



GLIDING
AUSTRALIA

Gliding Australia (GAus)

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

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VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Our gliding community depends heavily on the dedication and commitment of our volunteers. These individuals play a crucial role in maintaining the enjoyment, competitiveness, sociability, and safety of gliding for everyone involved.

One of our objectives for gliding is to enhance participation by offering innovative gliding activities, recreational and social gliding events, and competitive or adventurous opportunities to cater to the diverse needs of our members, pilots, and participants. As we strive for growth, it becomes imperative to have more volunteers who can guarantee an enjoyable gliding experience, encouraging our members to return year after year.

To achieve this, our clubs must maintain flexibility, foster innovation, ensure strong organisation, and run safely and efficiently, relying on a dedicated group of volunteers who contribute beyond just flying. We must also understand individual volunteers' needs and employ collaborative means to cultivate their support and develop successors.

Gliding Australia (GAus) acknowledges the importance of allocating time, resources, and financial support to engage, retain, and recognise volunteers within our sport. This commitment should not be limited to GAus alone but should be extended to Regional Associations and Clubs that rely on a volunteer ecosystem to provide gliding services to their communities. Failure to make this mutual investment may jeopardise the long-term sustainability and affordability of Gliding for future generations.

This framework, which looks at every step from recruitment, induction, mentoring, recognition, and succession planning, is your roadmap to maximise the potential of your volunteer workforce. It includes an overarching framework document, a modifiable Club/Regional Association Action Plan, and a suite of online resources in club development (Gliding Australia Clubhouse) and operational pathways.

“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.”

– Sherry Anderson



Background

Gliding, like many sports, relies on the dedication of a limited number of volunteers, often less than what is practically needed, which often results in volunteer burnout. This, in turn, leads to a higher churn rate of volunteers. Moreover, the constant need to recruit suitable volunteers, provide training and retraining, and offer additional services during regattas and competitions further strains an already stretched volunteer workforce.

Volunteer research reveals that busy schedules, internal politics within committees, a growing demand for flexibility, and the allure of online entertainment, gaming, and social media have increasingly diverted individuals from traditional volunteering practices. Furthermore, while volunteering has been recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic it still presents its own set of volunteer challenges with re-commitment and availability.

These challenges within gliding and our changing world should be regarded as opportunities for both gliding enthusiasts and volunteers. By adopting a united focus on volunteering, and better meeting volunteers' needs, we can generate value for both volunteers and our clubs while addressing the requirements of our sport. It is crucial to embrace the ongoing challenges of volunteers by offering innovative, inclusive, and flexible volunteering opportunities that go beyond traditional gliding engagement.

Purpose

The Volunteer Management Framework caters to varying sizes, role requirements, and volunteer availability in gliding clubs for activities and events. To factor in these differing club requirements, a gliding club profile has been designed to offer actionable recommendations to enhance volunteer support within clubs. Since club sizes and volunteer numbers may vary, each category should strive to develop a volunteer infrastructure that aligns with their volunteering objectives.

A distinction between volunteers and operational volunteers has been broadly characterised as:

VOLUNTEERS:

Includes individuals who contribute to club or regional association management, communications, marketing, and event support.

OPERATIONAL VOLUNTEERS:

Includes people who are trained, accredited, and endorsed to meet GAus requirements in safety, instruction, and maintenance.

NOTE: Volunteers can also be sub-categorised as digital (local or remote) and physical.

***Remember, no two clubs are the same –
so one size does not fit all!!!***

Club Profile

Every gliding club in Australia is unique due to its size, location, gliding specialty, fleet, infrastructure, and resources. This framework identifies these differences by identifying the basic volunteering requirements in Clubs with sizes ranging from small <50 members, medium between 50 to 100 members, and large > 100 members.

