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EMBARGOED AND NOT FOR RELEASE UNTIL TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER
Salvos need 1000 volunteers ahead of high-risk natural disaster season

With increased bushfire risk across many parts of the country, and a high likelihood of cyclone activity in the nation's north, The Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES) are calling on Aussies to sign up as a Salvos volunteer and help support thousands of first responders and survivors of natural disasters each year.

The Salvos need volunteers ahead of the upcoming disaster season to help their teams during a disaster provide meals and refreshments to first responders and evacuees, bedding and material needs for displaced community members, and a listening ear for those who have experienced the disaster first-hand.

SAES teams have a long and credible history supporting Aussies during natural disasters for over 130 years, including support during the 2019 Black Summer bushfires, the 2022 Queensland and New South Wales floods, Cyclone Tracy and countless others.

In the past three years alone, SAES teams have distributed over 390,000 meals and refreshments and supported over 80,000 people, all of which wouldn't have been possible without the 51,000 volunteer hours completed by over 8,500 incredible volunteers.

"Whether it be fire, flood, earthquake, cyclone, or any number of other disasters, the Salvos will be there for the long haul, which is why we are looking for passionate, dedicated people who would like to sign up and volunteer to support people doing it really tough during a natural disaster. Whether it is cooking and serving meals, chatting to evacuees, administration support, maintenance and much more, all these roles are vitally important in ensuring we can best support those who have experienced a disaster," said Daryl Crowden, Head of Salvation Army Emergency Services.

"However, this volunteer role is also a serious one, so we encourage Australians to consider it thoughtfully. The process to become a volunteer is thorough, as we want to ensure we find the right people for the role. So please, consider signing up as a volunteer with the Salvos. You will make a profound difference."

The application process for becoming a SAES volunteer is designed to ensure the team has the right mix of skills, experience and passion so we can support those in need. For this reason, the process includes the submission of a resume, screening questions, a phone interview, references and a police check.

If accepted, volunteers would undertake online training modules to learn the appropriate skills for the role. Then, if a disaster hits, volunteers may be contacted and mobilised to the disaster site (volunteers within a close proximity to the disaster are contacted before any interstate volunteers).

"Being a volunteer for The Salvation Army Emergency Services not only makes a huge difference for people doing it tough in a disaster, it also is extremely rewarding. It gives people the opportunity to give back at a time when communities are shattered, often unexpectedly. When people see The Salvation Army, they see a place of friendship and hope, and that is what you are able to bring to people as a volunteer with us," said Daryl.

To sign up as a volunteer for the Salvation Army Emergency Services, or for more information, visit <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/emergency-services/>

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For more information, please contact The Salvation Army's Media Relations Department on (02) 94663143

