

**NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS WEEK**

*Statement*

**HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan)** [6.26 pm]: About four weeks ago, from 21 to 27 May, we recognised National Volunteers Week and during that time I had the opportunity to reflect on the enormous contributions that volunteers make to the lives of so many people throughout Western Australia. Information from the Department of Local Government and Communities confirms that up to 80 per cent of Western Australians aged over 15 donate approximately 16 hours per month of their time to volunteering. A little bit of arithmetic converts this to over 38 million days or 105 000 years of support to the community by Western Australians to Western Australians each year. This is a truly remarkable number and one that underlines the immense impact of volunteering on the lives of people in our community. Many volunteer their time and services through some interest in an issue, sometimes because of a family involvement, while for others it is because they have made a conscious decision to make a positive difference to the community in which they live. Whatever the reason or motivation for their volunteering, the people who cook and deliver meals, fight fires, make our beaches safer, clean the club rooms, cook the sausages at the local footy club or read to the elderly are all volunteers giving up that precious commodity of time to enrich the lives of those around them and very definitely their own lives.

I especially want to acknowledge the winners of the WA Volunteer of the Year Awards held on 24 May this year at which the following people and organisations were recognised for their outstanding contributions to volunteering, which I should add I attended with the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Riverton, Hon Mike Nahan and my friend Hon Albert Jacob, Mayor of the City of Joondalup. The award winners were Mr Ken Blackie, from Whitfords Volunteer Sea Rescue Group, who won Western Australian volunteer of the year; Mr Paul Garlett, Australian Red Cross, who was the WA youth volunteer of the year; Ms Beth Smith, acknowledged for volunteering work in the town of Roebourne and for her lifetime contribution to volunteering; Mr Mario Matassa, from the group Chorus, who was the WA volunteer of the year for multicultural communities; Ms Nicole Woods, from Gingin Fire and Rescue Service, who was presented with the WA Volunteer Excellence in Volunteer Management Award; Chevron was recognised as the WA corporate volunteer of the year; EdConnect Australia was recognised as the WA community volunteer organisation of the year; and Ms Ruby Eagle, a volunteer at the Aquarium of Western Australia for 24 years, won the WA People's Choice "Spirit of Volunteering" Award. I wish to congratulate again all these people and organisations for their commitment to the community.

As a side note, during this week, I also had the privilege of visiting Lifeline to recognise the work of people who, on a daily basis, make a very real and positive difference to the lives of people undergoing significant emotional turmoil. I was impressed by their big-heartedness and their commitment to that cause. I was also impressed very much by the considerable training and accreditation all these people go through before they can volunteer for the 131 114 crisis line. I think it is a remarkable organisation composed of remarkable people. I close this member's statement by once again conveying my thanks and, no doubt, the thanks of all the people in this house, to those volunteers in our community who make this community a better place in which we live.

Several members: Hear, hear!