets the requirements of a position within a sport and recreation organisation.
- Training.** Equipping volunteers with skills directly related to their specific job.
- Volunteer.** A person who freely chooses to give his or her time to support the activities of a sport and recreation organisation or event.

Volunteer Coordinator. An individual with responsibility for developing and implementing a volunteer (human resource management) program within their organisation or for an event.

ⁱ Sixth Australian Masters Games (1997) *National Volunteers Orientation Kit*. Canberra: Author.