



# **VOLUNTEER Induction Handbook**

**Guidelines for volunteers to follow**



**RECREATION, SPORTS and AQUATICS CLUB**



# Vision

**To provide a range of quality, financially sustainable lifestyle services to people with disabilities, their carers and families in Metropolitan South Ageing, Disability and Home Care Region that include:**

- Specialist Services
- Sport
- Social and Recreational
- Vacation & OOSHC
- Support
- Educational and Personal Development
- Any other programs that may be developed over the life of the Strategic Plan

## CONTENTS

<b>Welcome to the RSAC Team.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>RSAC Profile.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Meet the Club.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Target Audience.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Looking after You! .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rights and Responsibilities.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Participant Complaints.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Child Protection.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Hints for Good Communication.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appropriately Speaking ~ terminologies.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Acceptance of Gifts.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Personal Relationships.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Supporting Participants and Carers.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Fundamental Training Notes.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Information about Disabilities.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Positive approaches to Disabilities.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Incident &amp; Injury Reporting.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Vehicle Use Insurance Cover.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Universal Precautions.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Manual Handling &amp; Back Care.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Understanding &amp; Maintaining Boundaries.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>22</b>

## Welcome to the RSAC Team

**T**ogether  
**E**veryone  
**A**chieves  
**M**ore!!

That says  
it all!

Volunteering is a great way to meet new friends, learn new skills and doing something worthwhile for your community. RSAC appreciates the assistance of volunteers and so do our participants. Without volunteers, RSAC services cannot be provided.

As a volunteer with RSAC you will be required to follow the organisations policies and procedures. This is our way of making sure our participants can receive quality care and that we comply with State and Federal legislations. All volunteers, staff and office bearers are required to sign a Code of Conduct, a Working With Children Check and complete membership forms prior to commencement in any position with RSAC.

The RSAC Volunteer Induction Handbook offers plenty of tips and training so that you have support across varied communication techniques, disabilities and conditions that may apply to our participants, including fundamental training notes relevant to your RSAC volunteer role.

As well as regular and occasional events, RSAC has key events that involve volunteers on an annual basis, these include; Presentation Day, Family Picnic Day and a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner in recognition of your commitment to volunteering with RSAC.

So we welcome you to RSAC and thank you for considering to offer your time and skills to a very worthy community organisation. We're certain you will gain as much as you give in your volunteering and find it rewarding!

**Fun should be a big part  
of your volunteer work!**

∞

**RSAC participants  
appreciate the enjoyable  
support that volunteers  
can provide.**

## RSAC Profile

Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club is an unfunded community based organisation that has provided sport and recreation for people with disabilities since 1987. It operates community-based activities in seven local government areas in south east, inner west and south western regions of Sydney.

RSAC was established to provide a venue for people with disabilities to swim, learn to swim and water safety in an environment that met their needs within a peer group, with adequate support. It was established as a volunteer based organisation that would support itself through its own and community resources and assistance.

RSAC now provides sporting, recreational and social activities and events that meet the ongoing needs of people with a disability and support to parents and carers. The personal development and independence of people with a disability is an ongoing commitment of our organisation. RSAC has been affiliated with Special Olympics NSW since 1988 under the name "Special Olympics Roselands Region".

RSAC has an active board with a diverse range of skills including two adult consumer representatives and professionals with expertise in disability and financial services and management. RSAC employs an Executive Officer who reports to the Board and is responsible for supervision of staff and volunteers.

RSAC is currently transitioning from an organisation reliant on volunteers and parents to a professional service provider for people with disabilities and their families and carers. This process has involved an increased emphasis on training and policy development to ensure that services provided by the organisation can achieve quality outcomes for all service users. RSAC maintains a strong commitment to the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families and carers, grounded in the experience and input of service users.

## Meet the Club



### Structure

A voluntary Board of management, who are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting, oversees the organisation. The Board meets bi-monthly and oversees the financial management of the organisation, its direction and policy development.

Governance policies are currently being reviewed to better detail the scope of activities and responsibilities of the Board.

The management of the club is undertaken by:

- **The Executive** - includes the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer with the Executive Officer ex-officio, which holds the legal responsibility for the management of the organisation.
- **The Board** - chaired by the President, consists of the Executive, Consumer Representative/s, Board members which meet at least bi-monthly.
- **The Sports Committee** - coordinated by the Executive Officer, includes Head Coaches of Sports and Team Managers.
- **The Social/Fundraising Committee** - chaired by the Social Fundraising Manager. Membership consists of Social Fundraising Manager and Social Fundraising Committee members.

