MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 5 December 2013  *Full list of 2013 award winners attached*

NSW VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

A North Coast man who drives isolated patients to their renal dialysis treatments has been named 2013 NSW Volunteer of the Year, Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello announced today.

Mr Dominello presented the award to 64-year-old Kenneth Bolt from Ballina in a ceremony at the Kirribilli Club in Sydney on International Volunteer Day.

“As a community transport volunteer driver, Kenneth drives up to 100 kilometres a day to help frail patients living in isolated communities get to life-saving treatment.

“A proud Aboriginal man of the Bundjalung nation, Kenneth has been volunteering for more than a decade. During this time he has completed approximately 3,500 trips, driving frail and sick people nearly 150,000 kilometres,” Mr Dominello said.

Using his own car or a service-owned vehicle, Kenneth picks up his passengers from their homes, helping them into the car and driving them to renal units at Ballina or Lismore base hospital. He then takes them home following four to six long treatment sessions.

“Kidney disease is a serious problem especially among remote Aboriginal communities. Some sufferers feel uncomfortable seeking medical treatment but Kenneth has successfully bridged a divide through his tireless work,” Mr Dominello said.

“He provides his invaluable services three days per week, all year round, including public holidays and Christmas time, sometimes getting caught in Northern Rivers weather events.

“For his extraordinary dedication, commitment and attitude, there can be no doubt that Kenneth Bolt is a worthy winner of this prestigious award. Today the NSW Government, and the people of NSW, say thank you,” he said.

The annual awards program is run by The Centre for Volunteering.

“Today’s celebration demonstrates the importance that the community and the NSW Government place on volunteering. What a tremendous way to mark International Volunteer Day,” CEO of the Centre for Volunteering Lynne Dalton said.

NSW has over two million volunteers, who collectively give 240 million hours each year and whose work is estimated to add $5 billion to our economy.

Media contact: Matt Dawson 0427 145 575
2013 Award winners

- NSW Volunteer of the Year – Kenneth Bolt, Ballina
- NSW Senior Volunteer of the Year – Howard Ralph, Mona Vale
  - Highly Commended Senior Volunteer – Basil Turner, Kiama
- NSW Youth Volunteer of the Year – Trent Thomas, Botany
  - Highly Commended Youth Volunteer – Alexa Pelkowitz, Karabar
  - Highly Commended Youth Volunteer – Andrew Horne, Wollongong
- NSW Volunteer Team of the Year – Cootamundra Creative Arts and Cultural Centre Committee
  - Highly Commended Volunteer Team – Macarthur Zone Raft Brigade
- NSW Excellence in Not-For-Profit Volunteer Management Award – Taronga Conservation Society Australia
- NSW Employee Volunteer of the Year – Dominic Lynch, Lend Lease
  - Highly Commended Employee Volunteer – Ken Bellette, Self Employed
- NSW Employee Volunteer Team of the Year – ANZ Emerge Volunteer Mentor Team

For more information, visit the website at www.nswvolunteerawards.com.