SNAP SHOT OF VOLUNTEERING WA MEMBERS RESPONSES TO COVID-19 27.4.20

This report captures results of a short online questionnaire sent to VWA members. Forty three responses were received between 7 and 24 April, of which forty were complete.

1. Volunteer management responses and needs (see tables in 6. below)
- The majority (68%) have **stopped** volunteer advertising either completely or partially. However, 30% are continuing to advertise for volunteers.
- The majority (65%) have **stood down** all or some volunteers. However, just over a third (35%) have not stood down volunteers.
- Over a half (56%) have **not** managed to redeploy volunteers. However, about a third (31%) have redeployed some volunteers; a few (3%) have redeployed all volunteers, and a further 10% are still working on this.
- A small group (18%) have increased their volunteer recruitment.
- Just under a half (46%) have **not** managed to adapt their volunteer roles. However, over a third (36%) have and a further 18% are still working on it.
- Over a half (55%) have **not** created new volunteer roles, but about a third (29%) have and 16% are still working on it.
- Help is most requested for: recognition activities for volunteers (61%), grants available (39%) and engagement with volunteers whilst inactive (33%).

2. Changes in volunteer management responses and needs over time
Changes refer to differences between the first analysis of 28 responses at 10 April and the second analysis of 40 responses at 24 April (see tables in 7. and 8. below). Please note, the small sample size means changes are not conclusive evidence of a trend and may be due to other variables, however, are considered of interest.

- Two weeks on, there are some positive indications the volunteer organisations are adapting volunteer management responses to COVID-19.
- Roughly a third of the volunteer organisations are adapting roles, creating new roles, redeploying some of their volunteers and increasing their volunteer recruitment and advertising, having moved from development into implementation.
- Most of these organisations operate in sectors considered 'emergency' services: Homeless and Housing, Aged Care, Disability, Health, Allied Health, Nursing, Local Government, Refugee and Migrant support. A few operate in other sectors, such as research (not medical) and outdoor recreation/wildlife care.
- This is still the minority. Over half have not managed to adapt and have closed volunteer programs and potentially stopped all services and activities. The increase in request for help with grants may reflect an increased financial vulnerability.

3. Impact on the organisation
- Concern about lost income - from clients cancelling their services, and from having to close activities, programs, services, events, venues and clubs. Some drawing on reserves and unsure how long can continue without income coming in.
- A few essential service still offering face to face support, at a safe distance with hygiene a high priority.