## Target Audience

### People with a disability

RSAC is structured to meet the needs of people with an intellectual or associated disability, and/or physical, sensory or other disability; most participants are between the ages of 5 and 65.

### Families, Carers and Friends

RSAC acts as a support system for carers of people with a disability providing activities, information and events for both people with a disability and their families, carers and friends.

### Volunteers

Being a community organisation, RSAC thrives on its volunteers. It relies on them entirely for the continuation of its events and programs. More than 100 volunteers currently participate on a regular basis, providing sports coaching and support, special event management and support, administration and overall club management.

### Donors, Sponsors and Funding Bodies

Being a non-profit organisation, RSAC relies on outside contributions and support. Both targeted and non targeted funds are essential for RSAC and a large number of its projects are directly funded through grants.

### Networks

RSAC has an established network of like-minded people and organisations with whom we interact. These networks are vital in disseminating our message and information. They also keep us up to date and on track and ensure that we continue to meet the ongoing needs of our target group, without replication.

### Consultation

RSAC is committed to extensive consultation with the people with disabilities and their families and carers who use our services, our staff and volunteers and with stakeholder organisations to ensure that it is informed and knowledgeable in its core business – service provision and support for people with disabilities.

## Looking after You!

### ***Reimbursements***

Occasionally volunteers may be required to make a purchase or incur an expense on RSAC's behalf. Such expenditure must be pre-approved by the Executive Officer or Treasurer.

Reimbursement requests should be presented as soon as practical and must be accompanied by a receipt, invoice or petty cash voucher as appropriate.

### ***Privacy & Confidentiality***

RSAC only collects and records personal information which is necessary for the functioning of our volunteer program. We do not collect information about you without your knowledge and consent.

All volunteer's personal information is treated with confidentiality and in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988 as amended, and the National Privacy Principles.

In the time you are volunteering with RSAC, you will come across personal information about participants and other volunteers. You are required to keep this information private at all times, and breaches of this can constitute an offence under the law. However, where you have a concern about a matter that you feel needs further attention, you need to discuss it with your manager or the Executive Officer. This is particularly important where you believe the health or safety of a participant is at risk.

### ***Mentoring, support & position review***

All volunteers have access to a manager to provide feedback and express their ideas and concerns. This can be a formal process, or informally over a cuppa!! Supervision gives you an opportunity to clarify any concerns, find out about changes, talk about training coming up and much more.



## *Every Volunteer has the responsibility to...*

**Be dependable.** It is very frustrating when people make promises they can't keep. Make sure that you are doing what you really want to do, and that you are reliable.

**Be willing to learn.** Find out all that you can about your job and attend training when offered.

**Be patient.** If you are working with people with special needs, allow them as much independence as possible. Don't do things for them just because it's quicker.

**Keep information confidential.** The things that you learn about people on or off the job should be kept to yourself. Any concerns should be discussed with the Coordinator.

**Be aware of the organisation's policies and procedures** that concern your work. A general rule of thumb is .... If you don't know...then please ASK.

**Not to judge** peoples capabilities by their age or disabilities, or to try and influence others with your own beliefs.

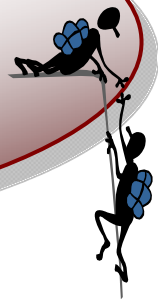
**Work as part of a team.** When you are working with other people you are not the "star performer" - everyone is equal. Keep a good working relationship with your workmates.

**Be open-minded.** Accept other people's opinions even if you don't agree with them. Don't try and make people accept your views and standards.

**Tell the Coordinator** if you are happy or unhappy with your work. Don't take on too much, it's better to start gradually and as you gain confidence you can then take on more if you wish.

**Be aware of your own limitations** you are assisting vulnerable members of our society. As much as this is commendable, it's also important that you look after yourself. Have your own interests, friends and activities and don't take on more responsibility that you can handle.

*Remember...*  
*you can't help others if you can't  
help yourself first.*



# RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES

## of VOLUNTEERS and RECREATION SPORTS AND AQUATICS CLUB

You as a volunteer and Recreation, Sports and Aquatics Club have responsibilities towards each other. As a volunteer you agree to perform a specific job and our job is to provide you with a worthwhile and rewarding experience. In return, each has the right to some basic expectations of the other.

