Thursday, 30 June 2011

NSW VOLUNTEERS TO HELP SHAPE NEW STRATEGY

Volunteers and volunteer groups will help the NSW Government develop the first NSW Volunteering Strategy as part of a state wide consultation process starting today.

Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Victor Dominello MP said the NSW Office of Communities has worked closely with Volunteer Referral and Resource Centres on the initiative.

“Volunteering is vital - it’s the backbone of our community. It directly contributes to our economy and to the health and strength of our communities,” Minister Dominello said.

“A series of 10 consultations with volunteers and organisations across the State will be held over the next two months to help shape the Strategy.

Key themes of the consultations include:

- Providing support and information for greater participation;
- Supporting volunteer recruitment and retention;
- Supporting the diversification of the volunteer base;
- Recognising the value of volunteering as a potential pathway to employment, including for disadvantaged groups;
- Encouraging new forms of volunteering;
- Leveraging business and corporate sector participation in volunteering; and
- Appropriately valuing and celebrating volunteering.

Minister Dominello said following the consultation sessions with volunteers, a series of sector-based meetings will take place.

“The NSW Government is eager to work hand in hand with community organisations to support the growth and development of volunteering in NSW,” he said.

“Each year, more than 1.7 million volunteers contribute more than 230 million hours of voluntary work in NSW. This contribution is estimated to be worth more than $2 billion to the NSW economy annually.

“By working collaboratively, great outcomes can be achieved and volunteering can flourish, further strengthening our communities.”

There is also an opportunity to provide input to the process online at www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au, or via email to volunteering@communities.nsw.gov.au.

The online consultation process will commence at the end of June and run until 12 August 2011.

ENDS