

# Queensland Blue Light Association Incorporated



## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2022





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# Welcome

**Welcome, congratulations and thanks for being a QBLAI Volunteer.**

You've joined a large group of very special people who contribute their time, energy, and knowledge to Blue Light programs all over Queensland.

QBLAI acknowledges that our volunteers play a vital role in our ability to provide the children of Queensland with safe, supervised alcohol and drug free programs and activities.

Whatever your reason for volunteering, your efforts will have a direct impact on the youth of your community – and for that, we thank you.

**This handbook should be read as part of your induction as a Blue Light Volunteer.**

**Please ensure that you complete the Local Branch Details form on the next page to familiarise yourself with your branch committee and keep this handy should you need to refer to it.**





## Local Branch Details

<b>BRANCH:</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Coordinator		
President		
Secretary		
Treasurer		
Other Contact		
Venue Address		
Event Details		
Your Role		
QBLAI State Office	P: 3014 3288 E: admin@bluelightqld.org W: www.bluelightqld.org A: PO Box 121, Acacia Ridge Qld 4110	





## QBLAI Overview & History

Blue Light began as a police youth program designed to encourage better relations between the police, young people, their parents, and the community. It does this by involving young people in supervised cultural, social, and sporting activities and programs in an environment free from alcohol, drugs, and violence.

Over the years Blue Light has developed into a crime reduction initiative, which aims primarily to identify and address the needs of young people who are 'at risk'. Blue Lights operate in all States & Territories of Australia and New Zealand, the South Pacific Islands, and the United Kingdom.

The first official Blue Light Disco in Queensland was held on the Gold Coast in 1984, and for nearly two decades discos were the primary activity offered across the state. Blue Light's ability to host events anywhere a serving Police Officer is located enabled us to spread from metropolitan areas to the most remote areas of Queensland. The Torres Strait, Barcoo, Charleville, Cunnamulla and St George all benefit from programs run by their local Blue Light.

Blue Light Branches now engage young people in a multitude of activities such as skating, movie nights, pool parties, camps, adventure activities and more.

QBLAI has strategically aligned itself with the Queensland Police Service and is now delivering early intervention and primary prevention programs to at-risk Queensland youth.

The South West Blue Light Shearing Program encourages youth from Cunnamulla, St George and Charleville to stay in school, gain a Cert II in Agriculture and learn a skill that can lead to local employment.

Our EDGE (Educate, Develop, Grow, Empower) Program is being delivered state-wide to at-risk youth, mentoring and teaching life skills for an improved future.

ELEVATE is a primary prevention program addressing Domestic & Family Violence to high school students.

QBLAI is always looking for new and innovative ways to engage young people at risk. In an ever-changing world we need to evolve to stay relevant. The one thing that never changes is our reliance on our volunteers.

***QBLAI's record of achievements is testament to the many hours of work contributed by thousands of volunteers over the years.***





## QBLAI Board & Association Hierarchy

QBLAI is an Incorporated Association and Registered Charity with the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission).

QBLAI is registered for GST (goods and services tax) and is income and stamp duty exempt.

QBLAI has DGR (deductible gift recipient) status.

Branches do not hold these statuses or exemptions in their own right.

## State Board

The Association is run by the State Board, elected each year at the Association's Annual General Meeting.

Positions on the State Board are President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee Members, totaling no more than 8 persons.

A Sergeant of Police is appointed to be the Association's State Coordinator. A civilian holds the position of General Manager and oversees the civilian staff.

Decisions regarding the day to day running of QBLAI are made by State Office with major expenditure and policy changes needing the approval of the Board.

## Branch Committee

Each Branch has its own Committee, with the same Executive Positions as the State Board, but with the addition of a Branch Coordinator.

