



Advocacy | Education | Support  
Serving Amateur Radio

# Charter for Volunteers

May 2017

# 1 Our Mission

To advance, enhance and sustain the hobby of Amateur Radio.

# 2 Our Vision

To advance over time the interests of all Australian-licensed radio amateurs and potential radio amateurs, to be achieved through advocacy, education and support within the WIA's capabilities.

# 3 Our Values

(1) Passion. Integrity. Fairness. Technical excellence.

(2) An abiding passion for Amateur Radio. Integrity, honesty and fairness in serving WIA members and the Amateur Radio community.

(a) Integrity includes: acting **ethically**; giving and receiving **respect**; displaying **openness**; treating people **equally** by respecting culture, custom, religion, gender and sexual orientation; and maintaining **loyalty** to the Amateur Radio community, the WIA and Australia.

# 4 The Wireless Institute of Australia

(1) The WIA is a company limited by guarantee, established under the Corporations Act 2001, for which the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) is the regulatory agency. The WIA's Australian Company Number (ACN) is 004920745.

(2) The Constitution sets out the objects of the company, its statutory obligations and essential operations, and is available at: [www.wia.org.au/joinwia/wia/about/](http://www.wia.org.au/joinwia/wia/about/)

(3) The Institute is governed by a Board of directors, elected by the membership. The process of electing directors is set out in the Constitution.

(4) Directors serve for terms of two years. Each year, half the number of directors must retire or the nearest number of those who have been longest in office since their last election. Hence, an election is held each year.

(5) Directors are all volunteers and do not receive a stipend or salary. However, some costs incurred from carrying out WIA business are reimbursed; likewise with the statutory roles of Treasurer and Secretary. All directors, Treasurer and Secretary are subject to the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001.

(6) Apart from the above functions and services, a flotilla of volunteer advisors, committees and teams provide a vast range of services to members and the wider Amateur Radio community. For more information, go to the WIA website and search committees, and volunteers.

(7) Each committee has a leader or co-ordinator, and a responsible Board director who provides a conduit between the committee and the Board to keep the Board informed of the committee's operations and to keep volunteers informed of relevant Board actions and requirements.

# 5 Definitions

(1) **Permanent committees** are established to provide ongoing, regular functions or tasks. The members of a permanent committee may meet on a regular basis as part of their function, or communicate and cooperate on an *ad hoc* basis, as required.

(2) For example, *Amateur Radio* magazine is prepared 11 times a year by the work of the permanent Publications Committee, headed by the Editor. It meets regularly to ensure the magazine is prepared and published on-schedule.

(3) The weekly VK1WIA broadcast is compiled by a widely dispersed permanent team led by the News Broadcast Manager; it is part of the Marketing and Communications Committee.

(4) **Advisors** are individuals with specialist knowledge and experience who provide technical advice to the Board as required, either individually or as one or more groups.

A good example here is the Technical Advisory Sub-committee, part of the Spectrum Strategy Committee. It comprises a variety of amateurs with expertise covering very many aspects of technical Amateur Radio matters. Members are spread across Australia and the Sub-committee is headed by a Co-ordinator.

(6) **Taskforces** are small teams appointed by the Board from time to time that work on a single, defined task or activity to be completed within a specified timeframe, disbanding when it is done.

(7) **Working Groups** may be permanent, time-limited or task-limited, established by the Board to study all aspects of a particular issue or topic and make recommendations in a report, or regular reports, to the Board.

(8) **Co-ordinators** are individuals that manage the operation of a function or service, or head-up a team, taskforce or working group.

## 6 Volunteering and the WIA

(1) Volunteers have been far and away the mainstay of the WIA operations and services in advocacy, education and support for the Amateur Radio community throughout its existence since the organisation was founded in 1910. The work of volunteers is highly valued by the Board, WIA members and other stakeholders in the Amateur Radio community.

(2) The WIA's volunteers bring substantial benefits to:

- a) members – through supporting or performing specific member services
- b) the Amateur Radio community – in performing or supporting an array of functions and operations that benefit prospective and licensed radio amateurs across the wide diversity of Amateur Radio interests
- c) the Institute itself – by bringing specialist advice and skills to the work of the WIA as an organisation.