GLIDING CLUB PROFILE – VOLUNTEERING GUIDANCE

Small Club

< 50 members

- ☐ Task/Activity/Job descriptions for volunteer and operational volunteer opportunities
- ☐ Up to date Club Constitution
- ☐ Host and record regular Committee meetings
- ☐ Have a Welcoming Officer (may be combined with Membership Officer)
- ☐ New member welcome email
- ☐ Social Media Recognition of Volunteers
- ☐ Club Volunteer Action Plan

Medium Club

50 to 100 members

ALL THAT A SMALL CLUB DOES plus:

- ☐ Have a Volunteer Coordinator
- ☐ Regular promotion and training for Club Volunteers
- ☐ Club Handbook
- ☐ Adopt and develop club level policy and procedures not covered by GAus
- ☐ Committee Meeting agenda to include Volunteering to identify and fill gaps
- ☐ Club Volunteer Recognition Program

Large Club

>100 members

ALL THAT A MEDIUM CLUB DOES plus:

- ☐ Have a Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Committee
- ☐ Induction for all New Members
- ☐ Volunteer Social Activities
- ☐ Social Media and Marketing Strategy
- ☐ Awards Event for Volunteer Recognition
- ☐ Event Management Plan

Smaller clubs should ideally consider recommendations from larger categories, as long as they have the necessary volunteer resources to implement them.

EAST Approach

To streamline the Volunteer Management Framework, GAus has adopted the EAST approach, based on research by Professor Swee-Hoon Chuah, to ensure the Volunteer framework is actionable and sustainable.

The EAST framework, **EASY**, **ATTRACTIVE**, **SOCIAL**, and **TIMELY**, is simply remembered and implemented.

An outline of the EAST approach is provided below to assist you in creating a workable Volunteer Action Plan for your club.



Easy: Creating easy roles and tasks creates member engagement and development. No one wants to feel inadequate or to get a task wrong. So, making our volunteer roles and tasks as easy as possible to understand and complete, means we remove this barrier and encourage volunteers to step up and try new volunteering jobs.



Attractive: One of the primary challenges in engaging volunteers is effectively communicating the available opportunities and attracting individuals who are well-suited for the roles. Another challenge is enhancing the visibility of rewards of volunteer service for individuals and clubs.



Social: Numerous long-term volunteers often emphasise the valuable friendships they have developed through their volunteering experiences. The social reward aspect of being a gliding volunteer is frequently what motivates individuals to return year after year. Implementing ideas to foster social environments can greatly enhance volunteers' overall experience while volunteering at your club.



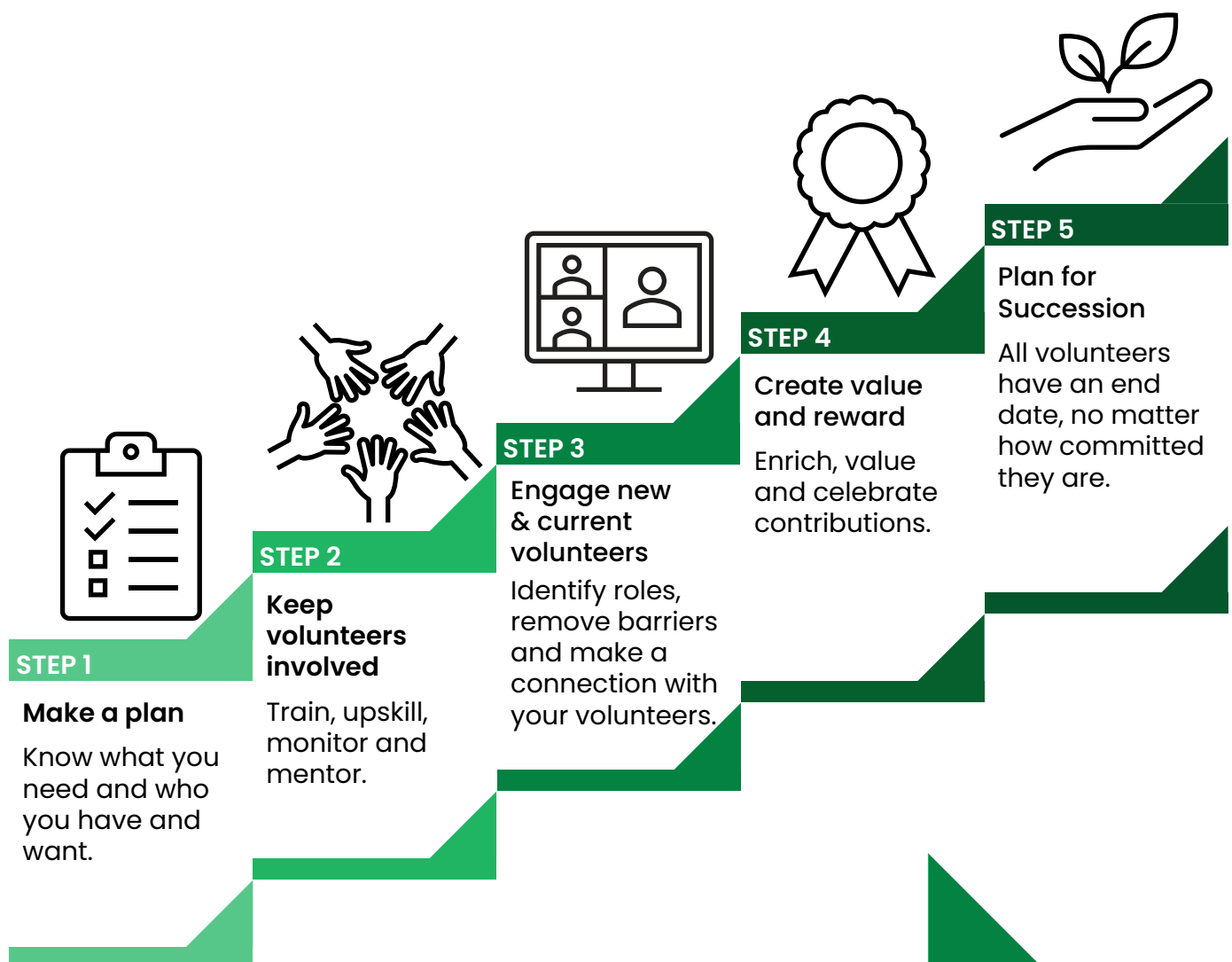
Timely: One of the most common objections raised when asking someone to volunteer is the perceived lack of time. Interestingly, individuals tend to prioritise and allocate time to what they value the most. Sometimes, volunteers may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities associated with a particular role or believe that they lack the necessary skills to succeed. In other cases, they may not have been adequately informed about the club's needs with enough time to complete the task. Implementing strategies to manage people's time expectations and change support roles can help your club address the objection to time constraints.

