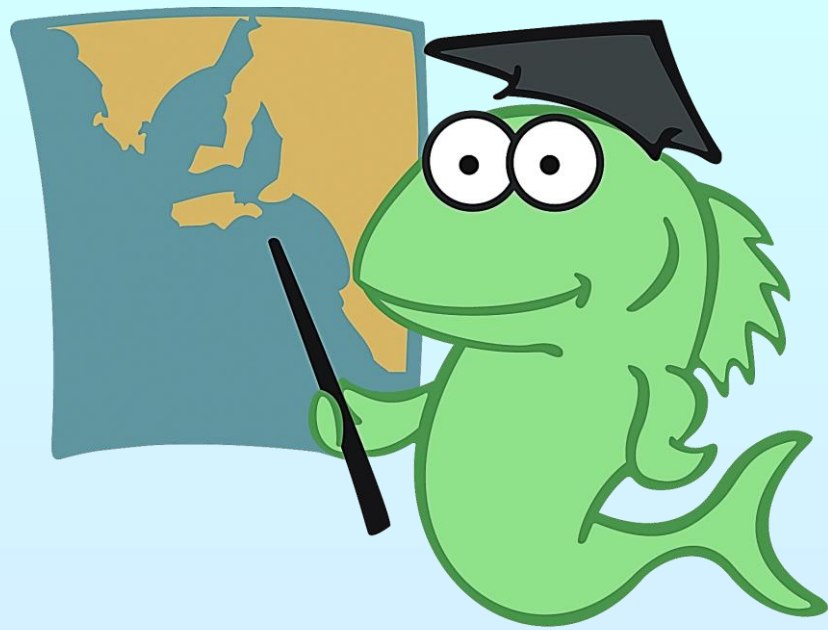


FISHCARE VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES



August 2023

Our Vision

“Fish For The Future”



FISHCARE
VOLUNTEERS

Our Mission

“To raise the community’s awareness and appreciation of the need to protect and preserve fisheries resources and their habitats for future generations”

PREFACE

Volunteering allows people to participate actively in all facets of society in a way that contributes to the spirit of democratic involvement. In living their lives to the full, many people have the desire to give voluntarily of their time.

The harnessing of people's time, interests and skills can provide benefits to the person volunteering, the project, the organization and the community at large. The South Australian Government recognizes that certain services provided can be enhanced by the involvement of volunteers.

These guidelines are designed to provide clear direction and guidance for the Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) FISHCARE Volunteer Program and for any volunteers who join that program. Specifically they are provided so that the role of a FISHCARE Volunteer is clear and is not misinterpreted but at the same time ensure that the program provides a fair and supportive volunteering environment.

More detailed information about the day-to-day operations of the program can be obtained from the "FISHCARE Volunteer Procedures Manual".

INTRODUCTION

The aim of these guidelines is to provide a written document outlining the expected role of the South Australian FISHCARE volunteers. This document is to be utilized by both volunteers and PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture staff as a reference when undertaking any activity within the program.

Volunteers have the same obligations as paid staff for working within agency guidelines. As with paid staff, volunteers need to be aware of their responsibility to act according to instructions from appropriate individuals and adhere to the reporting mechanisms put in place.

The intent of this document is to outline the key policies, procedures and protocols involved in the program. It provides a sound base and ensures that all staff and volunteers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the program.

In addition, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture has an obligation to ensure that all program tasks are clearly defined and that volunteers have a clear understanding of the objectives, role and function of the agency.

FISHCARE VOLUNTEER

The term "volunteer" may have a different meaning for different persons. To ensure that there is no misunderstanding about what a volunteer is, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture defines the role of a volunteer within a Government agency as follows:

Volunteering involves people undertaking defined activities:

- of their own free will
- without payment (other than out-of-pocket expenses)
- that will benefit the community and the agency concerned.

Therefore, as a FISHCARE volunteer, you perform volunteer activities of your own free will and without payment (other than out-of-pocket expenses) and with no expectation that paid work may come as a result.

The benefits to the community are increased awareness, enhanced fish stocks and improved fish habitat. The benefit to the agency (PIRSA) is enhanced public relations and greater community awareness of the rules and regulations used to achieve the objectives of the Fisheries Management Act 2007.

THE ROLE OF A FISHCARE VOLUNTEER

The FISHCARE Volunteer Program relies on a high level of public professionalism. For this reason, there cannot be any misunderstanding about the role of a FISHCARE volunteer. If you have concerns about the role of a FISHCARE volunteer, you should consider re-evaluating your commitment to the program and contact the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator immediately.

FISHCARE volunteers only act in an educational capacity. The volunteer program is based entirely on distributing information to the fishing public.

The role of a FISHCARE volunteer is to:

- advise and educate the public of the rules and regulations associated with fishing in South Australian waters
- help protect the environment and aquatic life for present and future generations
- help inform the public of the need to conserve fisheries resources for present and future generations
- provide a link between PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture and the recreational fishing communities of SA
- help promote the role of PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture in fisheries management
- advise the public of PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture management initiatives, including FISHWATCH, and all other education and extension programs
- assist PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture in collecting data and information from the fishing public.