(3) The WIA supports the principles of volunteering defined by *Volunteering Australia*<sup>1</sup>. In the context of Amateur Radio and the WIA:

- a) volunteering is always a matter of the individual's choice
- b) volunteering activity is unpaid (but reasonable or necessary out-of-pocket costs can be reimbursed)
- c) volunteering is an activity performed in the not-for-profit sector only
- d) volunteering is a legitimate way for people to participate in the activities of their community
- e) volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- f) volunteers do not replace paid employees or contractors nor constitute a threat to their job security
- g) volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others
- h) volunteering benefits Australia, WIA members, the Amateur Radio community and the volunteer.

1. [www.volunteeringaustralia.org](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org)

## 7 Volunteer roles

The Board will establish and maintain a register of role functions and responsibilities and related minimum necessary skills and experience required for all volunteer roles. These will be informed by the principles set out in Volunteer Australia's 'Volunteer Roles Toolkit' publication ([www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy-and-best-practise/best-practise/](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy-and-best-practise/best-practise/)).

## 8 Recruitment and retention of volunteers

- (1) The WIA supports the principles of Volunteer Australia's publications, *National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* and the *Model Code of Practice for Organisations Involving Volunteer Staff*.
- (2) From 1 January 2017, each volunteer role already established, or created subsequently, has a nominal tenure of two years. Volunteer roles created subsequent to 1 January 2017 will commence from the agreed date a volunteer is appointed to the role. Towards the end of a tenure period, volunteers will be contacted and asked if they wish to continue, or to retire from the role. No volunteer needs to feel 'trapped' in a role, and may elect to continue for a further two years, or an agreed shorter period.
  - (a) For roles that require a longer-term commitment than two years (eg. IARU and ITU related roles), the Board can, at its discretion and with the agreement of volunteer candidates, vary the tenure to suit the role.
- (3) Individuals may take up more than one role, provided they have the skills and capacity to fulfil the requirements. This may be advantageous where skills and experience necessary to roles overlap. To spread a work load, a role may be shared by two or more volunteers (role-sharing).
- (4) Volunteers may apply to transfer from one role to another. At any time, a volunteer can resign from their role or roles by writing to the WIA Secretary and informing the responsible director for the Committee.
- (5) Recruiting for volunteer roles will be conducted according to relevant WIA policies, which requires a competitive process of advertising for expressions of interest, followed by candidate evaluation, selection of a short list of candidates and interview. The Board may elect to appoint and use an independent *ad hoc* committee to conduct volunteer recruitment activities and make recommendations to the Board. Permanent committees are generally responsible for recruiting volunteers to fulfil vacancies, or may ask the Board to appoint an independent *ad hoc* committee to do so.
- (6) All volunteer roles established before 1 January 2017 are to have a role description prepared by, or in consultation with, the current incumbent, which provides:
  - a description of the job and a list of the tasks involved
  - necessary or essential skills needed to fulfil the role
  - any desirable skills useful to the role
  - an estimate of time commitment (weekly / monthly / yearly)
  - necessary training required and who might provide it
  - any statutory qualifications essential to fulfilling the role (amateur licence of defined grade, Working with Children accreditation, WHS certification, etc).
- (7) Likewise, volunteer roles created after 1 January 2017 are to have a role description prepared and agreed by a resolution of the Board before recruitment can commence. The Board may ask volunteers, or an *ad hoc* team of existing volunteers, to prepare role descriptions for consideration by the Board.

## 9 Intellectual Property

Generally, where products (publications, products, software etc) are produced by individual volunteers or volunteer teams, what intellectual property (IP) resides in or is attached to these products, belongs to the WIA unless arrangements or agreements are made otherwise to grant a licence to use the IP on mutually agreeable terms.