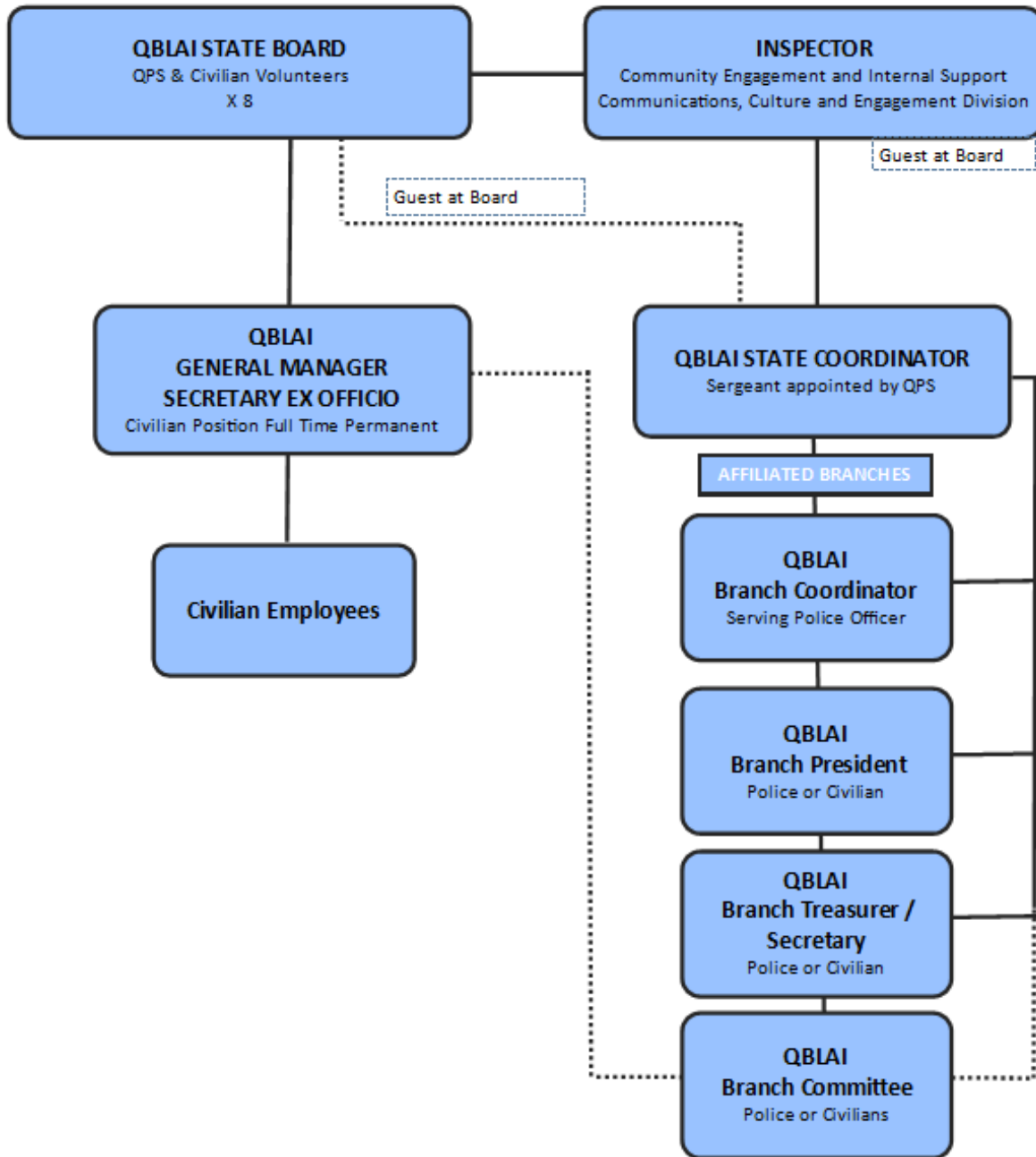
The Branch Coordinator must be serving Police Officers, while the rest of the Board can be Police or Civilians. The position of Branch Coordinator and President can be held by the one person. In very small communities it is not unusual for Volunteers to hold more than one position on the Board.

Job descriptions for Branch Committee members and a template for taking meeting minutes can be found in the QBLAI Procedures - Branch Rules. These documents are available for download through the website [www.bluelightqld.org](http://www.bluelightqld.org).





# QBLAI Board & Association Org Chart





## Volunteering and QBLAI

***Volunteering: is time willingly given for the common good without financial gain.***

QBLAI has many opportunities for volunteers to be involved in a variety of activities throughout Queensland. Most of our Branch volunteers work within their local community, providing activities in the form of dance parties or movie nights. This could involve working in a canteen, selling tickets, promoting the event, or providing supervision during the event.

Local Branch Management Committees are also run by volunteers, and you may be able to contribute to the role of Treasurer or Secretary, or as a Committee Member.

Our early intervention and primary prevention programs also rely on volunteers. Depending on your skills and abilities, you could be cooking breakfasts, facilitating a workout session, or supervising youths on a camp or excursion.