<b>You, as a volunteer have the right to:</b>	<b>RSAC has the right to:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose suitable assignments, tasks or jobs that are worthwhile to you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expect conscientious work performance, punctuality and reliability from a volunteer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job descriptions or clear outlines of your responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expect volunteers to adhere to their job descriptions/outlines.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know the purpose and "ground rules" of Recreation, Sports and Aquatics Club.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the decisions regarding the best placement of volunteers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate orientation and training for your work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express opinions about poor volunteer effort in a diplomatic way.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be treated as a co-worker in relation to anti-discrimination, EEO, OH&amp;S, legislation and organisational grievance processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expect loyalty to the organisation and only constructive criticism.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound managerial support and leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expect clear and open communication from a volunteer.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A place to work and suitable tools and materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expect the volunteer to undertake training provided.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate promotion and a variety of experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate work assignments.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be heard and make suggestions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow grievance procedures.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be adequately insured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adhere to safety rules.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reimbursement of agreed expenses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Release volunteers under certain circumstances.</li> </ul>

*NB. Extract from Volunteering NSW leaflet 10/08/2000.*



## Participant Complaints

Feedback from participants is important in ensuring that services are continuing to meet their needs and for planning appropriate services. An important source of feedback is participant complaints and these are encouraged and welcomed by RSAC.

All participants should be made aware of their right to complain, and should fully understand the complaints procedure and the use and availability of advocates.

Participants have a right to complain about the service they are receiving without fear of retribution and can expect complaints to be dealt with promptly.

The Coach or manager should take steps to ensure that participants feel comfortable to continue accessing the service after making a complaint.

RSAC has a procedure in place that will be followed if you have a grievance about an issue relating to your volunteer work, this allows all complaints and disputes to be dealt with fairly, promptly and without retribution.

### **Complaints Procedure**

1. Complaint are dealt with in accordance with the formal complaints procedure, *Refer to RSAC Member Protection Policy and Constitution.*
2. If the issue is still not resolved, the participant can complain to the:

NSW Ombudsman  
Level 3, 128 Chalmers Street  
Surrey Hills NSW 2010  
**Phone (Freecall): 1800 060 409.**

Please refer to RSAC “Enjoy Your Sport, Be Safe and Play by the Rules”. *See “Appendix A”*

## Child Protection



Child protection is a whole of community responsibility. RSAC maintains a CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING POLICY that all staff and people providing services to children and young people must follow.

*Policy is attached as “Appendix B”*



Prior to commencement in your volunteer role you are required to complete a Working With Children Check Employment Screening Consent Form.

## Hints for Good Communication

**Communication Techniques for people with disabilities may vary so;**

- Be patient
- Be aware of external stimuli (TV, Radio, etc)
- Ask one question at a time – make it simple (not condescending)
- Be precise to avoid confusion
- Allow time for the participant to comprehend what you have said
- Allow time for the participant to respond
- You may need to repeat yourself a few times
- Find out about the participant's favourite things and talk about that

***If you do not do this it can result in;***

- Agitation or anger
- A blank stare
- The wrong answer and much more



Everyone is different, so every individual with a disability is going to be different to communicate with.

Sometimes just your presence can make a big difference to support our participants, even if there can't be much conversation. In other situations simply listening to what the person has to say can provide support. At such times you are not necessarily expected to respond, it may be enough to show you are listening.

***Always consider the following points;***

### **1. RESPECT**

The expression of respect and genuineness in the helping relationship are important. Unless the participant feels respected no true communication can take place.

### **2. EMPOWERING**

We are there to help and promote the participants independence – not create dependence on us. Empowering means giving back the power to our participants that in so many circumstances because of their disability they have not developed or lost. The service is for the participants to maintain independence and recreational inclusion. Encourage them to make their own decisions.