Volunteer Management Framework Steps

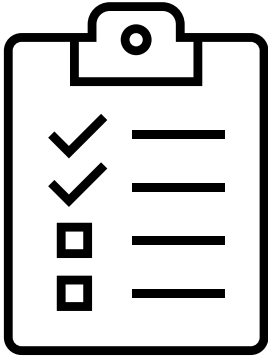
GAus acknowledges the crucial stages in the volunteer management process and the ongoing necessity of volunteers in facilitating organised gliding activities.

Clubs and Regional Associations must recognise all the important steps within the volunteer management plan and the continual need for volunteers to proactively engage within our clubs. Following these steps will ensure our volunteers can be found, empowered, and rewarded.

Your Volunteer Management has five steps with specific tasks to successfully engage and manage your volunteers.



Step One: Make a plan



Summary: A Volunteer Management Action Plan (VMAP) lets everyone know how they can help and what they are expected to do to assist volunteer engagement. Use the Volunteer Management Framework information to help you identify what volunteer roles are needed in your club, what type of person you need to fill them, and what roles require recruitment. Complete the VMAP Template to ensure everyone is clear on how they can help and what they are expected to do to create volunteer engagement.

Easy: Use the templates and resources available on the GAus website through the Clubhouse menu and Instructing, Coaching, and Airworthiness pathways to support club operations and to help create your VMAP.

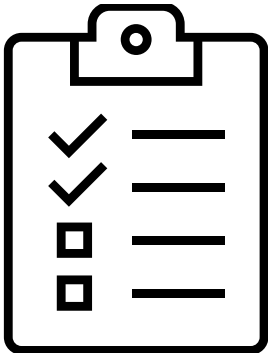
Attractive: When creating your VMAP and identifying volunteer roles and tasks, consider what may make these roles attractive to your gliding and extended community. E.G., Marketing short-term tasks help in advertising, targeted recruitment and gaining confidence by volunteers that they are not going to be sucked into the 'black hole' of volunteering with no end date.

Social: We are social creatures, so consider how to make your volunteering roles more socially attractive when engaging potential volunteers. Consider if your current volunteering network reflects the community around you. If not, clubs have been successful in creating social memberships (with no intention of flying) who have become highly valued members of the club and some of their biggest volunteer contributors.

