



Volunteers: the heart of sport

The experiences
and motivations of
sports volunteers

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Foreword

Volunteers are a valuable resource in the sports sector. While about 41,000 people are paid to work in sport in New Zealand, it is estimated that another 500,000 people work unpaid. Without their hard work and effort at every level, many sports activities and events would not happen.

Recent New Zealand research¹ suggests that people can demonstrate a range of motivations, attitudes and behaviours in their interactions with sports organisations. Understanding the motivation of those who volunteer and the impact of their experiences on their future involvement as a sports volunteer is important for those trying to encourage participation in volunteer roles.

This report details the findings from the *Sports Volunteers' Experiences Survey* conducted on behalf of Sports and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC). In the survey, sports volunteers report many positive experiences but also identify some challenges and barriers to successful volunteering.

SPARC has prepared this document to help community-level organisations refine their volunteer management practices and to help sports clubs, regional sports trusts and others become better recruiters and managers of volunteers.

The full results of the survey are available from SPARC in the report, *Volunteers: the heart of sport*.

¹ SPARC. (2006). *Finding and keeping volunteers: What the research tells us*. Wellington: SPARC.

The research

During 2007, Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) contracted Research New Zealand to conduct a telephone survey of current sports and recreation volunteers, with a focus on their activities and experiences, motivations and attitudes, and their level of satisfaction with volunteering. The survey had a final sample of 1000 people from over 30 sporting codes who were currently volunteering their services to sports organisations, sports teams or recreational organisations.

SPARC intend to use the survey results to help sports clubs, national sports organisations, regional sports trusts and other community-level organisations improve volunteer management practices and retain their current sports volunteers. The full results of the survey are available from SPARC in the report, *Volunteers: the heart of sport*. This document provides a summary of those results and highlights some of the interesting findings and issues, and the recommendations made.



Key points

- When compared with the general population in New Zealand, sports volunteers are more likely to be men than women and are more likely to be of European ethnicity.
- The age distribution of sports volunteers is centred around the child-upbringing years (36 percent are aged 40 to 49 years), with many people volunteering because a family member has started to play a sport. Over half the volunteers in this survey live in a family household with a child under 18 years.
- Volunteers undertake a wide variety of roles for their sports organisations. While about half of sports volunteers are working in more highly visible sporting roles, there are almost as many volunteers working 'behind the scenes'.
- Volunteering can represent a substantial contribution of time for many people. Up to 15 percent of those surveyed volunteer for over ten hours a week. However, for others, the amount of time donated is less (24 percent volunteer for two hours or less a week and another 26 percent for between two and four hours a week).
- New Zealanders report that they become sports volunteers for many different reasons, with the main ones including giving something back to the sport or club, a family member starting to play in the sport, and love of the sport.
- Reflecting a high degree of satisfaction with sports volunteering, 95 percent of all respondents reported they recommend being a sports volunteer to other people.
- Despite high levels of satisfaction with volunteering, over one third of all sports volunteers considered quitting their main role in the 12 months leading up to the survey. Most frequently, their reasons include time and work commitments, personality clashes, club 'politics', and a feeling that it is time to move on. Of those with a family member participating in the same club or team, one third said that they would not continue volunteering if that family member left.
- Despite high satisfaction levels, three quarters of sports volunteers still had some suggestions for changes, including having more volunteers, financial support for the club or team, sharing responsibilities with others, and having parents more involved.
- While 51 percent of volunteers say that there are no things that make it personally difficult for them to continue in their main volunteer role, the other 49 percent mentioned time constraints, family commitments, work commitments, personality clashes, club 'politics', and personal health issues.
- Two in three volunteers received support from their club or team to fulfil their role as a volunteer at the time they started the job and 90 percent of those volunteers felt it was sufficient. Those few volunteers (60 respondents, or six percent) who said that the support they received from their club or team was not sufficient said this was due to no comprehensive instructions, a lack of organised introduction, a lack of written guidelines on the role, and no clear communications.
- While 40 percent of volunteers say they currently do not need additional help and resources from the club to carry out their roles better, 56 percent say there are several things that could be of assistance to them. These include providing coaching seminars or training, feedback and information, and having written guidelines for the role.

A profile of sports volunteers

Demographic characteristics

A demographic profile of the sports volunteers in this survey shows substantial differences with the description of New Zealanders aged 15 years or older in the 2006 Census².

