

# What is the Volunteer Appreciation Plan?

The Volunteer Appreciation Plan was developed to provide a co-coordinated approach toward appreciation and support of volunteer effort. The volunteer base is the foundation on which most clubs are built. The unpaid work of all the people involved in community sport allows the base to be wide, deep and strong. Without their continued involvement in clubs, the future of sport in New Zealand will be under threat. In order to maintain or increase the volunteer base it is important that all volunteers at all levels of sport are appreciated, thanked and supported in appropriate ways by the groups that benefit from volunteer's work.

## 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: Recognise, Resource, Respect

### 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 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 administration or team official. The winner could be the club's nomination to Sport Manawatu Grassroots sports awards – or to Sports Manawatu Sports awards in the Services to Sport, Coach or Official of the Year categories.
- **Thank you letter from Club Chairman/Captain to all volunteers and team officials in the club** Letter from club Chairman/Captain to all volunteers and club administrators thanking them for their contribution.
- **All volunteers invited to a club thank you night. Possibly on a sponsors thank you night** Clubs should hold a "function" of some form to thank their volunteer base. This thank you could be incorporated into a sponsors thank you function and could involve Sport Manawatu
- **"New Zealand Volunteers week"** Sport Manawatu host events this week and these could be held in conjunction with your events that week. **New Zealand Youth week** could also be a chance to acknowledge your Youth Volunteers

### 2. 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.
- **Training and up-skilling promoted** Clubs should actively promote and provide opportunities for up-skilling and training for coaches. Sport Manawatu have a range of planned workshops over the year. There is also a opportunity for your Club to host.
- **Training equipment readily provided** Clubs should have, readily accessible and in good working condition, all the necessary equipment for training. Do the Volunteers now Palmerston North CC have a sports equipment hire programme.

### 3. 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 and Schools should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for volunteers. These should be documented for the volunteers to know what is expected from them, a Club Manual would assist in this. Small volumes of work for many, is better than large volumes for a few.
  
- **"Volunteer succession" plan in place** Your club/group 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 by clubs.