### **3. DON'T RUSH IN WITH ADVICE**

Or feel you need to offer a solution. Be aware of your own values and the importance of not imposing these on other people. Try to get the person to look at what options they may have and then make a choice but don't give advice. Do not give advice to participants about topics that are non RSAC related, this is not our responsibility and only adds to their confusion and may even give participants false hope and understanding *ie; information about their finances or rights to Centrelink etc.*

### **4. ACTIVE LISTENING**

Is, checking out what you heard the speaker say. You may be faced with a situation where there is a lot of emotion involved and if you can listen first then feedback what you picked up to the participant it gives them a chance to let you know if you are on the same wave-length (e.g "Joan you were really hurt by that weren't you?" Joan may reply. "Yes I think I was" or she may say "No, I was really angry!")

## 5. NON VERBAL

Remember so much communication actually takes place without speaking. Body language forms a large part of how we communicate. If you lean slightly forward when facing a speaker, you show interest. Be mindful that some of our participants do not like you to be too close and in retrospect some of our participants do not observe others' personal space and may need a gentle reminder every now and then to step back from someone including yourself.

## 6. OVER EAGERNESS

You may be so eager to respond that you listen to only part of what the participant is saying. You become pre-occupied with your responses rather than with the participant's conversation.

## 7. PREJUDICE

You may have some kind of prejudice towards the participant because of any number of things; not just the obvious ones such as race, religion, social status. Maybe your participant loves football and you think it is the most barbaric game invented. Be aware of this and let your activity manager know you may not be able to have a full relationship with that participant.



## 8. MOODS

Don't take mood changes personally. The participant may not be feeling well or just had a bad day.

## 9. PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Do not talk to the participant about your own personal problems. Your role is a 'supportive' one and is meant to provide social contact and activity assistance. Encourage a positive outlook and be a good listener.

## 10. TAKING THINGS HOME

Please don't take home the participants problems. This will not be beneficial to you or your participant. Talk problems over with your manager or the Executive Officer, those who are paid to deal with them – not volunteers.

*When assisting a participant we suggest you:*

### Should

- **Speak clearly**
- **Say simply what you are going to do**
- **Ask questions to check understanding**
  
- **Listen**
- **Be patient**

### Should not

- **Shout**
- **Mumble**
- **Speak too fast or use too many words**
- **Use jargon**
- **Be sarcastic**
- **Rush**

## Appropriately Speaking

Good terminologies and information to keep in mind when working with people with disabilities are;

- People with a disability may only have one disability, but they have many Abilities!
- Use the term 'people with a disability' not 'disabled person'.
- Disability is part of everyday life so try not to describe people as brave, special or suffering.
- People with epilepsy have 'seizures' not 'fits'.
- People with a disability do not see themselves as afflicted or suffering.

The manager of each program or session maintains 'Member Information Sheets' with detailed relevant information about participants. If you should feel the need to know more about a participant, please speak with the program or session manager responsible for that person.

The responsible manager will use their discretion as to whether it is necessary information to provide you with. Volunteers should observe and respond appropriately to the needs of participants and direct any questions or curiosities about a participant directly to the responsible manager. If the manager is unsure of any relevant details they will contact the RSAC office for clarification.

## Acceptance of Gifts

Volunteers must recognise the following guidelines that RSAC has in relation to accepting gifts from participants. A gift is anything that is usable and/or has a money value. The acceptance of a gift could place the volunteer or the participant in a situation where they could feel a debt is owed. This could lead to that participant receiving favoured treatment or feeling obligated to provide a gift in return.

Volunteers **must disclose all gifts** from participants irrespective of the value. This protects both the volunteer and RSAC.

Volunteers must not ask for gifts from participants. Gifts of money will be receipted and recorded as a donation. Participants offering items of large value will be requested to make a bequest to the organisation.

Possible outcomes once a gift is received:

- Staff or volunteer is permitted to retain.
- Used by the organisation.
- The organisation may raffle or sell the gift later on.
- The Gift may be given back to participant or their family.

## Personal Relationships

RSAC regards relationships between volunteers with participants and carers as an important professional issue where the volunteer has or is likely to have a service provision responsibility for the participant or carer. Volunteers are expected to abide by the activities identified in their job description; any variations must be given prior approval by management. Such relationships may raise serious questions regarding *conflict of interest*, trust, confidence, dependency in working relations and equal treatment with assessment and access to service provided by the organisation.

RSAC Volunteers are not permitted to enter into a personal, intimate relationship with RSAC participants under any circumstances. Any volunteer doing so are in breach of RSAC policy and will be dealt with accordingly, likely resulting in dismissal from their role.

