VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PLAN

*It is essential that you show appreciation to all the volunteers in involved in your club and show support for their effort. The unpaid work of all the people involved in the club allows the base of your club to be wide, deep and strong and continue to grow annually. In order to maintain or increase the volunteer base it is important that all volunteers at all levels of the game are appreciated, thanked and supported in appropriate ways by your club.*

**The Plan**

While the volunteers and their roles are many and varied, there are 3 common areas that can be focused on to appreciate and support the volunteers. These are:

1. Recognise
2. Resource
3. Respect

Many clubs are already showing appreciation to their volunteers but you should review what you are doing against the following and if appropriate implement into your clubs.

1. **Recognise**
* **Make a club policy that all teams have a way to thank team officials.**

All clubs should have policy and procedures in place to ensure all teams thank their team officials.

* **“Volunteer of the Year” Award as part of the club prize giving.**

A “Volunteer of the Year” award should be included as part of the club’s prize giving. This award can go to any administrator, team official or volunteer in any capacity.

* **Thank you letter from Club Chairperson to all volunteers and team officials in the club**

Letter from Club Chairperson to all volunteers thanking them for their contribution.

* **All volunteers invited to a club thank you night. Possibly include as a sponsor’s thank you night.**

Clubs should hold a “function” of some sort to thank their volunteer base. This thank you could be incorporated into a sponsors thank you function.

1. **Resource**
* **Team officials included in any clothing sponsorship.**

Where possible clubs should endeavour to obtain clothing sponsorship that also covers team officials and the volunteer base of the club.

* **Organisations have a stated policy as to reimbursement of personal expenses incurred by volunteers on behalf of the organisation.**

Team officials and volunteers should not be ‘out of pocket’ for items of spending incurred on club business. A policy, and procedures for expense reimbursement should be formulated. It is essential that this is done at the start of the year and that all volunteers made fully aware of spending allowed etc. Clubs may set up text accounts for example to ease these expenses.

* **Training and up-skilling promoted.**

Clubs should actively promote and provide opportunities for up-skilling and training for volunteers. A club can include training for local teachers in this also to encourage further development in schools.

* **Training equipment readily provided.**

Clubs should have readily accessible, and in good working condition, all the necessary equipment for training. As above it is important for the club to outline at the start of the year how volunteers get access to this equipment.

1. **Respect**
* **Ease the administration load for team officials.**

Clubs should ensure that policies and procedures are in place that makes the administrative load on volunteers as easy as possible.

* **Workload is divided into small lots. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented.**

Clubs should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all volunteers. These should be documented for the volunteers to know what is expected from them. Small volumes of work for many is better than large volumes for a few.

* **“Volunteer Succession” plan in place.**

The club should develop a volunteer succession plan so that no volunteers feel that they are forced to keep the role for life. Such planning helps ensure new blood flows in.

* **Formal support plan is in place.**

Volunteers need to know who to turn to for help and support. This should be formalised in your club.