- Outdoor activities. eg with animals, continuing where social distancing is possible
- Those offering essential services have experienced increased need eg in homeless, drug or immigrant support services or essential health products. Having to cope with either reduced volunteers and fewer staff, or distancing requirements.
- Concern about providing a lesser service and not being able to provide same level of support particularly to vulnerable people. In one case, customer collections of goods, changed to postal deliveries, making more work for fewer staff and slower service which is concern.
- Where services are continuing, prioritising the most vulnerable clients.
- Adapting business processes eg staff working from home, face to face meetings cancelled, adjusting to online communications and increased use of phone calls for regular check ins.
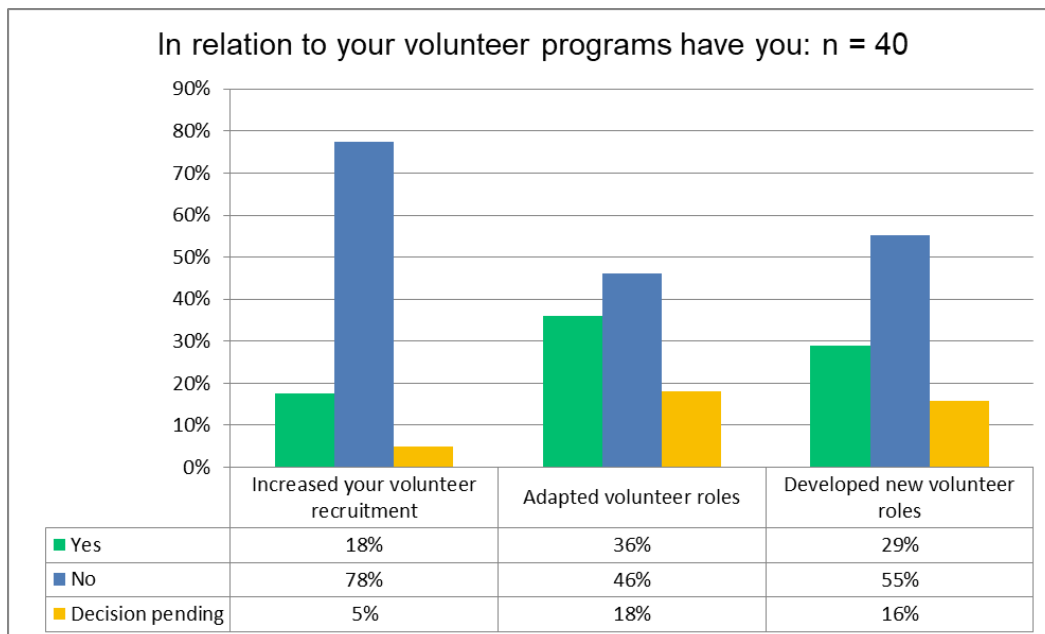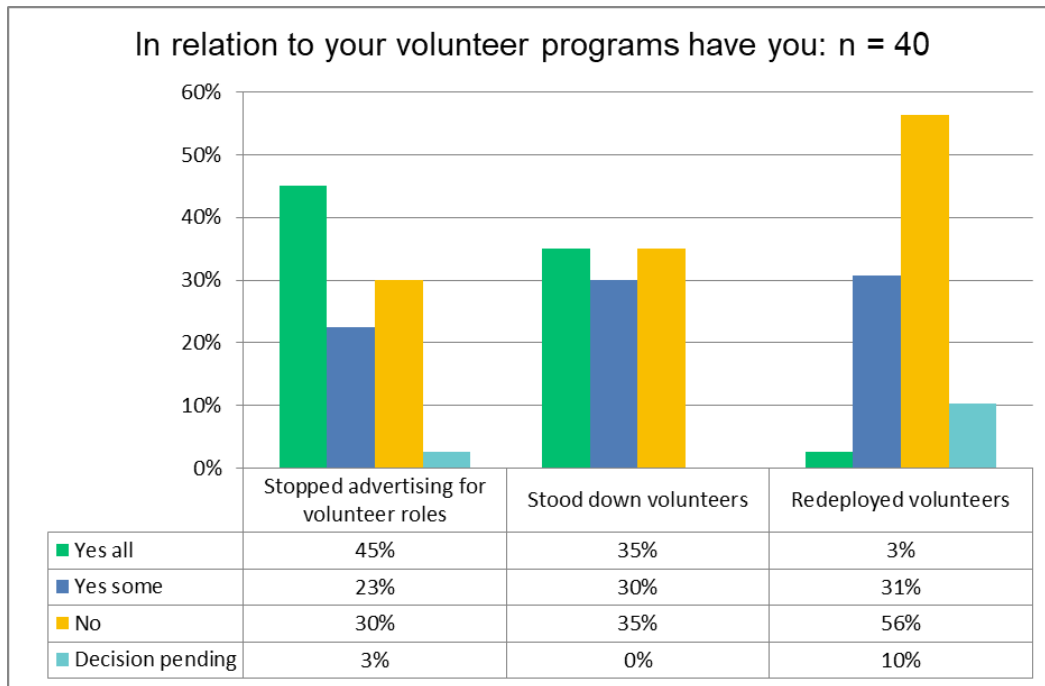
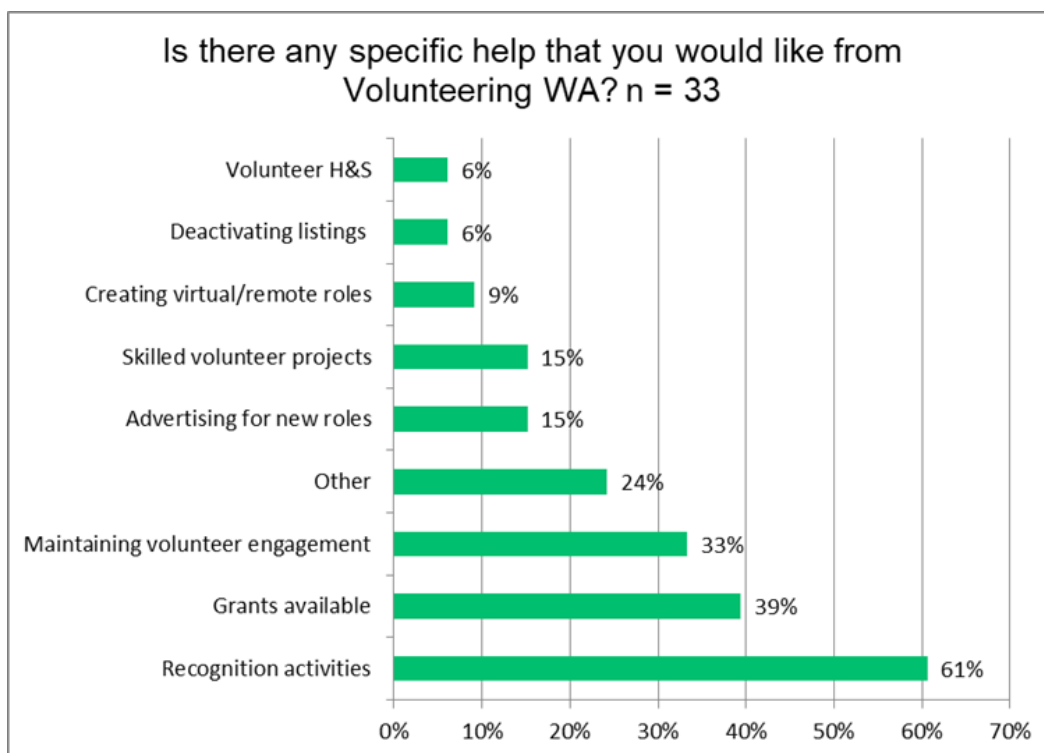4. **Issues relating to volunteers**
- Drop in volunteer numbers as many volunteers have chosen to self-isolate or been stood down as programs cancelled.
- Concern about keeping volunteers engaged and connected when cannot redeploy them – especially those that do not use computers (elderly) or those dispersed across the metro and regional areas, and those who will miss the personal interaction.
- In some cases staff taking on volunteer roles, eg with meals on wheels services, or looking for volunteer roles as under occupied with their work.
- Volunteer engagement taking place online, eg via closed facebook pages, apps such as Blue Jeans, skype calls, in groups and one to one, regular phone calls, whatsapp groups, weekly emails, messages from CEO, and newsletters (digital and hard copy options).
- Increased interest in volunteering from unemployed and students whose classes are cancelled.
- One organisation overwhelmed by people wanting to volunteer, not having time to train them, not having worked out new virtual/remote roles for them, whilst responding to huge increased demand for their services from new clients.
- New requirement for volunteers to have flu vaccine in Aged Care sector.