Timely: Consider how to provide volunteer roles that have different time expectations as not everyone has the same available time to give to your club. Consider how more established volunteer positions could be 'job share' or have assistant roles attached to assist in dividing workloads. Consider what aspects of some tasks could be completed 'off-site' or 'on-line' to provide more convenience and flexibility to your volunteer roles. By identifying specific tasks for a role, you can bring in volunteers for short-focused projects.



Step Two: Engage new and current volunteers



Summary: Identify essential volunteering roles and tasks in and out of the air, what skills they require, and then consider how best to engage these types of people. People volunteer for various reasons and fostering a sense of belonging and community strengthens connections, keeping both current and potential volunteers engaged and committed.

Easy: People may hesitate to volunteer because of various barriers or challenges, so your club needs to show they can remove these to make volunteering as easy as possible. Talk to your members and potential volunteers to identify volunteering 'motivations' and 'barriers' that may be preventing their participation.

Some barriers include:

- **Not being aware:** Hard to believe? Well, when your members arrive at the airfield and the gliders are out, instructors are available, and people are retrieving gliders, it may not occur to them that you (the club) need help. Regularly communicate (in person, online, in newsletters) with all new and current members about expectations and club needs. Identify potential volunteers and have a chat, especially in operational spaces, as it is easy to identify the skill sets you need. Have the flexibility to offer roles that allow people to pick convenient days and times to contribute.
- **Not asked:** The best form of communication with potential volunteers is to speak to them directly to ask about their interests and availability. Enlist respected, well-liked people to invite members to assist in tasks, roles, and more long-term commitments. Remember, people like to be social, so having friends involved is a great drawcard to recruiting volunteers. Take the time to understand your members and the reasons they joined your club. If you can deepen their motivations for a volunteer role, then you will create a greater sense of belonging and minimise churn.



Tip: When recruiting for volunteering, focus on the benefits of volunteering, such as community involvement, social interaction, personal development and skill building, instead of just needing to fill a role.

- **Not confident:** No one wants to feel that they are not capable, so they are not going to volunteer if they feel they are not aware of what the job/task requires, or that they cannot do the job/task, and finally, if there is no training and support for the job/task. This can be particularly true in recruiting new instructors within your club. Ensure roles and tasks are clearly defined, offer support, training, or mentoring to guide new volunteers, and begin with easy tasks to build confidence in the role. Organise for new volunteers to work with friends or in larger groups to allow social connection and support.



Tip: When approaching potential volunteers, do this individually, preferably face to face, remember to offer support and mentoring and give them time to consider their response. Recruiting in meetings may not always give you longer-term volunteering outcomes.

Attractive: What makes volunteering attractive for individual people can be dependent on several different factors. When advertising, promoting, or seeking suitable volunteers, consider listing the qualities or benefits of undertaking the role before you mention what the job tasks entail. Appeal to different volunteer motivations or how new skills can benefit a volunteer in their personal life as well as for the club. This can also drive you to look outside of the club to different communities, such as universities, local community groups, and previous members, to find a particular skill set. Highlight family bonding opportunities where applicable, as some volunteers seek to give back to the sport in the same way they were guided through their gliding journey. Remember, not all volunteer roles need to be long-term; people are looking for one-off opportunities and short-term projects with no further commitments.



Tip: Ask volunteers why they like helping and use this information in your discussions, advertising, and communications. Good mentors can make volunteer prospects more attractive, and less daunting so include this information in your recruiting.

Social: The number one reason why our clubs have members – they enjoy being with like-minded people who share common interests in gliding. So how do you make your volunteer roles social? While not every role can be a social role you need to consider when they are to advertise roles using visuals that show volunteers doing the tasks together. Encourage current volunteers to reach out to their networks to introduce new members to volunteering groups. Or if someone is interested in moving through an instructor or airworthiness pathway, encourage them to find another member to join them on the journey. This will not only assist in creating the social element but will also make volunteering roles more attractive and address potential self-confidence issues.



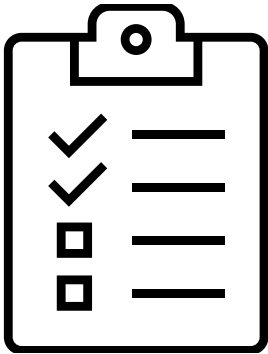
Tip: Social opportunities in volunteering are a good way for volunteers to feel included and gain mutual understanding of members and respect within the gliding community.