## 10 What volunteers can expect

- (1) That selection for a role is based on the suitability of interests, skills and experience relating to the role.
- (2) That all volunteers are properly covered by the WIA's applicable insurances, including public liability.
- (3) That all volunteer roles are covered by the WIA's policies and procedures on bullying and harassment, discrimination, equal employment opportunity, grievance, appeals, safety, privacy and such other applicable policies and procedures as may be adopted from time to time.
- (4) Where applicable, that a role has tasks and requirements well-defined, including deliverables and time frames. Some roles cover situations that are, by nature, dynamic and require flexibility, as set out in the role description.
- (5) That, as role vacancies arise, they will be advertised on the WIA website and in other media as the Board requires, providing a role description and selection criteria.
- (6) That expressions-of-interest in roles will be handled expeditiously and without discrimination.
- (7) On appointment, volunteers will receive an orientation briefing and guidance from the committee leader or other nominee, setting out the purpose of the committee and/or the role's tasks, current issues and reporting requirements.
- (8) That the assigned responsible director actively supports the work of committees and volunteers and their relationship with the Board.
- (9) That the tools (eg. software applications) for fulfilling the tasks of a role are adequate and generally fit for purpose.
- (10) To have a safe, healthy working environment so far as is applicable in the circumstances.
- (11) To be able to request support as or when required.
- (12) To be consulted and involved in changes to roles or committees, their functions and tasks.
- (13) That suggestions, recommendations and advice provided to the Board is acknowledged, treated fairly, and actioned in a timely manner, or, where not approved, that a clear explanation is provided.
- (14) To have their membership of a committee or placement in a role acknowledged on the WIA website and, from time to time when available, published in *Amateur Radio* magazine and other media.
- (15) That performance or misconduct issues are promptly identified, recorded and addressed in line with principles of natural justice.
- (16) That fair and transparent procedures are employed for ending the involvement of a volunteer, for whatever reason.

## 11 What the WIA expects

- (1) That volunteers will be a current financial member of the WIA, except where a role is specifically identified as being exempt from this requirement, as resolved by the Board.
- (2) That volunteers uphold the WIA Constitution, the Code of Ethics, the Privacy Policy and the Vision and Values of the WIA as expressed in this Charter, or as otherwise set down from time to time.
- (3) That volunteers will perform their tasks and functions reliably and in a timely manner, according to the requirements of their role and within their capacities and capabilities.
- (4) That volunteers not make, or be party to making, decisions with any improper purpose or personal motive; loyalty and integrity come before personal ambition and ego.
- (5) That, as a representative of the WIA, volunteers are expected to act in the best interests of the Institute and represent Amateur Radio and the WIA in a positive and professional manner.
- (6) That volunteers are expected to value and support WIA employees, WIA members and other volunteers.
- (7) That committee leaders or other co-ordinators will make regular contact with committee or team members to maintain clear communication, to obtain status advice and to take action on issues that need addressing.
- (8) That volunteers will inform their committee leader, or their responsible director, or the WIA Secretary, if deliverables are delayed, may not meet given time frames, or cannot be fulfilled.
- (9) That volunteers seek assistance and advice from their committee leader, their colleagues or their responsible director if required at any time.
- (10) That volunteers are encouraged to identify opportunities for continuous improvement, offer suggestions and recommend change/s to business functions and processes, and communicate these to the Board. In turn, the Board will acknowledge, consider and approve changes where they add value or improve customer service; change/s to business functions and processes shall not be made without approval of the Board.
- (11) That volunteers will cooperate with the Board in any action necessary to maintain a healthy work environment.
- (12) That, where IT application or software tool development are undertaken, guidelines and requirements will be provided by the IT Committee.
- (13) That, so far as is practicable, volunteers are encouraged to attend conferences, expositions, meetings, training events or teleconferences from time to time, in order to fulfil their roles.
- (14) That volunteers agree to have their membership in a committee or placement in a role published on the WIA website and in *Amateur Radio* magazine, or other media.
- (15) That volunteers will not make public statements via any media that is to the detriment of the WIA.
- (16) That resolution of disputes is first sought through discussion and mutual agreement, or, failing that, through the policies and processes for grievances and appeals adopted by the Board.

- (17) That, while the Board reserves the right to reassign volunteers or change role requirements, fair and transparent procedures are employed for changing the role or nature of the involvement of a volunteer.
  - (18) That volunteer performance or misconduct issues are promptly identified, recorded and addressed in line with principles of natural justice.
  - (19) That fair and transparent procedures are employed for ending the involvement of a volunteer, for whatever reason.
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## **12 Our Commitment**

The WIA Board commits to applying this Charter in a spirit of mutual respect and goodwill and envisages all volunteers will join in the same spirit.