The survey shows that there are more men than women in sports volunteer roles. Sixty percent of volunteers are men compared with 48 percent of the New Zealand adult population. Among the different age groups, a notable difference is that 36 percent of volunteers are aged 40 to 49 years compared with 19 percent in the New Zealand adult population.

Up to 85 percent of the sports volunteers surveyed are of European descent (this group makes up 66 percent of the general population). This is mainly due to very low numbers of Asian volunteers (one percent) and those in the category "Other Ethnic Groups" (five percent), compared with their numbers in the general population.

Not surprisingly perhaps, men are more likely to be involved with rugby (41 percent of men compared with 12 percent of women), whereas women are more likely to be involved with netball (26 percent of women compared with only five percent of men). Respondents of Māori descent are more likely to volunteer for rugby (59 percent) and netball (29 percent) organisations.

Sports volunteers, as a group, are better educated and more likely to be employed than the general adult population in New Zealand, and 84 percent are married or living with a partner compared with 57 percent of the New Zealand adult population.

Recommendation – Develop strategies to recruit and retain women volunteers

The survey found that there are fewer women than men among the sports volunteers, despite the fact that there are slightly fewer men among the New Zealand adult population than there are women.

Given the impact that female mentors and positive female role models can have on young people, the sports sector should consider how they can attract more women into sports volunteering and provide support for their sustainable involvement. This can also send the message that 'volunteering is for everybody', and that specific roles, such as coaching (69 percent of whom are male) or team captains (66 percent of whom are male), are not gender-specific.

2 To what degree some of these differences may be explained by the response bias of the achieved sample is not known. For example, telephone surveys typically under-represent Māori, Pacific and Asian peoples and those aged 15 to 24 years old, due to higher rates of non-response amongst these groups, and a telephone methodology tends to capture those people who are comfortable taking part in a survey in English. This biases the results against those with poor or no English language skills.

Participation at every level of sport

Volunteers undertake a wide variety of roles for their sports organisations. Four in five volunteers (79 percent) volunteer for a sports club, while 36 percent volunteer for a sports team and 13 percent for a recreational organisation.

While about half (54 percent) of sports volunteers are working in more highly visible sporting roles, such as coaching, managing or refereeing, there are almost as many volunteers (46 percent) working 'behind the scenes'. These include committee members, organisers, fundraisers, and general helpers. While those working 'behind the scenes' may not be actively involved with sports players, without their help the sporting organisations would not be able to function.

Typically, volunteers work in more than one role for their organisation. Most often volunteers are coaches (39 percent), club committee members, board members or board chairpeople (20 percent), and team managers or assistant managers (14 percent). However, women are less likely than men to be a coach or assistant coach (28 percent, compared with 40 percent of male volunteers).

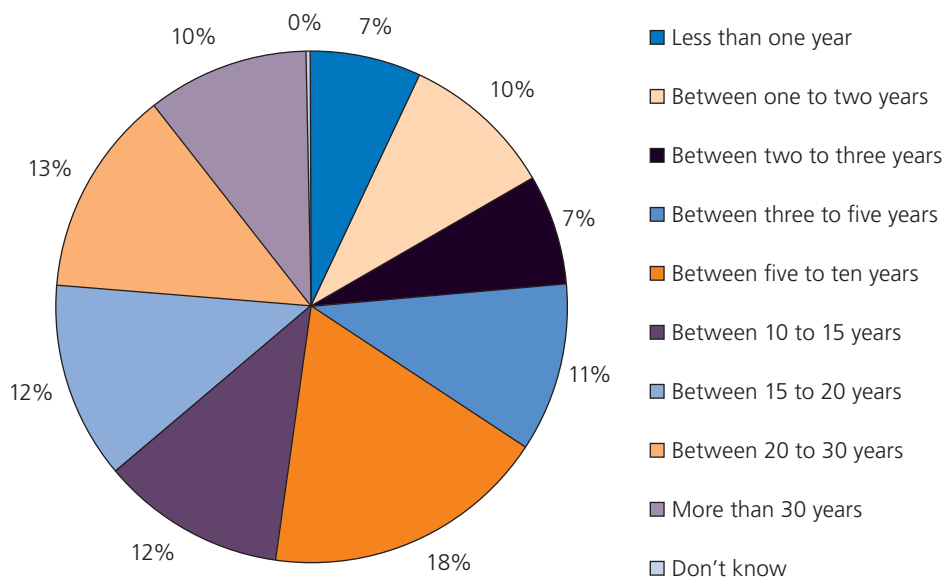
Commitment to volunteer roles

Many New Zealanders have been volunteering their time and skills to sports for a considerable number of years, with 15 percent having been sports volunteers for over ten years. Not surprisingly, older volunteers, aged 50 to 59 years, are more likely to report they have been in their roles for more than ten years. However, about half of all volunteers have been in their main volunteer role for three years or less.