A FISHCARE Volunteer's role does NOT involve:

- compliance or enforcement duties
- the promotion of personal views (i.e. religious beliefs or political views should not be discussed whilst working as a volunteer)
- the promotion of personal financial gain (e.g. promoting or endorsing of private businesses or products).

Any FISHCARE volunteer becoming involved in fisheries compliance activities, or found acting outside of the defined roles of the FISHCARE volunteer program without permission from PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture, may result in the volunteer being dismissed from the program.

ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

Upon completion of the application form, the next stage is the informal meeting process. It is at this time, where potential applicants are assessed for their suitability to the program. PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture has the right to accept or decline potential applicants into the program.

A Police and Fisheries clearance is required before applicants can be accepted into the program.

POLICE AND FISHERIES CLEARANCE

PIRSA has a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of fellow volunteers and members of the public. Prospective volunteers will be required to undertake a National Police History Check within the first 20 hours of volunteer time. Individuals, who refuse to comply with the request, will not be accepted as a volunteer.

Prospective volunteers will be sent a weblink to complete the Police Clearance online. You will need 100 points of identification to complete this. The current requirements of 100 points of identification are stated on the application. Fishcare pays for the Police Check on behalf of volunteers. The Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator or Fishcare and Administration Support Officer can assist you with this process if required.

Results of the police check are used only for the purposes of the Fishcare Volunteer program and are treated as confidential. Any records that arise from the check are at the discretion of the Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator and General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA as to whether it will affect the prospective volunteer's place and role in the program.

A police check will be carried out every three years, or more regularly at the Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator's discretion. When your police check is due for renewal the Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator or Fishcare and Administration Support Officer will contact you and arrange completing a new police check application.

If at any time a volunteer is involved in court proceedings or has charges laid against them, the Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator must be notified, and the volunteer will be required to go inactive until the matter is resolved and/or the Fishcare Volunteer Coordinator and General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA have made a decision regarding the volunteer's continued involvement in Fishcare.

CONVICTIONS

Persons with prior fisheries related convictions in South Australia will not be admitted to the program. However, consideration may be given to persons with prior fisheries convictions in excess of ten years, prior to program entry.

Any FISHCARE volunteer found to be knowingly involved with any fisheries related offence (regardless of whether a court conviction arises or not) will be asked to leave the program.

The existence of a police record does not mean that you will be automatically assessed as being unsuitable to join the FISHCARE Volunteer Program. Some offences are more serious than others, and people will be accepted depending on the nature of the offence.

Each case will be assessed on its merits, and the final decision will remain with the General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture.

If a volunteer's circumstances regarding any pending convictions change during their time as a volunteer, they are required to immediately advise the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator. Failure to do so may result in the volunteer being dismissed from the program.

APPEAL MECHANISM

In cases where persons have been declined from entering the program, they may apply in writing to the General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture, GPO BOX 1625, ADELAIDE, SA, 5001, outlining their reasons for due consideration.

PIRSA FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE PRIVACY POLICY

PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture is committed to ensuring the continued integrity and security of the personal information you entrust to us and our aim is to comply at all times with the State Privacy Principle Instructions.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The appearance and behaviour of FISHCARE volunteers whilst in uniform or performing volunteer activities should be professional at all times. This includes:

- Alcohol or non-prescription (other than normal pain relief type) drugs are not to be consumed before or whilst on patrols;
- FISHCARE volunteers can only promote the interests of PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture and are required to maintain professional neutrality on non FISHCARE related issues such as politics and religion;
- FISHCARE volunteers cannot endorse products other than those promoted by PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture;
- FISHCARE volunteers have no authorisation to perform duties as Fisheries Officers;
- FISHCARE volunteers cannot insist on viewing fish catches, cannot seize fish, cannot direct any person to return fish to the water, and cannot apprehend or interview any person found to be fishing illegally;
- Uniforms and identification are to be worn at all times whilst performing volunteer activities;
- Uniforms and identification are not to be worn whilst not performing volunteer activities (other than for travel to and from patrol);
- Uniforms must be maintained in a clean, neat and tidy manner, and no alterations may be made to the uniform without the consent of PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture;
- Uniforms (including identification (ID) badges), will remain the property of PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture, and must be returned to PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture when asked to do so, or when a volunteer ceases to be actively involved in the FISHCARE volunteer program;
- Uniforms and ID badges cannot be lent to any other person not actively involved in the FISHCARE program;
- PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture must be notified immediately of any loss of uniform or ID;
- FISHCARE volunteers must advise the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator of any intended patrol activity, including factors such as where, when, who, times, expected route taken etc... before any patrol activity is undertaken;

- FISHCARE volunteers are not to operate during hours of darkness thus operating only between sunrise and sunset;
- FISHCARE volunteers are not to undertake volunteer activities individually unless specific permission is given by appropriate personnel within PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture;
- FISHCARE Volunteers should attempt to utilise PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture resources wisely and economically.

REIMBURSEMENT

Volunteers are entitled to seek reimbursement for defined out-of-pocket expenses (such as meals, accommodation, vehicle mileage etc...).