The emphasis is placed on the ethical responsibility of the volunteer not to abuse their power and trust when dealing with participants and carers. This protects all concerned and enhances the overall quality of the service provided.

### **‘Conflict of interest’**

Conflict of interest is assessed on the likelihood of a reasonable person to think that a situation could influence the way a service is provided by the organisation and which could lead to biased decision making.

### **‘Personal relationship’**

Personal relationships include family, sexual, other close personal natured partnerships e.g. dating, organising social activities outside of the organisation’s activities, transporting participants independently of RSAC requirements and going to a participant’s home to do jobs in own time.

Duty of Care is to ensure legal and human rights are upheld in relation to the prevention of sexual, physical and emotional abuse of all involved and to ensure everyone’s safety and well being.

## **Supporting Participants and Carers**

RSAC wants to make sure that **everyone** enjoys their sport in a safe and friendly manner. To help make this happen, RSAC has a set of rules which are clearly outlined in the RSAC “Be Safe and Play by the Rules” guidelines as follows;

### ***Be a good sport***

- Treat all participants in your sport as you like to be treated yourself.
- Co-operate with your team-mates, coach and opponents.
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse and sledging are not acceptable behaviours.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their ability, gender or cultural background.



### ***You must feel safe***

- playing, at training and practice.
- travelling to and from games and training.
- with other players, your coach or team personnel.

### ***No-one should***

- verbally abuse you or anyone else.
- make racist or sexist jokes or comments, or jokes or comments about sexual preferences.
- allow offensive pictures or graffiti to be visible.
- look at or touch anyone in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- make uninvited sexual comments that offend, intimidate or humiliate.
- discriminate against or harass anyone else.

Duty of care is observed throughout all aspects of RSAC. In short, this means we all have a duty to care for each other and for our participants and fellow members to ensure that they do not suffer harm that was foreseeable.

## Fundamental Training Notes

Training is available to volunteers when identified as a need, to assist them to volunteer in a safe and responsible manner. Training can be social, fun and informative and will keep volunteers up to date with the latest in best practices for service delivery. Following are some training notes to assist you to develop further confidence in your volunteering with RSAC.

### Information about Disabilities

Some disabilities are more obvious than others, maybe a person uses an aid like a wheelchair or is assisted by a guide dog. But then again, the effects of disabilities such as diabetes, multiple sclerosis, hearing impairment, epilepsy or mental illness are hidden most of the time. So, maybe, you know people with more disabilities than you think!

People with intellectual and physical disabilities can and do learn. They may learn more slowly or differently, but they are very capable of learning.

Everyone is different from everyone else in one way or another, whether it's because of size, height, skin or hair colour. Since we are all unique, do not treat those who appear different like aliens. Even when we try to categorise specific disabilities, it becomes clear that the effects of a disability are different from person to person. A disability is not a sickness. It is always with you and individual develop ways to work with it.

It's important to remember that just because a person has a disAbility, it doesn't mean they have no Ability. A person should be valued for what they can do, not judged for what they cannot. Stevie Wonder's musical ability isn't affected by his lack of sight, but people with disabilities shouldn't have to be Superstars before they are seen as competent human beings.

The reason why anyone has a particular friend is because they have been in a situation where they have met them, and they have liked them. People with disabilities are no different. If you have red hair, you don't automatically like only other people with red hair.

What's normal? Your normal might be my abnormal. People with disabilities sometimes have to deal with unreasonable attitudes and being excluded from fully participating in society – not because of their disability, but because of a society organised around a very narrow definition of normal.









Society is becoming more accepting of homosexuality and de-facto relationships, but when someone with a disability is involved, the thought seems too shocking for many to imagine. People with disabilities are sexual beings and express their sexuality in ways that appeal to them – just like everyone else. People with disabilities live the way they want and have their own values like all other individuals.

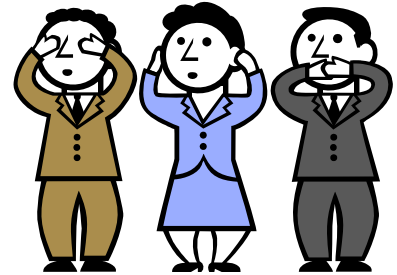
Most people with disabilities who use a general service aren't expecting you to perform a miracle. They use the service because of what it has to offer. Don't underestimate people with disabilities, your own resourcefulness or your own capacity to assist someone.