Two-thirds (66 percent) volunteer throughout the year for their sports club or organisation, while 30 percent do so for between three to ten months per year and five percent volunteer only during special events.

GRAPH 1: TOTAL AMOUNT OF TIME VOLUNTEERING (N=1000)

Question: So in total and counting this year, how many years would you say you've been doing volunteer work of any kind for any type of organisations?

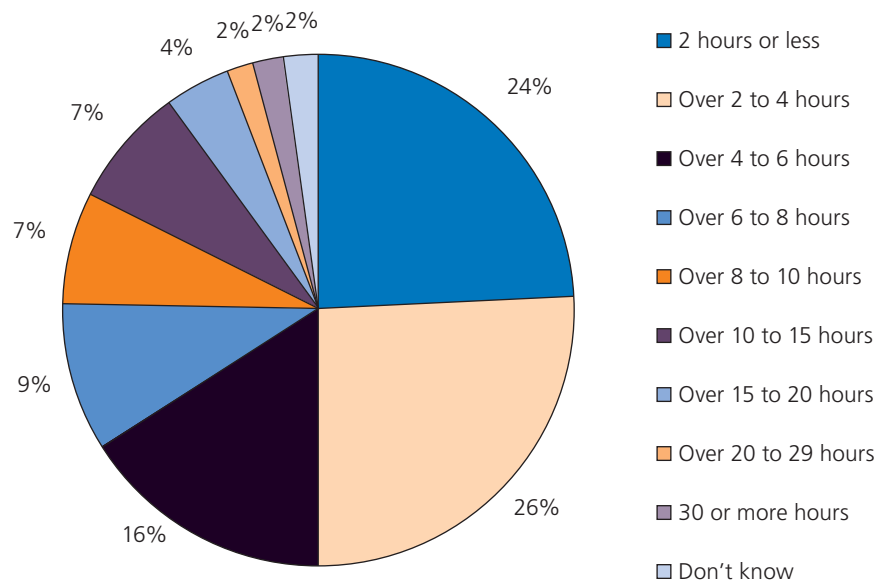


Volunteering hours

Volunteering can represent a substantial contribution of time for many people. Up to 15 percent of those surveyed volunteer for over ten hours a week. In contrast, about one half of all those surveyed volunteer for four hours or less per week.

GRAPH 2: SPORTS VOLUNTEERING WEEKLY HOURS (N=1000)

Question: In total, about how many hours of volunteer work per week would you say you do in a typical season for this organisation?



Coaches or assistant coaches are less likely to report volunteering for two hours or less per week (12 percent), while referees/judges, marshals or umpires are more likely to be doing so (50 percent). Volunteers whose organisations are not team-sport oriented are more likely to mention that they volunteer for two hours or less per week (32 percent), compared with those who volunteer for team-oriented sports organisations (17 percent).

The survey also found that women are more likely to report volunteering for two hours or less per week for their organisation (33 percent), compared with men (19 percent). In contrast, those aged 70 years or older are less likely to mention that they volunteer for two hours or less per week (11 percent).

Recommendation – Focus on retention of existing volunteers

There does not appear to be an insufficient numbers of people volunteering. It is estimated that 500,000 people work unpaid as sports volunteers and, of those surveyed, over a third also donate time to non-sports organisations. However, the amount of time many of those are able to commit to sports volunteering is relatively low. Half of the sports volunteers in this survey currently volunteer for four hours or less per week.

The sports sector should consider strategies and policies that are focused on the retention of existing volunteers (through enhancement of the volunteering experience) rather than on the acquisition of new volunteers, and also identify ways to compete for potential volunteers' available time.

Other voluntary commitments

Sports volunteers may have other voluntary commitments. About two in five currently volunteer for more than one sports club or team. A significant number of sports volunteers are also giving time through other forms of volunteering in their community. About a third (36 percent) of sports volunteers donate their time to non-sport organisations, most commonly to schools (excluding sports), charity organisations, sports development at schools, and local community volunteering and rotary clubs.



Recommendation – Develop strategies to recruit and retain volunteers from a range of ethnic groups

Certain ethnic groups are under-represented among sports volunteers, including Asian peoples³.