5. **New initiatives**
- Upskilling of volunteers so can deliver services online, eg training, and to use virtual meetings and communications.
- Moving face to face visitor and companionships roles to remote/virtual buddy /welfare roles eg phone call check- ins, intergenerational video chats, letter writing, card writing
- Recruiting skilled volunteers especially relating to IT – websites, graphic design, moving services online, and marketing
- Reviewing technology used
- Reviewing volunteer procedures and volunteer roles
- Catching up with volunteers one-on-one to make a film to promote volunteering
- Establishing an online fundraising team to replace physical event based fund raising
- Community bus recommissioned as special deliveries for vulnerable people (LGA)
- Established a register for vulnerable people in the community to sign up for support (LGA)

6. Volunteer management responses and needs as at 24 April

In relation to your volunteer programs have you: n = 40

	Stopped advertising for volunteer roles	Stood down volunteers	Redeployed volunteers
■ Yes all	45%	35%	3%
■ Yes some	23%	30%	31%
■ No	30%	35%	56%
■ Decision pending	3%	0%	10%

In relation to your volunteer programs have you: n = 40

	Increased your volunteer recruitment	Adapted volunteer roles	Developed new volunteer roles
■ Yes	18%	36%	29%
■ No	78%	46%	55%
■ Decision pending	5%	18%	16%

Is there any specific help that you would like from Volunteering WA? n = 33

Category	Percentage
Volunteer H&S	6%
Deactivating listings	6%
Creating virtual/remote roles	9%
Skilled volunteer projects	15%
Advertising for new roles	15%
Other	24%
Maintaining volunteer engagement	33%
Grants available	39%
Recognition activities	61%

7. Changes in volunteer management responses and needs between 10 April (28 responses) and 24 April (40 responses) NB the small sample size means changes are not conclusive evidence of a trend and may be due to other variables.

7.1 Changes observed in managing volunteer roles and volunteers between 10 April (28 responses) and 24 April (40 responses).
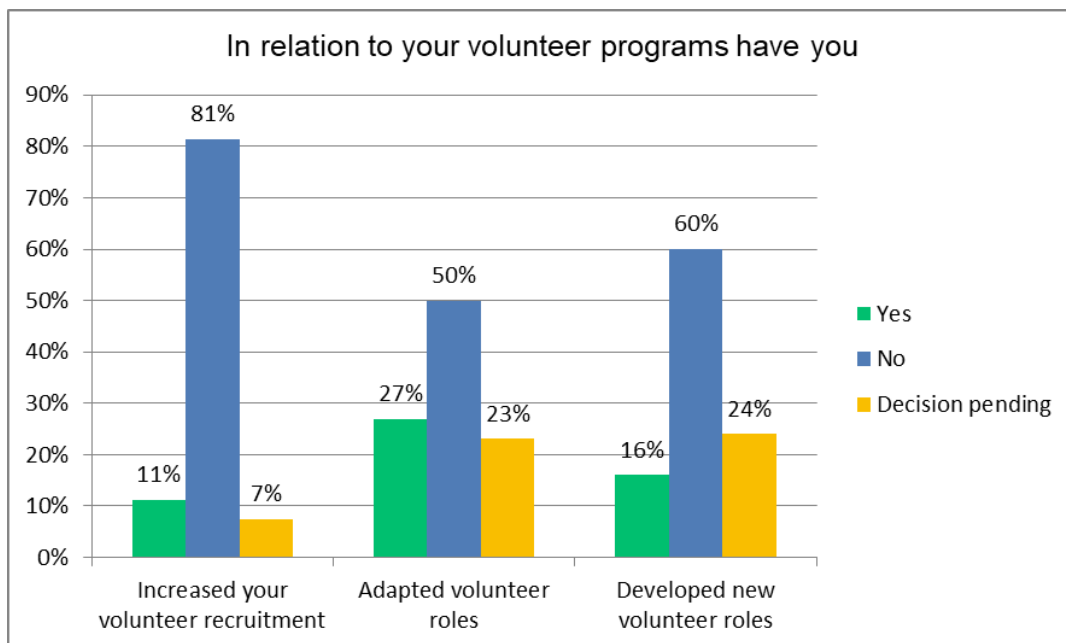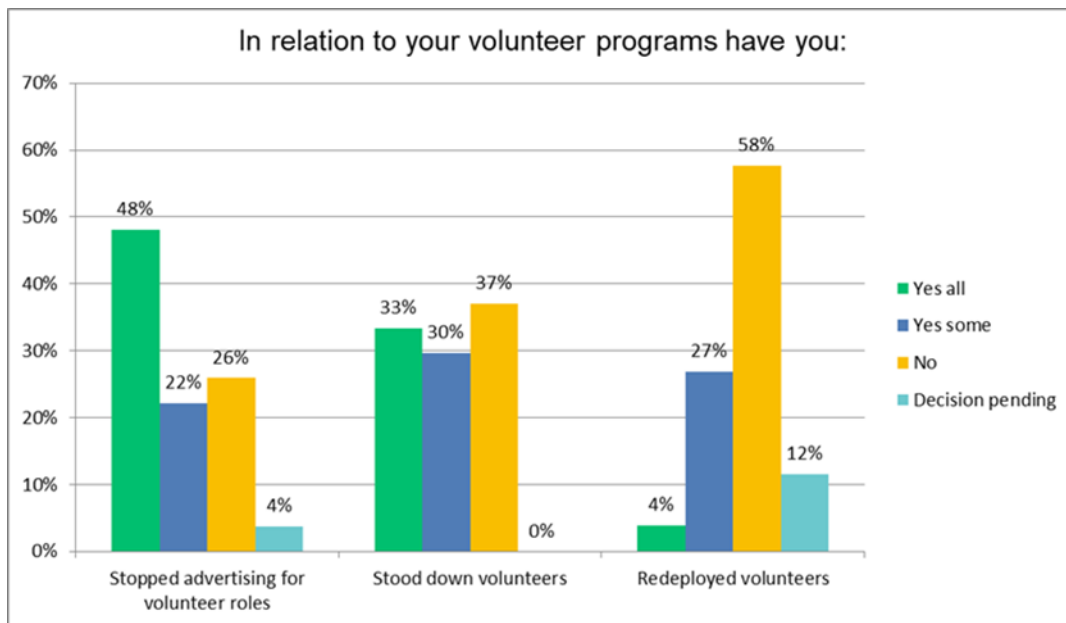
	Yes All	Yes Some	No	Pending
Stopped advertising volunteer positions	-3%	+1%	+4%	-1%
Stood down volunteers	+2%	-	-2%	-
Redeployed volunteers	-1%	+4%	-2%	-2%

