



Chapter 13

Volunteering and Sport

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This chapter analyses the scale of sport volunteering in Australia, reviews the myriad roles performed by Australian volunteers in sport, and identifies the key trends of volunteer involvement in sport. It explores the main issues involved with sustaining a significant sport volunteer workforce for Australia in the context of increased regulation and drivers towards greater professionalism of volunteering, and scopes some of the future challenges for volunteering in the Australian sport sector.

Introduction



In most Westernised countries the proportion of volunteers who choose to devote their volunteering efforts to sport is significant. For example, somewhere between a quarter and a third of volunteers in Australia are involved in sport organisations as coaches, officials, administrators or general volunteers for clubs or events such as State or national championships, or for multi-sport events such as Olympic, Commonwealth or Masters Games. The importance of volunteers in sport cannot be underestimated as highlighted by Doherty 'sport volunteerism is critical to the sport industry itself, and to the voluntary sector as a whole' (2006: 105). This chapter analyses the scale of this voluntary effort in Australia, reviews the myriad roles performed by Australian volunteers in sport, and identifies the key trends of volunteer involvement in sport. It also explores the main issues involved with sustaining a significant sport volunteer workforce for Australia in the context of increased regulation and drivers towards greater professionalism of volunteering. Finally, it outlines some of the future challenges for volunteering in the Australian sport sector.



Scale of sport volunteering

Cuskelly, Hoye and Auld pointed out that 'the scale and nature of volunteer participation in sport depends very much on how volunteering is



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