**If you feel you need to know more about a person's particular disability  
Try asking the expert ..... the person themselves!**







## Positive approaches to Disabilities

### **Suggestions for assisting people with vision loss:**

-  Always let a person with vision impairment know that you have entered a room, or have left it, so she or he knows when you are there.
-  Walking into bright sunlight can be like walking into a snow storm for someone with a visual impairment. So give the person time to adjust to the light changes.
-  Some vision impaired people have a problem with depth perception. Especially when different surfaces are the same colour. So mention this to the person if you are walking with them.
-  Shake a persons' hand if they extend their hand towards you.
-  If you think a vision impaired person might need help then please ask them. When guiding a vision impaired person don't push or pull them forward. Let them take your arm.
-  When seating a vision impaired person put their hand on the back of the chair. They will be then able to seat themselves.
-  Don't feed or pat a guide dog when the dog is in harness. When a guide dog is in harness, they are working.
-  Saying 'look at this' or 'I see' is normal. Don't avoid using them because you might feel it will offend the vision impaired person.



### **Some tips for helping people with hearing impairments:**

-  Wait until you are clearly visible to the hearing impaired person before you begin speaking.
-  Remember that communication is always more difficult in noisy situations and in groups.
-  Speak in a slightly louder voice and at a slightly slower rate. Don't shout.
-  Avoid speaking to the hearing impaired person while chewing, eating etc.
-  Remember that covering the mouth with hand when speaking or even beards on men can obstruct the view to the mouth and lips. Lip reading requires the person to see the movement of the mouth and lips and also read body language and gestures.
-  Make sure your face is in good light and free from shadow.

### **How to help a person who is having a seizure:**

- Keep calm – the person is not in pain.
- Allow the seizure to take its course. It will stop.
- Remove any objects that may cause injury to the person.
- Protect the person's head by using a pillow or rolled-up towel.
- Don't put your fingers or anything else in the person's mouth.
- Don't try to restrain movement.
- After the convulsion, roll the person over on their side and loosen tight clothing.
- Offer support and reassurance when the person regains consciousness.
- The person might be confused, so explain to them what has happened.
- Get medical help if the seizure lasts more than 10 minutes or another begins.

## Incidents and Injury Reporting

RSAC maintains current Voluntary Workers Personal Accident insurance under NCOSS (Council of Social Service of NSW) Community Cover with AON, to provide support to Volunteers. A strict reporting mechanism is in place to comply with our insurance requirements and ensure all participants, members and volunteers are covered for accident and injury.

The reporting plan helps cover you and the club should any accident or injury occur and further reasonable action is required. [see Reporting Requirements to Comply with Insurance Responsibilities "Appendix C"](#)

An Injury/Incident Report form requires completion in all cases where members, participants (whether members or not), family members, coaches and assistants and members of the public may be involved in any incidents that may be seen as being capable of having further repercussions. [see Injury/Incident Report "Appendix D"](#)

**Report any OHS issues that arise to the Executive Officer. These may be actual or potential risks that must be addressed before they cause injury or distress.**

## Vehicle Use Insurance Cover

If you drive a vehicle to attend and perform your RSAC volunteer duties and maintain a comprehensive insurance policy or third party property damage only insurance, then you are covered by RSAC NCOSS Community Insurance Policy.

This insurance covers the loss of excess and no claim bonus incurred for accidental damage to vehicles used on behalf of RSAC, in an at fault accident. Please refer to AON's NCOSS Policy or contact RSAC office if you require further clarification.

## Universal Precautions

In 2000 the New South Wales Government updated the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The Act gives the responsibility for providing a safe workplace to managers and supervisors. The Act also shared some responsibility with employees and made it compulsory for workers to use safe methods and equipment to do their job. Under the legislation employees must take reasonable care of the health and safety of others. Employees must cooperate with employers in their efforts to comply with occupational health and safety requirements.

### ***Employees, Employers and Volunteers must:***

- Take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety of others.
- Co-operate to ensure that the workplace is safe and healthy and report to the employer any situation at the workplace that could constitute a hazard.
- Follow the instruction provided by their employer and use any personal protective equipment provided.
- Staff & Volunteers should observe basic hygiene and infection control measures in their work with participants in order to avoid communicable diseases.

### ***Health and Hygiene Procedures***

Risk of infection can be virtually eliminated by the implementation of the following standard infection control procedures.