Reimbursement of any expenses can only occur if PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture has given **PRIOR APPROVAL** for the expenditure and has been informed that a claim will be generated. This approval can be obtained either from the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator or General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture.

Important note - Vehicle Claims

There will be very few occasions when FISHCARE volunteers are asked to use their own vehicle for FISHCARE volunteer activities. Before claims for vehicle mileage can be approved, volunteers must provide written proof that the vehicle is covered either by comprehensive or third party property insurance, and that this policy clearly shows there is cover for the volunteer and the government when the vehicle is used in the business of the employer (i.e. the government), as detailed in *Determination 3.2*.

USE OF GOVERNMENT VEHICLES / VESSELS / TRAILERS

Permission has been obtained from the Executive Director, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture for FISHCARE volunteers to be able to drive and travel in departmental vehicles and vessels and to tow trailers. Stringent controls have been placed on those persons using government vehicles, including:

- The vehicle can only be used for official business and cannot deviate away from that official business to partake in personal business;
- A current drivers licence must be held by each volunteer driver. A copy of their current drivers licence is required to be presented to PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture before the volunteer is permitted to use the vehicle;
- Unless prior permission is provided by the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator or the General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture, prior to driving a government vehicle, the nominated volunteer must attend, or provide evidence of previously completing, an accredited driver training course. This is paid for by the agency;
- Each volunteer granted permission to drive a government vehicle must acknowledge and sign a declaration that they are fully aware of their responsibilities associated with driving a government vehicle;
- Permission must be obtained from the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator (as PIRSA representative) for each trip in which FISHCARE volunteers use Government vehicles/

vessels/trailers;

- If a volunteer has their license suspended or disqualified, they should advise the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator immediately. Failure may result in the Volunteer being dismissed from the program;
- Zero blood alcohol level;
- Any speeding, parking or other fines received will be the responsibility of the FISHCARE volunteer (driver) who was allocated the vehicle at the time of the offence;
- Accurate records must be kept, detailing driver, kilometres travelled, times and location of travel.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

FISHCARE Volunteers are covered by SAFA. However, this is only in the form of an “out-of-pocket” reimbursement basis when all the volunteers’ personal entitlements and own insurances are exhausted by the claimant. If you wish to make a claim, you will need to provide the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator with a letter, fully detailing what you are claiming for. This letter will then be forwarded to the General Manager Operation Support, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture for reimbursement consideration.

HOURS OF DUTY

For the purpose of providing adequate insurance coverage for FISHCARE volunteers, it has been determined that PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture will recognise hours of duty as being:

- **When operating for a single day:**

From the time the volunteer leaves their home until the time the volunteer arrives home, provided a direct route is taken between the residence and area of duty. Where a volunteer does not proceed directly between residence and area of duty, the hours of duty will be recognised as the time at which the volunteer reached or departed the area of duty. In other words, if a volunteer proceeds to a friends house after their patrol has finished, the recognised time shall be from the time the volunteer departed the work area.

- **When operating overnight and away from home:**

When operating overnight and away from their normal residence, hours of duty will only be recognised for actual hours worked, and for the travel time between their residence and area of duty. In other words, PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture will only recognise actual hours of service for insurance purposes. This has implications whenever volunteers camp overnight, or attend social functions between actual work. Insurance claims by any volunteers can only be accepted if the volunteer has adhered to the reporting procedures. If any volunteer has not been logged on as being on duty, claims may not be honoured.

LOG ON AND LOG OFF

It is essential that FISHCARE Volunteers follow reporting procedures because it is necessary:

- for your safety to be registered during your activities
- for the agency to be aware of volunteers activities for insurance and compensation purposes.

FISHCARE Volunteers are required to log on and off with Police Securities (VL5FY) when carrying out field activities.

Please state:

1. your name and call sign
2. who you are working with
3. patrol area
4. time of next call.

When you have finished FISHCARE duties you must log off using the same details as outlined above. Ensure that you inform the operator that this is a final call.

RECORD KEEPING

A very important aspect of FISHCARE volunteer activities is the keeping of accurate records of daily activities. The keeping of records allows PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture to determine the amount of work undertaken by volunteers, which in turn may assist with funding applications. Records required to be kept may vary over time, but include factors such as number of persons spoken to, amount of gear given away, actual hours worked etc.

All volunteers are expected to keep records of their activities, which will assist with any reimbursement claim arising. Records are also to be kept by all volunteers who use government vehicles and trailers. Logbooks will be made available for this purpose.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

FISHCARE Volunteers are to contribute to a safe, healthy and discrimination free workplace by maintaining an awareness and adherence to PIRSA's policies in relation to:

- work, health and safety
- discrimination
- sexual harassment.

More information on these policies is available from the FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator and is contained in the "FISHCARE Volunteer Procedures Manual". All Volunteers are responsible for developing sound working relationships and creating an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

PIRSA's policy aims to achieve a culture that promotes good work performance and conduct, and protects privacy and the rights of individual volunteers.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

If you require further explanation of anything outlined in this document please contact:
FISHCARE Volunteer Coordinator

PIRSA Fisheries & Aquaculture
2 Hamra Avenue
West Beach SA 5024
Phone: (08) 8429 3878



