



# Tony Simpson MLA

## Opposition Spokesperson for Volunteering

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### Simpson calls on Premier to put money where his mouth is on volunteers

Premier Alan Carpenter has declared that emergency services volunteers should be given tax breaks to make it easier for people to give their time for good causes.

However, he has placed the burden to do this on the Federal Government.

Opposition Spokesperson for Volunteering Tony Simpson MLA has criticised the Premier for passing the buck and failing the many people in Western Australia that volunteer their time and expertise.

“The Premier has stated that emergency services volunteers need our support, yet he’s not willing to put his money where his mouth is,” said Mr Simpson.

“He claims to have recognised how important volunteering is to the Australian way of life, he claims to have recognised that it would be beneficial to provide a tax rebate to emergency services volunteers.

“Instead of waiting for the Federal Government to do something about it, why doesn’t Alan Carpenter just get on with it and provide Western Australian emergency services volunteers with some form of compensation?

“Volunteering Western Australia, the State Governments own peak body for volunteering has stated that a uniform tax break is in fact not the best option to help volunteers cope with the financial costs of volunteering.

“Volunteering WA has pointed out that the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum report, *The Cost of Volunteering* states that the best way to financially assist volunteers is to reimburse costs for out of pocket expenses related to the volunteering duties.

“These can include petrol used on duty and uniform and equipment costs when these are not provided.

“As the efforts of the Volunteer Fire Fighters that recently fought the fires near Waroona and Dwellingup show, there are many thousands of volunteers willing to help others and give up their time for their community.

“Their services this summer have saved lives and property.

“These are services that can never be given a value.

“To perform these invaluable services, many of these volunteers have had to take time off work and use their own vehicles to travel to wherever they are needed.

“These requirements, on top of the many hours of training they do each year, can at times impose a heavy financial burden.

“Volunteers do not perform the work they do for financial gain. But when they are performing such an important service to society, it is not too much to ask that we try to ease the burden placed upon their shoulders.

“Instead of passing the buck, Alan Carpenter should act like a real Premier and make his own decision.

“Premier, do the right thing and help our emergency services volunteers.”

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