Taking into account the strong growth of the Asian population in New Zealand in recent years, the sports sector should consider how to attract Asian people to participate in their sport.

Recommendation – Investigate challenges for single-parent families' participation in volunteering

More sports volunteers (84 percent) are married or living with a partner compared with the New Zealand adult population (57 percent).

Taking into account the number of children brought up in single-parent families in New Zealand, the sports sector should consider whether these children have fewer opportunities to be involved in sport, or if serious barriers exist that prevent single parents from participating in sports volunteering. Clubs could identify whether single parents are volunteering and, if not, how they could be encouraged to become involved.

³ The extent of this cannot be accurately judged from the survey results due to sample bias caused by over-representation of some sports that may not be popular among this particular population.

Becoming a sports volunteer

Why do people become volunteers?

New Zealanders report that they become sports volunteers for many different reasons, with the main ones including giving something back to the sport or club (28 percent), a family member starting to play in the sport (27 percent), and love of the sport (21 percent).

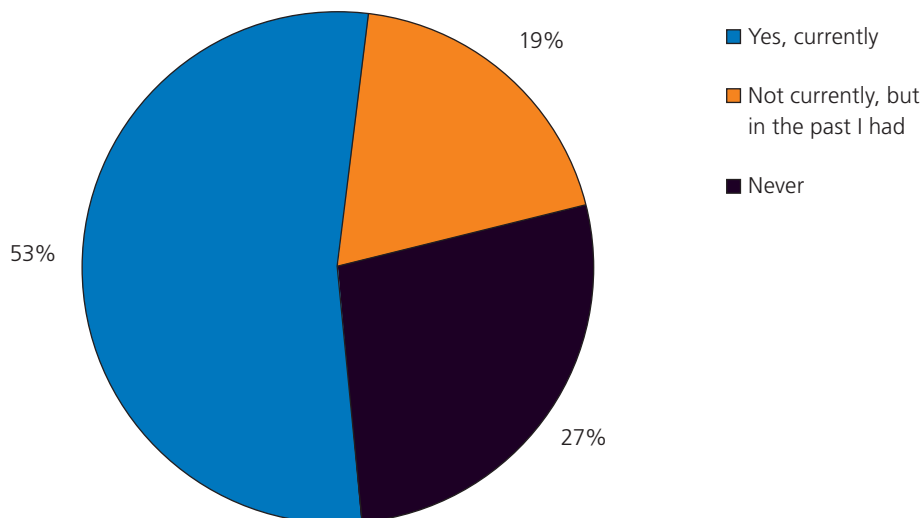
Originally I'd played for the club and wanted to give something back.

My boy was playing rugby and he wanted me to coach, even though I had never played rugby in my life before.

That the involvement of their family in a sport is an incentive for many sports volunteers is reflected in the number of sports volunteers (53 percent) who currently have family members participating in the same club or team. For a further 19 percent, a family member had participated in the club or team in the past but is no longer doing so.

GRAPH 3: OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE SAME CLUB OR TEAM (N=1000)

Question: Do you have a son or daughter, or another member of the family participating in the same club or team that you volunteer for?





Coaches or assistant coaches, in particular, are more likely to report that they currently have a family member in the same club or team (63 percent). Both coaches and managers are more likely to say they became volunteers for their current organisation because a family member started to play the sport (36 percent and 47 percent respectively).

Captains/co-captains are more likely to report giving something back to the sport or club as their main reason for becoming a volunteer (50 percent). Club committee members or officers are more likely to say they became volunteers for their organisation because no one else could do it, so they stepped up (26 percent).

Volunteers involved with team-oriented sports organisations are more likely to mention they became volunteers because a family member started to play (39 percent), compared with volunteers from non-team sports oriented organisations (14 percent).

Recommendation – Develop family-oriented strategies

The age distribution of sports volunteers is centred on the child-upbringing years (36 percent are aged 40 to 49 years). Many people start volunteering because a family member has started to play in the sport and the majority of volunteers live in a family household with a child under 18 years.

The sports sector should consider family-oriented strategies to assist in the retention of existing volunteers. Specific strategies are also needed to retain younger volunteers either throughout their life or to encourage them to come back to volunteering as they get older.