Whatever the level of your involvement, QBLAI recognises the importance of adhering to the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement as published by Volunteering Australia. These were developed in consultation with the volunteering sector across Australia in 2015.

### **The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement incorporate these principles:**

- Volunteer involvement should be a considered and planned part of an organisation's strategic development, aligning with the organisation's strategic aims and incorporating into its evaluation framework.
- Effective volunteer involvement requires organisational leadership and a culture and structure that supports and values the role of the volunteers.
- Volunteers have rights, which include the right to work in a safe and supportive environment with appropriate infrastructure and effective management practices.
- Volunteers have responsibilities, which include acting responsibly, being accountable for their actions to the organisation, and respecting the organisation's values and practices.







## Volunteer Rights

The rights of volunteers are addressed by a range of legislation, but volunteers are not covered by awards or work-place agreements.

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Be adequately covered by insurance.
- Be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- Have a job description and agreed working hours.
- Have access to a grievance procedure.
- Be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which you are working.
- Be provided with orientation to the organisation.
- Be provided with sufficient training to do your job.
- Be given a copy of the organization's volunteer policy and any other policy that affects your work.
- Be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses.
- Not fill a position previously held by a paid worker.
- Not do the work of paid staff during industrial disputes.
- Have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act 1988.





## Volunteer Responsibilities

While volunteers might not have a formal contract with an organisation, just as the organisation must ensure volunteer rights, volunteers must fulfil their responsibilities to the organisation.

As a volunteer you are responsible for:

- Following policies and procedures of the organisation such as accounting for finances, recording information, protecting privacy, following anti-harassment or grievance procedures.
- Being loyal to the organisation.
- Accepting direction.
- Respecting and maintaining privacy and confidentiality.
- Maintaining safe work practices in accordance with health and safety.
- Speaking up regarding important issues or concerns regarding regulations that apply to the organisation.
- Carrying out your agreed duties in the agreed time frame.
- Being dependable and reliable.
- Working the hours agreed.
- Being accountable and accepting evaluation and feedback.
- Complying with the legal and organisational requirements of your volunteer position.





## Responsible Behavior & Code of Conduct

The Queensland Blue Light Association Incorporated Code of Conduct is supplied as part of your induction. You should read this document carefully; it covers all staff and volunteers of the Association.

As a supervisor/volunteer for QBLAI you are expected to adhere to the following whilst undertaking volunteer duties.

- All volunteers are to be neatly dressed and wearing the supervisor's uniform as prescribed by their Branch during all activities. For dance parties and other indoor events, this will require a minimum of T-Shirt and enclosed footwear. For camps, outdoor activities and exercise or sporting sessions, appropriate clothing can be worn, keeping in mind you are representing the Association.
- At all times volunteers are to conduct themselves in a correct and proper manner having regard to the use of correct language and tone of voice when dealing with young people.
- Volunteers at all times are responsible for the safety of the participants in Blue Light activities. Your own safety, as well as that of your fellow volunteers and young people should always be your top priority. Any problems or concerns regarding the safety of any person should be reported to your supervisor and/or Police Officer in attendance.
- No volunteer may be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol whilst on duty.
- There is to be NO SMOKING at any Blue Light event. If you must smoke, you must adhere to the Tobacco Laws of Qld with regards to exclusion zones, which range from 5 to 10 meters from the entry to venues and sporting fields. We request that no volunteer smoke where they are visible to young people.
- Volunteers should not make any public comments or statements to the media that would lead anyone to believe you are representing the views of QBLAI. All media enquiries should be referred to State Office.





## Ongoing Training

All volunteers are to undergo training for the role they will undertake, with Blue Light this is usually delivered on the job at your local branch. Your supervisor should be able to instruct you. Assistance is always available from State Office also and can be provided in the form of over the phone counseling or the provision of manuals/information via post or email. All Policy & Procedure documents and other forms are available on the website for download. Onsite training can also be provided for volunteers needing assistance with the administration requirements of Blue Light.

It is the Branch Coordinator's responsibility to pass on any new policy or procedural requirements as advised by State Office.

There should be a qualified first aid officer at every event, and Volunteers wishing to undertake First Aid training should approach their Branch Coordinator. This expense may be covered by your local branch at the discretion of the Branch Coordinator, taking in to account the financial position of the branch and the need for further qualified volunteers.