### **Recommended hand washing procedure;**

- Use soap and running water.
- Rub hands vigorously.
- Wash all surfaces – back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under nails.
- Rinse well.
- Dry hands with single use paper towel (do not use cloth towel).

### **Suggestions for maintaining universal precautions;**

- Wear disposable latex gloves when contact with blood or other body fluids is likely to occur.
- Wear gloves when preparing/serving food for events and activities.
- Participants' clothing that has become soiled with blood or body fluids should be handled with gloves and put into bags at the point where the soiling occurred.
- Body fluid spills can be cleaned with detergent. Blood spills should be cleaned with chlorine solution and COLD water.



*First Aid Kits  
are usually available at venues  
and activities where you will  
be volunteering, or the group  
will have a kit organised.*

## **Manual Handling & Back Care**

There are a number of regulations under the Act and in 1991 the Manual Handling Regulation came into force. This regulation requires all workers to look at manual handling tasks and to ensure that they were correctly carried out.

Manual handling is not just lifting and the definition is very broad indeed. A Code of Practice is included in the Regulation and this defines manual handling as:

***Any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry, or otherwise move, hold or restrain any animate or inanimate object.***

**Quite simply....if the object is too heavy- then don't lift it!**

To assist in deciding whether a task is going to present a manual handling hazard it must be assessed by the person who is going to do the job. The Code of Practice includes a checklist that examines a task to see if it is safe. The checklist asks questions about the task relating to:

- ✓ Weight
- ✓ Shape and size
- ✓ Distances to be moved
- ✓ Temperature of the object
- ✓ How often the action is made and
- ✓ How high the load is lifted



Generally speaking, the more questions that are ticked, then the greater the hazard, but note that the weight of the object is only one factor.

## **Maximum Loads**

The ability of a person to lift an object will depend on their physical strength, their experience and their training. This applies to both males and females equally.

Whilst there are no longer any exact weight limits for lifting, the Code of Practice does make some specific recommendations:

- ✓ Those under the age of 18 years should not lift more than 16kg (this is because it cannot be certain that they are not fully physically developed and any injury could affect them for the rest of their lives)
- ✓ The maximum weight to be lifted from a seated position should not exceed 4kg.
- ✓ Loads should, where possible, not be more than 16 to 20kg for any individual.
- ✓ No one should lift more than 55kg without help.

There are no limits with regard to older workers since, whilst ability may decrease with age, any loss of ability will often be compensated for by experience and technique.

## **Some General Rules for Lifting**

People need to be trained to lift properly so that they can move the load without hurting themselves. The actual technique will vary depending:-

- ✓ On the load and size and shape of the object. The actual weight doesn't matter- if it feels too heavy then it is too heavy. This can vary from day to day.
- ✓ You will usually find that it is easier to push or pull an object than it is to lift it and pushing is easier than pulling.
- ✓ If you can place a hessian bag or something similar under the base of the object to minimise the friction, then this will make the job even easier.



## **Some Lifting Techniques**

How things are lifted will vary depending upon the size and weight of the load amongst other things. There are some basic rules however, like don't jerk the load up to lift it. Don't twist when lifting or lowering the load – turn your feet so that the load is always in front of you. Remember that while you may have to wait 5 minutes for someone to help you that is better than having 5 days off work with a strain injury or developing a permanent disability.

Take time to assess the job, a few minutes used to do this could save many hours of time lost due to injury. Before attempting to lift an object always:

- ✓ Examine the load, check its weight, and decide whether you can lift it alone.
- ✓ Rock the load to see if the stated weight is correct since the re-use of containers is quite common.
- ✓ Make sure that the pathway you are going to use is clear.
- ✓ Be sure the place where you are going to put the load is clear.
- ✓ If a mechanical aid is available, like a trolley, or lifter, then use it.
- ✓ If you are not sure about your ability to lift and carry the load then **GET HELP** (as a general rule- if you have to hold your breath to lift an object then it is too heavy!).

Lifting an object above shoulder height is particularly difficult because you cannot use your legs to assist you. Always use a ladder or platform to get that extra height you need.