Timely: Short on time? Take a moment to identify where your volunteer roles are needed most and understand any gaps in contribution. Once you have this information then you can consider how to:

- Offer smaller tasks
- Offer one-off volunteering jobs
- Offer online opportunities (social media roles, uploading photos, or updating club records)
- Look for technology that can make volunteering jobs easier and more efficient
- Share roles with friends or family
- Offer short-term projects with clear time commitments and end dates



Step Three: Keep volunteers involved



Summary: Certain roles in gliding require specific skill sets and ongoing training to ensure the safety of our pilots and fleet. Inducting and upskilling for committees and other non-operational roles is also important to ensure volunteers are comfortable with the work they need to do. Volunteers' personal lives change too, so it is important to check in, provide support, and offer feedback and assistance when needed. These little efforts ensure your volunteers feel valued and seen as a person and not just a club resource.

Easy: Create a friendly environment and make it as easy as possible by ensuring they have everything they need or, at the very least, know where to find it. Provide access to drives, Google documents, and portals by sharing passwords and including clear instructions on where to find the information they require. Let them know who can mentor and support them in their role while they are learning, and even better have the outgoing volunteer provide a handover and support period.

Attractive: Volunteer roles need to deliver on the initial attraction to the role. Be honest with the volunteer role/task expectations, and if undergoing a specific accreditation, ensure there is support in place to assist in achieving this outcome. This may include informal mentors or buddies to support members in instructing and maintenance qualifications. It is well known that members undertaking these types of roles enjoy having an informal "sounding board" as well as their official instructors. For other volunteer roles (e.g., non-operational), consider online training or upskilling to support volunteers and make roles easier. Training will boost confidence which makes volunteering roles attractive and creates skilled volunteers within your club.



Tip: Make provision in your annual club budget or apply for grants for 'volunteers', e.g. to upskill and provide support.

Social: Consider expanding some volunteer roles that are less attractive or more isolating to be job-shared or completed in small groups to create social connections. Where tasks can be completed with other volunteers, as it creates a social component that makes less attractive volunteering tasks more enjoyable. Also, consider training volunteers in small or larger groups including instructors and airworthiness officers, where theory components can be completed together to complement individual training and assessment.



Tip: Encourage peer group involvement, to create social opportunity and create a sense of belonging particularly for new or minority members.

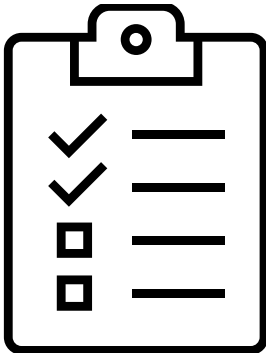
Timely: Volunteers' lives often change for short-term periods and longer, more permanent time frames with family, work, and other commitments. It is important not to take volunteers' time for granted, so don't over-request volunteers at events such as working bees or 'come and fly' days. There is nothing worse than having volunteers standing around with no clear direction. Also, take the time to check in with your long-term volunteers and see if they are still managing their volunteer load with personal and family commitments. This may be a good opportunity to put in place assistant roles for succession or move people into less taxing roles until they can manage greater time commitments. This is far better than losing a volunteer to burn out or having volunteer tasks not completed.



Tip: Life is complicated. Be flexible in supporting volunteers by building peer group and team support networks. Consider using free technology such as [signup](#) or [signupgenius](#) for scheduling volunteer timeslots, tasks, equipment, and reminders.



Step Four: Create value and reward



Summary: Volunteers bring energy to your club community, and your club can, in return, enrich a volunteer's experience with personal growth, skill development, and acknowledgment of achievement. Recognising and celebrating volunteers is essential for your club to show that their contributions are valued.

Easy: As your volunteers' experience grows, consider how the club can develop them further for personal and club growth. Encourage volunteers to continue through operational pathways or access easily accessible online courses and resources, e.g. for governance training to develop their skills and expertise further. Consider how these training opportunities can be fun and accessed in socially inclusive environments.

Attractive: Upskilling, socially connecting, and giving back may not be the only benefits your volunteers are looking for. Recognition and reward can also play a part in valuing our volunteers and acknowledging their work for the club. Create regular social media posts highlighting volunteers in your club, acknowledge them with monthly or annual awards, or source from your local cafes, bakeries – coffee/meal vouchers that can be given to volunteers throughout the year. Another example: is if the club is financially able, flying or membership credits can be allocated for volunteers with over 100 service hours.