	Yes	No	Pending
Increased volunteer recruitment	+7%	-2%	-2%
Adapted volunteer roles	+9%	-4%	-5%
Created new volunteer roles	+13%	-5%	-8%

7.2 Changes observed in help wanted from Volunteering WA between 10 April (28 responses) and 24 April (40 responses).

Advertising new roles	+6%
Grants	+3%
Recognition activities	+2%
Deactivating listings	+1%
Health and safety	+1%
Creating skilled volunteer projects	-3%
Creating new virtual roles	-5%
Engagement	-8%
Other	-8%

8. Volunteer management responses and needs as at 10 April n = 28

In relation to your volunteer programs have you:

Stopped advertising for volunteer roles:
- Yes all: 48%
- Yes some: 22%
- No: 26%
- Decision pending: 4%

Stood down volunteers:
- Yes all: 33%
- Yes some: 30%
- No: 37%
- Decision pending: 0%

Redeployed volunteers:
- Yes all: 4%
- Yes some: 27%
- No: 58%
- Decision pending: 12%

Legend: Yes all, Yes some, No, Decision pending

In relation to your volunteer programs have you

Increased your volunteer recruitment:
- Yes: 11%
- No: 81%
- Decision pending: 7%

Adapted volunteer roles:
- Yes: 27%
- No: 50%
- Decision pending: 23%

Developed new volunteer roles:
- Yes: 16%
- No: 60%
- Decision pending: 24%

Legend: Yes, No, Decision pending

Is there any specific help that you would like from Voluntering WA?