## Understanding & Maintaining Boundaries

Boundaries enable everyone to act in an appropriate manner and observe guidelines and rules both ethically and safely. In turn, guidelines and rules are in place to make boundaries clearer and therefore protect individuals from overstepping into areas they have little or no control of. For this reason, all volunteers (and staff) are discouraged from providing their own personal details or asking participants for theirs. This assists to prevent 'unwanted' contact from participants and members, remembering that it is impossible to retract a contact number or home location once you have offered it to someone.

Sometimes the participants with whom you work may ask you to do activities with them outside your usual arranged and scheduled volunteer work. This action is not permitted under any circumstance when involving a minor (under 18yrs) and in the case of adult participants (18+) both the participant and volunteer need to understand that this activity is in the spirit of friendship, and outside your responsibilities as a volunteer, and consequently all the protection in place as a volunteer does not apply, including insurance cover normally in place during your volunteering. It is important to discuss this with your manager and act on their guidance.

### **Boundaries:**

- Allow a safe relationship with the participant.
- Produce consistent and predictable behaviour in the worker so the participant knows what to expect.
- Protect the participant in the relationship.
- Protect the volunteer/worker in the relationship.

*Extracted from Davitt*

### **Summing up Key Boundary Areas:**

#### **Role**

- Clarify what you are able to do and stay within your role, for example loan a participant money.
- Do not give advice about areas outside of your work responsibilities.

#### **Self Disclosure**

- Discuss only small amounts of information about yourself and your circumstances to create rapport – do not discuss yourself in depth.
- Do not discuss your personal opinions or values – stay objective.

#### **Influence**

- Do not influence the participant to think a certain way or to take certain actions (unless those actions are part of your role to support). Be especially careful not to influence vulnerable or impressionable people.
- Do not promote any particular moral, religious or political views.

#### **Physical Contact**

- Do not have physical contact with children or young people: do not be alone with children or young people (unless it's a regular part of your role to support).
- Do not have intimate physical contact with adults, other than assisting with specified personal care tasks of daily living according to your role to support.
- Pick up the person's cues if they feel OK about contact, for example, if a person feels OK about you touching his or her arm if he/she is crying or upset.

### **Possessions or Money**

- Do not take participants' possessions, even if they offer them to you.
- Do not take money from a participant unless it is a fee and it is your role to accept it on behalf of RSAC, then follow procedures about collection, recording, receipting etc.
- Do not give participants your possessions or money.

### **Cultural and Religious Beliefs/Practices**

- Show respect for participants' cultural and religious beliefs.
- Ask questions to seek to understand, where appropriate.
- Do not criticise a participants' or anybody else's cultural and religious beliefs/practices.

### **Emotional Over Involvement**

- Be aware when you are becoming emotionally over involved, such as thinking a lot about the participant, worrying excessively about the participants needs outside their involvement with RSAC, and seek support.

### **Dependency**

- Do not make decisions for any participants – offer and discuss options and choices, as appropriate to your role.
- Do not do for people what they can do themselves, support independent decision making and actions.
- Be aware if a participant seems to be becoming dependent on you – discuss with your supervisor.
- Where possible avoid being the only support person in a person's life.

**Remember... Be friendly and clear that you are 'Not a Friend' in your Volunteer capacity**

### ***Some handy questions to ask yourself from time to time in your Volunteer role;***

- Does this participant mean something special to me?
- Am I treating this participant differently to other participants?
- Is this in the participant's best interest?
- Whose needs are being met?
- Will doing this cause confusion to the participant or the participant's family, about my role?
- Am I doing something someone else should be doing?
- Am I taking advantage of this participant?

### ***Maintaining Boundaries;***

Be clear with participant of your role when you begin working with them and throughout the working relationship. It also help to be informed of other services which can meet the needs of participants and if ever your not sure direct participants to your manager.

**Thank you for volunteering  
your time and skills with Recreation, Sports and Aquatics Club.  
We are certain you will gain as much as you give in your  
volunteering and find it rewarding!**

## Appendix

<b>A. Be Safe and Play by the Rules</b> .....	Ref pg 9
<b>B. Child Protection Reporting Policy</b> .....	Ref pg 9
<b>C. Reporting Requirements</b> .....	Ref pg 16
<b>D. Injury / Incident Report Form</b> .....	Ref pg 16

## NOTES



## **Acknowledgements**

*This induction handbook was made possible with the assistance of sharing information with other volunteer based training resources and organisations.*

*If you have any suggestions for improving this handbook please feel free to forward them to us.*



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