The experiences and attitudes of sports volunteers

Experiences of volunteers

Sports volunteers report many positive experiences of volunteering. Those surveyed chose the following statements as applying the most to their personal attitudes and experiences:

- I enjoy seeing others succeed in sport.
- Volunteering is a way that people can give something back to the community and society.
- Volunteering lets me give something back to the sport I love.
- When people do well in sport, it reflects positively on their community/whānau/the club as a whole.
- When someone I've worked with while volunteering succeeds, I feel like I've succeeded also.
- I've learned a lot from volunteering.

The six distinct types of volunteers

One of the key objectives of this survey of volunteers and their experiences was to gain a clearer sense of their attitudes towards the sports volunteering experience. Recent New Zealand research⁴ looking at existing volunteers, potential volunteers and lapsed volunteers identified nine motivational mindsets in how people want to deal with a sports organisation.



4 SPARC. (2006). Finding and keeping volunteers: What the research tells us. Wellington: SPARC.

One of the objectives of the Sports Volunteers' Experiences Survey was to confirm whether this previous qualitative segmentation of volunteer coaches' motivations could be quantified, as well as applied to a broader range of sports volunteers. The survey looked in more detail at current volunteers. Analysis of the respondents' answers to the various attitudinal and experience statements identified six key segments, or types of volunteers, within the survey sample:

- **Mutual Beneficials** – volunteers who perceive themselves as gaining personally from the volunteer experience, while still feeling they are giving something back to the community and the sport they love.

This group includes slightly more women (52 percent) than men (48 percent). Those in the *Mutual Beneficials* segment are less likely to report their main role as a being a referee/judge, marshal or umpire.

- **Investors** – volunteers who feel they are contributing to the sport, but do not necessarily gain as much personally as those in the *Mutual Beneficials* segment.

Respondents in this segment are significantly more likely to be aged 70 years or older and also to have a household structure of an older couple with no children, or none living at home, and be retired.

- **The Cautious, but Keen** – volunteers who, while similar in some aspects to those in the *Mutual Beneficials* segment, do not appear to be as personally engaged and have concerns about the commitment involved.

Those in the *Cautious but Keen* segment are more likely to be volunteering as a coach.

- **Social Norms** – volunteers who tend to be engaged in team sports, such as rugby, are more likely to have a family member involved in the sport they volunteer for, and are more likely to put in a minimal number of hours. They also have a lower level of emotional commitment than those in the *Mutual Beneficials* or *Investors* segment.

On average, those in the *Social Norms* segment mentioned they are doing a lesser number of roles for their organisation than the total sample of volunteers. They are also more likely to report volunteering for two hours or less per week and are less likely to report they volunteer year round.

- **The Frustrated** – while they may agree that they have experienced many positive aspects of volunteering, these volunteers also feel their contributions are not appreciated or recognised. They have issues in relation to the clarity of roles and responsibilities as well as the time commitment involved.

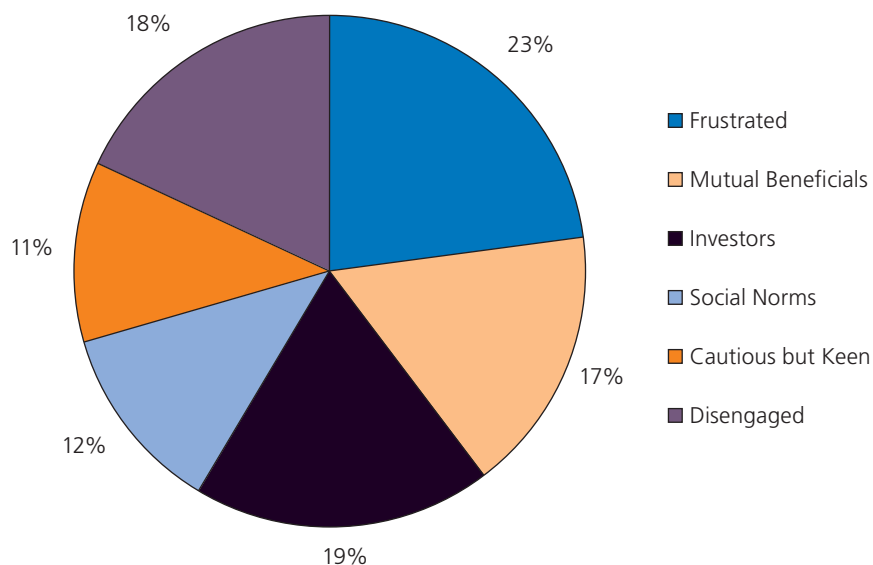
Those in the *Frustrated* segment can be found in any demographic group, sport or role.

