What is Spontaneous Volunteer Registration?

Spontaneous Volunteer / Emergency Recovery Registration is an online registration, information and referral system for the many volunteers who generously and spontaneously offer to lend a hand to help the community in recovery operations following a disaster.

It is for volunteers who are not part of a recognised voluntary recovery agency and often:

- have no formal training in emergency response
- are not officially invited to become involved but are motivated by a sudden desire to help others in times of trouble
- have a variety of skills.

Volunteers from either inside or outside the affected area are welcome to register.

Who manages the Registration System?

Under an agreement with the Northern Territory Government, Volunteering SA&NT is responsible for the registration and referral of volunteers to Northern Territory emergency management recovery agencies (when required), following a disaster or emergency event in the Northern Territory.

Why should I register?

There are four important reasons why you are encouraged to register.

1. Volunteer effort is most helpful and more effectively coordinated if details about people who are spontaneously volunteering are known.
2. Everyone’s personal safety is important and you could even unintentionally hinder some aspects of the overall recovery effort.
3. It enables us to get volunteers with the right skills, at the right time, to priority areas of need, when it is safe to do so.
4. Volunteering SA & NT will refer you to emergency recovery organisations that have Volunteer Personal Accident and Public Liability Insurance. You will need to check if there are any exclusions such as age limits or the type of voluntary work undertaken.

How do I register?

Following the disaster / emergency event, messages will be advertised on how to register, either on line through the Volunteering SA&NT website or via a spontaneous volunteer hotline.

How can I update my registration information?
Once you have registered, to update or correct any of your details, phone (08) 82217177.

**When can I volunteer?**

- Following registration, Volunteering SA&NT will provide you with regular updates by email and or phone, about the need for volunteers, when it is safe to enter recovery zones, priority needs and volunteer roles.
- After an emergency, it takes emergency recovery agencies time to work out how to most effectively use volunteers - it can take a number of weeks to get placed in a volunteer position.
- When an emergency recovery agency puts out a request for volunteers, Volunteering SA&NT will contact you either by email or phone to see if you are available to assist.
- Specialist volunteer roles will be advertised on the Volunteering SA&NT website at [www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au](http://www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au) If it matches with your interest and skills, apply on-line.
- We cannot guarantee that all registered spontaneous volunteers will be contacted as this depends on the number of people who may register to volunteer, the skills best suited to support the recovery and the requests we receive from disaster recovery management authorities.
- Depending on the extent of the disaster, recovery volunteers may not be required for the first few weeks after the event (eg it may not be safe). The recovery process could then last months or a number of years with spontaneous volunteers called on to assist during this time. In the mean time the person can support family, friends and neighbours or one of their local community organisations may appreciate support.

**What's expected of me when I volunteer?**

As a spontaneous volunteer helping in emergency recovery operations it's expected that you will:

- support the work of the team
- be flexible and reasonable in accommodating team requirements where possible
- treat those in need, other volunteers and workers with respect and courtesy
- be open, honest and fair in your volunteer role
- take responsibility for your own health and safety and not put at risk the health and safety of others
- participate in training, briefings or coaching necessary to your voluntary duties
- take responsibility for staying informed
- use information gained in the course of your volunteer work with sensitivity and discretion and observe confidentiality and privacy requirements
- help to maintain a harmonious workplace and recognise the value of diversity.

**What must I do if I'm asked for a media comment?**

Under NO circumstances may you discuss any issues with members of the media. There will be clearly designated staff responsible for this function to ensure that a consistent message is passed on to the media.

**How do I claim out-of-pocket expenses?**

You must first gain permission for any expenses incurred prior to expenditure then submit any claims promptly for any approved out-of-pocket expenses.
What can I expect from the recovery organisers?

You can expect that emergency recovery organisations will:

- regard volunteers as members of a team and recognise their contribution
- value the time, energy and commitment of volunteers and not make unreasonable demands
- treat community members, volunteers and each other with respect and courtesy
- be open, honest and fair in our dealings with volunteers
- make sure volunteers have safe and healthy working conditions and appropriate insurance cover
- provide support and supervision for volunteers
- provide appropriate training and coaching to help volunteers in their work
- provide prompt reimbursement to volunteers for appropriate out-of-pocket expenses, if those expenses were approved prior to expenditure
- make sure volunteers are well informed, have clear volunteer duties and have the information they need to do their jobs
- protect and respect the confidentiality of personal information about volunteers.