Tip: Offer help, not criticism. Expand support when plans or timelines are not being met. Share problems, build mutual respect, and make volunteers feel valued.

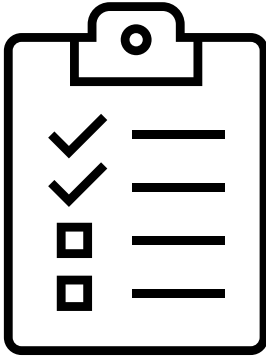
Social: Create friendly environments and social opportunities for specific volunteering groups or all volunteers in your club. These social get-togethers could be quarterly and can be held on-site at your club, at central locations, or even include different activities to try. Organise a BBQ breakfast for members coming early to prepare and move gliders for the days' operations or an end-of-day catch-up, especially for clubs where volunteers travel home at the end of the day. Making small efforts will show appreciation and respect for your volunteers.

Timely: Schedule social media posts so it is an ongoing recognition for volunteers. Include nominations and presentation of volunteer awards as part of your end-of-year celebrations. Make the time to say thanks to your volunteers, small words can mean a lot to volunteers especially when it is unsolicited.

Note: *Creating value and reward also means reinforcing behavioural standards, respecting individuals, immediately countering criticism of efforts, and/or talking over volunteers.*

Nothing erodes value and reward quicker than disrespect, unwarranted criticism and not being heard. Club leadership and culture must be seen and heard to support members and volunteers.

Step Five: Plan for succession



Summary: Succession planning helps clubs plan for the day a volunteer decides to hang up their wings and pass their role onto someone new. Anticipating this change and preparing new volunteers will assist your club in preparing for a future when key volunteers step down. Succession planning gives your club the best opportunity to have trained volunteers ready to step into key roles within the club.

Easy: Invite potential volunteers to take on assistant or short-term projects to give them confidence in volunteering or to allow them to find a specific volunteering area they enjoy.



Tip: Grow volunteer prospects over some time, with mentoring, with no long-term expectations or time restrictions. Avoid surprises or pressuring volunteers through guilt or need and allow them to learn the role in less formal situations to gain confidence and willingness to continue.

Attractive: Give attention to your volunteering roles and the social aspects to create “a fear of missing out” and encourage new volunteers to get involved. Giving volunteers a profile in your community motivates volunteers to continue to contribute or creates energy to join the fun and feel connected and respected within your community.

Social: Use volunteer perspectives to sell the value of volunteering. Create social media content with “quick fire” questions as to why volunteers contribute to your club.

Timely: Don't wait, develop and implement plans to engage volunteer involvement even before you think you need them. Identify your tasks and roles and start matching potential candidates to ease them into new areas of volunteering. Being proactive allows more opportunities for mentoring and handover by more experienced volunteers. Encourage peer groups that assist volunteers.



Volunteer Management Action Plan (VMAP)

Creating change in your volunteer landscape is going to take some effort at the front-end of the process. GAus has taken measures to make this initial work as simple as possible for your club by providing resources and templates to assist in making a workable plan. Investing some time into your VMAP now will assist in laying a foundation that will be easy to follow for years to come, i.e., to ensure your club is sustainable and suitably resourced long term.

Volunteering in Gliding is more than just enabling us to fly. People choose to volunteer in clubs for a range of health and social benefits which include:

- Being with like-minded people
- Having fun
- Being part of and contributing to a community
- Obtain new skills (becoming a pilot)
- Improve confidence and wellbeing
- Sense of purpose
- Giving back
- Spending time with family

Knowing there are different reasons as to why people engage in volunteering, must be the driver in our volunteer recruitment. Considering these engagement drivers and your club profile will assist you in preparing your VMAP.

So, let's get started...

- ☐ Use the information in this Volunteer Management Framework to assist you in creating your VMAP.
- ☐ Identify your Club Profile and select the GAus VMAP template to suit your size club.
- ☐ Complete the identified VMAP template and create supporting documents which can be found in the Clubhouse development resources on the GAus website.
- ☐ Review the other VMAP templates to see if you want to utilise any additional strategies.
- ☐ Share the plan with committee members, key personnel, and members.
- ☐ Store the plan online and ensure your Volunteer coordinator/committee has access.

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”

— Pablo Picasso