- **The Disengaged** – volunteers who appear to be getting much less out of volunteering than those in the other segments, and who are more likely to have higher levels of agreement with some of the more negative aspects of volunteering (though not to the degree of those in the *Frustrated* segment).

Those in the Disengaged segment can be found in any demographic group.

The size of the different segments, relative to the total sample, is shown below.

GRAPH 4: VOLUNTEER SEGMENTS (N=1000)



Recommendation – Social marketing: an effective option

Analysis of the different segments that distinguish volunteer sub-groups confirms that, beyond the nature of their volunteer roles, sports volunteers differ primarily in relation to their attitudes and experiences rather than demographically.

Social marketing campaigns directed at sports volunteers could reach and impact a wide range of different volunteers in a cost-effective manner. The same channels can be used for delivering a range of messages that different volunteer sub-groups will be able to identify with.

Satisfactions and challenges for sports volunteers

Reflecting a high degree of satisfaction with sports volunteering, 95 percent of all respondents reported they recommend being a sports volunteer to other people.

Satisfaction with volunteering

Ninety-two percent of sports volunteers report being satisfied with their role in the sport organisation they mainly volunteer for, with over a quarter giving a '10 out of 10' score. Only two percent were dissatisfied, giving a score below the mid-point⁵.

Most frequently volunteers said they are satisfied because:

- It is fun and enjoyable.

Well, I wouldn't do it if I didn't enjoy it. It's as simple as that.

I enjoy doing it, it has to be done and it gives you a sense of achievement.

- They enjoy and love the game and the job.

It's a good way to see how gymnasts are doing from a different viewpoint. It's another way to give back to the sport.

- They enjoy seeing players develop.

I am making good progress with my athletes – they are reaching their goals and reaching independence, learning life skills.

Coaches or assistant coaches are more likely to be satisfied with their roles, while club committee members or officers are significantly less satisfied.

⁵ The survey participants are all current volunteers and it is extremely likely that, if they had high degrees of dissatisfaction, many would have already quit. As such, the findings should be used with caution and, in particular, cannot be extrapolated to represent the views of former sports volunteers.



Dissatisfaction with volunteering

While, overall, most current volunteers are satisfied with their roles, some still mentioned certain negative aspects of sport volunteering. These include *that little or no support is provided*, *that it takes up too much time* and *that it is harder than I thought it would be*.

Furthermore, over half of all volunteers report that the following two statements apply somewhat to their experiences as a sports volunteer:

- Most people do not recognise the value of volunteer's time.
- Parents and other people who come to watch sport can be quite abusive of coaches and referees. SPARC has developed a *Sport Rage* information page on their website that provides resources for volunteers and clubs to manage this issue⁶.

Only 15 of the 1000 people surveyed reported various degrees of dissatisfaction with their main role⁷. The reasons for their dissatisfaction included: *harder than I thought it would be* (three people), *it takes up too much time* (three people), *no or little support is provided* (two people), *not feeling valued* (two people), *need more volunteers* (one person), and other various reasons (three people).

I'm putting too much effort in and not getting the returns. That's probably because the club membership is diminishing and so we're getting less and less support. I don't get enough time to enjoy gliding for the volunteer hours I put in.

⁶ <http://www.sparc.co.nz>

⁷ The survey participants are all current volunteers and it is extremely likely that, if they had high degrees of dissatisfaction, many would have already quit. As such, the findings should be used with caution and, in particular, cannot be extrapolated to represent the views of former sports volunteers.

Quitting volunteering

Despite high levels of satisfaction with volunteering, over one third (38 percent) of all volunteers considered quitting their main role in the 12 months leading up the survey. Most frequently their reasons include *time and work commitments*, *personality clashes and club 'politics'*, and a *feeling that it is time to move on*.

Those in the *Investors* and *Social Norms* segments are less likely to report that over the past year they have considered quitting their main volunteer roles. Managers or assistant managers are also less likely to report they have considered quitting in the last 12 months.

Volunteers living in a family household with the youngest child aged 5 to 15 years are more likely to mention *time & work commitments* (53 percent) as being a reason they have considered quitting. Older couples with no children, or none living at home currently, are less likely to mention this (23 percent).

