

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF VOLUNTEERS 2002;**  
**RECEIPT OF REPORT ON 2001 AND**  
**LAUNCH OF EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING GUIDE**

**8AM, THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2002**  
**LEVEL 41 GMT**

Sandy Hollway; Col Gellatly; Parliamentary colleagues;  
distinguished guests; volunteers!

Welcome to this celebration of the International Day of Volunteers  
2002.

Thank you Sandy Hollway, Chair of the International Year of  
Volunteers Advisory Committee your report on last year's  
activities.

And thanks to all the Committee members for their work during the  
International Year of Volunteers 2001, and for preparation of such  
a comprehensive report on activities.

On behalf of the NSW Government, I acknowledge the wide range  
of activities undertaken during the International Year of Volunteers  
by community organisations, councils and government agencies

I congratulate all who participated in activities during the year -  
both those included in the IYV Report, and those whose efforts  
weren't captured in the Report.

The range of activities makes impressive reading – from the Ambassadors Program, and the Volunteers Expos, to those of the winners of the Premier’s Award for Active Citizenship, and many, many others.

Some people think volunteering came to notice with the success of the Sydney Olympics.

It was, of course, a magnificent effort – but the Olympics were just the tip of the iceberg.

Volunteering has always been bubbling away in the community – largely unheralded, but in great numbers.

The current estimate of 1.4 million volunteers contributing over 200 million hours of their time each year is a staggering figure.

However, times and community values change. We need to keep volunteering in the forefront of people’s thinking.

Your report and its recommendations will play a vital role in that process – indeed, I note that aim is a key area in Report’s Plan of Action (page 29).

The Employee Volunteering Guide, which I shall launch shortly, will also play its part.

Volunteering plays a crucial role in our society. Without it, many activities would cease.

The NSW Government has a long-standing, and continuing, commitment to volunteering, through structures such as the IYV Secretariat in Premier's, and our successful Families First early intervention program.

As Minister for Community Services, our \$117 million, Families First program is the volunteer program I am most familiar with.

We now have over 500 experienced parents across NSW who have volunteered to help other parents with young families to reduce the pressure, and in some cases isolation, that having a new family can bring.

That is 100 more home visitors than this time last year – a tribute to the success of the program.

Without these volunteers and their organisations, many of the activities and services that children, young people, and families need and enjoy would not be available.

As Minister for both Community Services and Juvenile Justice, I see every day the problems that a lack of volunteers can lead to.

The International Year of Volunteers Advisory Committee made it clear from the beginning of their work that they wished to leave a legacy.

They have made a number of recommendations in the Report, for both Government and other players in the volunteer sector

The Premier has already made some decisions in response to these recommendations, including:

- seed funding for the Sydney Major Events Volunteer Pool being run by Volunteering NSW;
- an additional year of funding to nine Volunteer Referral Services funded as part of the last election campaign;
- seed funding for COVERRS Inc (Coordinators of Volunteer Education, Resource and Referral Service Inc) the body representing and resourcing Volunteer Referral Services around the State);
- funding to FIDO (Friends in Deed Organisation) to undertake a Strategic Review and Program Development project; and
- funding to produce an Employee Volunteering Guide for employers, not for profit organisations and employee volunteers.

The Government will use the other recommendations in the report as a guide in the development of future policy on volunteering.

Once again, Sandy, thank you for the report on last year's activities.

At this point, let me turn to one of the major initiatives to keep volunteering in the limelight.

It gives me great pleasure to launch the Employee Volunteering Guide.

The guide has been produced in recognition of a marked change in the way people get involved in community work.

Put simply, with changes in the workforce, there has been major shift in the interest in volunteering through the workplace.

The Guide is a practical resource for both companies and non-profit organisations that are interested in employee volunteering.

It points out the benefits of employees volunteering in the areas of team building, professional training, and development.

The benefits for employers include building loyalty and pride in the company.

The easy to read guide includes advice on getting started; implementing and promoting activities; and evaluation. It also gives useful contact numbers.

In line with the fact that most people now access their information from the internet, the Employee Volunteering Guide will be placed on [communitybuilders website](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au) – that's [www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au)

It is also be available for organisations in NSW to place on their websites. Please contact Nivek Thompson of the Premier's Department if you need more information on this.

May I finish by thanking all the volunteers here today. Your work is invaluable.

And can I please urge you all to continue to sell the benefits of volunteering – including the availability of the Guide on the internet.

Thank you.

**END**