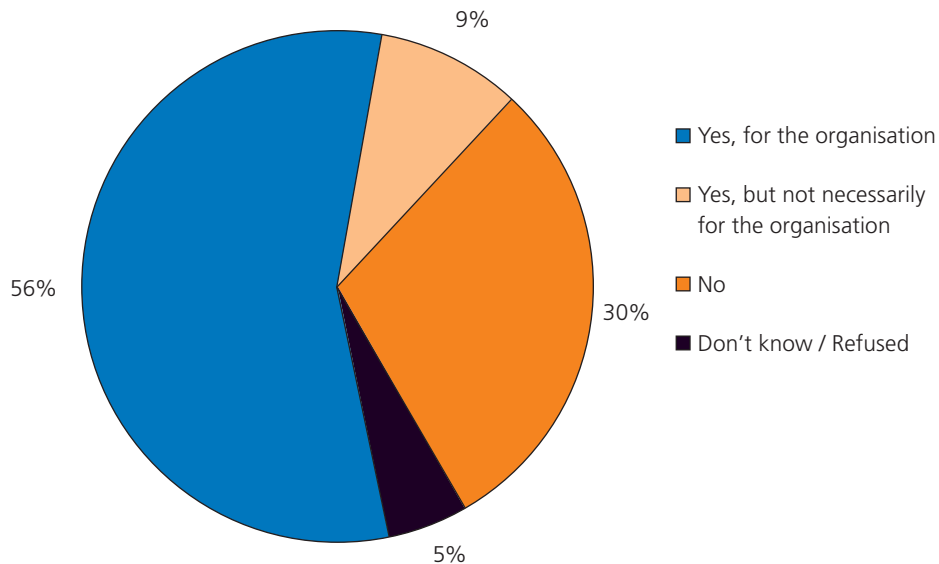
The presence of a family member in the same club or team appears to influence decisions about quitting. Nearly one third of those with a family member participating in the same club or team say that they would not continue volunteering if their relative stopped being involved with the sport. On the positive side, 56 percent say they would continue to volunteer for the same organisation even if their relative stopped being involved with the sport. Another nine percent say they might switch to a different sports organisation.

Those volunteers in the Mutual Beneficials segment are more likely to say they would continue to volunteer for their organisation if a family member stopped being involved with the team.

Those living in a family household where the youngest child is aged over 15 years, as well as older couples with no children, or none living at home currently, are also more likely to continue volunteering for their organisation.

GRAPH 5: LEAVING VOLUNTEERING DUE TO FAMILY PARTICIPATION (N=534)

Question: You mentioned that you have a family member participating in your club or team. If they stopped being involved with the sport, would you continue volunteering?



Sub-sample based on respondents who currently have a family member participating in their club or team.

Barriers to volunteering

While 51 percent of volunteers say that there are no things that make it personally difficult for them to continue in their main volunteer role, the other 49 percent mentioned:

- Time constraints (22 percent).
- Family commitments (11 percent).
- Work commitments (five percent).
- Personality clashes, club 'politics' (five percent).
- Personal health issues (five percent).

Respondents living in a family household with the youngest child under 5 years are more likely to mention *family commitments* (37 percent) and *time constraints* (35 percent) as making it personally difficult for them to continue in their main volunteer role. Older couples with no children, or none living at home currently, are more likely to report there is nothing that makes it difficult for them to volunteer in their main role (62 percent). However, as a group, they are more likely to mention *personal health issues* (ten percent), while being less likely to mention *time constraints* (ten percent) and *family commitments* (three percent) than the total sample.

Recommendation – Develop resources designed to improve volunteer skills, experience and confidence

The survey examined several risks to sports volunteering, including ceasing involvement for various reasons. Up to 38 percent of volunteers have thought about quitting their role in the last 12 months. And, while the prime reasons for this are people's time and work commitments, the second most frequently mentioned reason was personality clashes and club 'politics'.

The sports sector should consider how they can support clubs and teams with guidance on how to find the right fit between the role and the person, given their skills, experience and confidence levels, as well as guidance to volunteers on how to do a job well.

Recommendation – Sustain involvement during different life phases

Nearly one third of volunteers who have a family member in the same club would stop volunteering if their relative left the sport. This equates to 16 percent of all sports volunteers.

Strategies are needed to support younger people to sustain their involvement at the time they start a family. At the very least, clubs and teams should endeavour to keep active contact with them, so that by the time they have time to do other things, sports volunteering is high on their consideration set. Clubs and teams should aim to provide volunteers with positive experiences in the first place, so that they want to come back rather than feel they are .

Improving the sports volunteer experience

One in five volunteers think that there is nothing they could change about being a volunteer for their sporting organisation to improve their satisfaction, and another seven percent are uncertain what they would or could change. However, despite very high satisfaction levels, three quarters of volunteers still had some suggestions, including:

- Having more volunteers.

More members, more people to work with.

- Financial support for the club, team.

Better funding for lower profile sports.

- Sharing responsibilities with others.

Trying to get all members to contribute something whether it would be just an hour of their time not just same people.

- Having parents more involved with the club or team.

That the school or club has a roster for parents to participate rather than the coach doing it.



Support for volunteers

Two in three volunteers (67 percent) received support from their club or team to fulfil their role as a volunteer at the time they started the job. Moreover, 90 percent of those receiving such support feel it was sufficient.

Notably, coaches or assistant coaches are more likely to report they received support from their club or team when they started (75 percent), while club committee members or officers are less likely to have received any support (56 percent). Those in the Disengaged segment are less likely to say they received any support (56 percent) from their club or organisation when they began volunteering. They also have the lowest reported levels of satisfaction in relation to volunteering.

Those few volunteers (60 respondents, or six percent) who said that the support they received from their club or team was not sufficient at the time they started gave the following reasons:

- No comprehensive instructions.
- A lack of organised introduction.
- A lack of written guidelines on the role.
- No clear communications.

Also, while 40 percent of volunteers say they currently do not need any additional help and resources from the club to do their volunteer roles better, 56 percent say there are several things that could be of assistance to them. These include providing coaching seminars or training, feedback, information (17 percent), more support in general (ten percent), and having written guidelines for the role (seven percent).

Recommendation – Supporting the coaching role

Many coaches and assistant coaches want assistance and support in their roles. SPARC has a coaching strategy in place designed specifically for delivering training, resources and support to coaches. This strategy is delivered through our national sports organisations.

Some coaches may have low levels of awareness of the assistance available through NSOs. This issue might merit further exploration during the next review of the coaching strategy.

Conclusion

Volunteers are a valuable resource for sports teams and clubs, and in many cases their involvement can ensure the survival of a club or team. To ensure the continued involvement of volunteers, it is important to understand their motivations for becoming and staying involved.

Several recommendations have been made for the sports sector throughout this report and these are listed below. However, SPARC hopes that individual clubs and teams will also find much of interest in the body of the report and use the information to further improve their volunteer management and retention practices. The full results of the survey are available from SPARC in the report, *Volunteers: the heart of sport*.

Recommendations for the sports sector:

- Consideration of strategies and policies that are focused on the retention of existing volunteers (through enhancement of the volunteering experience) rather than on the acquisition of new volunteers, and also identifying ways to compete for potential volunteers' available time.
- Development of strategies that help to attract more women into sports volunteering and provide support for their sustainable involvement. This can also send the message that 'volunteering is for everybody', and that specific roles, such as coaching (69 percent of whom are male) or team captains (66 percent of whom are male), are not gender-specific.
- Review of strategies and policies, with the aim of attracting a range of ethnic groups, and particularly Asian peoples, to sports volunteering.
- Further investigation to determine whether children from single parent families have fewer opportunities to be involved in sport, or if serious barriers exist that prevent single parents from participating in sports volunteering. Clubs could identify whether single parents are volunteering and, if not, how they could be encouraged to become involved.
- Development of family-oriented strategies to assist in the retention of existing volunteers. Specific strategies are also needed to retain younger volunteers either throughout their life or to encourage them to come back to volunteering as they get older.
- Social marketing campaigns directed at sports volunteers could reach and impact a wide range of different volunteers in a cost-effective manner. The same channels can be used for delivering a range of messages that different volunteer sub-groups will be able to identify with.
- Development of guidance for clubs on how to find the right fit between the role and the person, given their skills, experience and confidence levels, as well as guidance to volunteers on how to do a job well.
- Development of strategies to support younger people to sustain their involvement at the time they start a family. At the very least clubs and teams should endeavour to keep active contact with this group, so that when they have time to do other things, sports volunteering is high on their consideration set. Clubs and teams should aim to provide volunteers with positive experiences in the first place, so that they want to come back rather than feel they are obligated.
- Promote the delivery of the coaching strategy through National Sport Organisations (NSO). Some coaches may have low levels of awareness of the assistance.



Level 4, Dominion Building, 78 Victoria Street,
PO Box 2251, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: +64 4 472 8058 Fax: +64 4 471 0813

www.sparc.org.nz