QBLAI's biennial State Conferences are an important way of providing up to date training for our volunteers. Attendance by at least one person from each Branch is strongly encouraged. This is also a great forum for networking and an exchange of ideas.

Any other training that you feel you may require to perform your duties for QBLAI should be discussed with your Branch Coordinator.

Ongoing training is an important part of volunteering for QBLAI, and you are encouraged to participate in any training opportunities that may arise.





## Typical Volunteer Duties

Volunteering for QBLAI can involve a large range of duties - planning & preparation of events, supervision of children, set up & care of audio-visual equipment, canteen duties, cooking, cleaning, position on the Branch Committee (Treasurer, Secretary etc.) to name a few.

You should always be comfortable with the duties assigned to you. Some Volunteers like to carry out a number of duties, while others prefer to be given a single duty to take care of.

Following is an outline of some of the duties to be performed by persons assisting at Blue Light Events. As the majority of events held by Branches are dance parties, movie nights or other indoor activities, below is an outline of some of the duties a Volunteer may be asked to assist with at an indoor event. Each Branch should produce their own customised list to be given to volunteers.

**Front Door:** To be manned at all times by a responsible person. Collection of any entrance monies to be performed by two people.

**Supervision:** Supervision throughout the evening is to be performed at the designated points in the hall. These should be arranged and discussed with your supervisor prior to the event. Volunteers should act in pairs when dealing one on one with a young person.

**Toilets:** Both the male and female toilets are to be inspected at least every 15 minutes by volunteers of the same sex acting in pairs. Children are not permitted to loiter in toilets and should be asked to return to the main hall.

**Incidents:** If a patron is causing trouble, performing a dangerous act, or injured they should be escorted to the main office in the presence of another volunteer, preferably a Police Officer. The Branch Coordinator

**Canteen:** There must be an adult supervisor in the canteen at all times. This person must ensure that the canteen goods and monies are secure, and that excess money is taken into the main office.

**First Aid:** All supervisors must know the location of the first aid equipment. Please inform your supervisor of any treatment given. All major incidents and accidents are to be reported and recorded on a BL7. Incident Report for forwarding to State Office. (See page 16)





**Finish:** Outside of the venue should be monitored, especially car parks. Our duty of care does not finish until all participants have been collected by a parent or guardian.

It is part of the volunteer’s duties to ensure that patrons adhere to our rules. There are **four** rules that must be enforced at **ALL** Blue Light activities. They are:

1. **NO SMOKING**
2. **NO ALCOHOL**
3. **NO PASS OUTS**
4. **UNDER 18’S ONLY**

There are other restrictions that may be implemented at the Branch’s discretion in order to help manage activities.

**Some** of these are:

No Hats/Caps	No chewing gum
Dress standards (shoes must be worn at all times)	Bags to be places in cloak room
No bags permitted	No Mobile Phones

These are not exhaustive in any way and are merely suggestions.  
Any restrictions implemented by a branch must not be discriminatory.

***It is the duty of QBLAI Volunteers to ensure the safety of patrons, each other, and themselves at all times.***





## Grievances / Complaints

A grievance is any type of problem, concern or complaint related to your voluntary work environment that may arise from an act, situation, decision, or omission which you consider to be unfair, discriminatory, or harassing.

There are several avenues for which you could resolve your grievance, however you should always ensure your Supervisor/Branch Coordinator is aware of the situation:

- If at all possible, discuss your dispute with the concerned party. The majority of small grievances can be resolved through effective communication.
- If unable to resolve the issue, talk to your supervisor and/or Branch Coordinator and discuss the problem.
- If for any reason you are not able to discuss the problem with your supervisor or Branch Coordinator, you should contact State Office and speak to your State Coordinator directly.
- Your supervisor or Branch Coordinator will make all reasonable attempts to resolve the matter at a Branch level.
- If the matter is still not resolved, all details of the complaint should be submitted to State Office in writing. Where a written complaint is not possible, the complainant may provide a verbal complaint to be documented by a nominated delegate, which can then be signed off by the complainant as a true and accurate recording of their complaint.
- The State Coordinator will assess the complaint, in consultation with the Branch Coordinator and any other persons as deemed necessary. The State Coordinator will decide if the matter can be resolved internally, or if a matter is of a serious nature that needs to be referred to an external party i.e. Queensland Police Service.
- The complainant and respondent will be notified in writing of the outcome.
- State Office will keep a record of the grievance for future reference and implement a management plan if required.

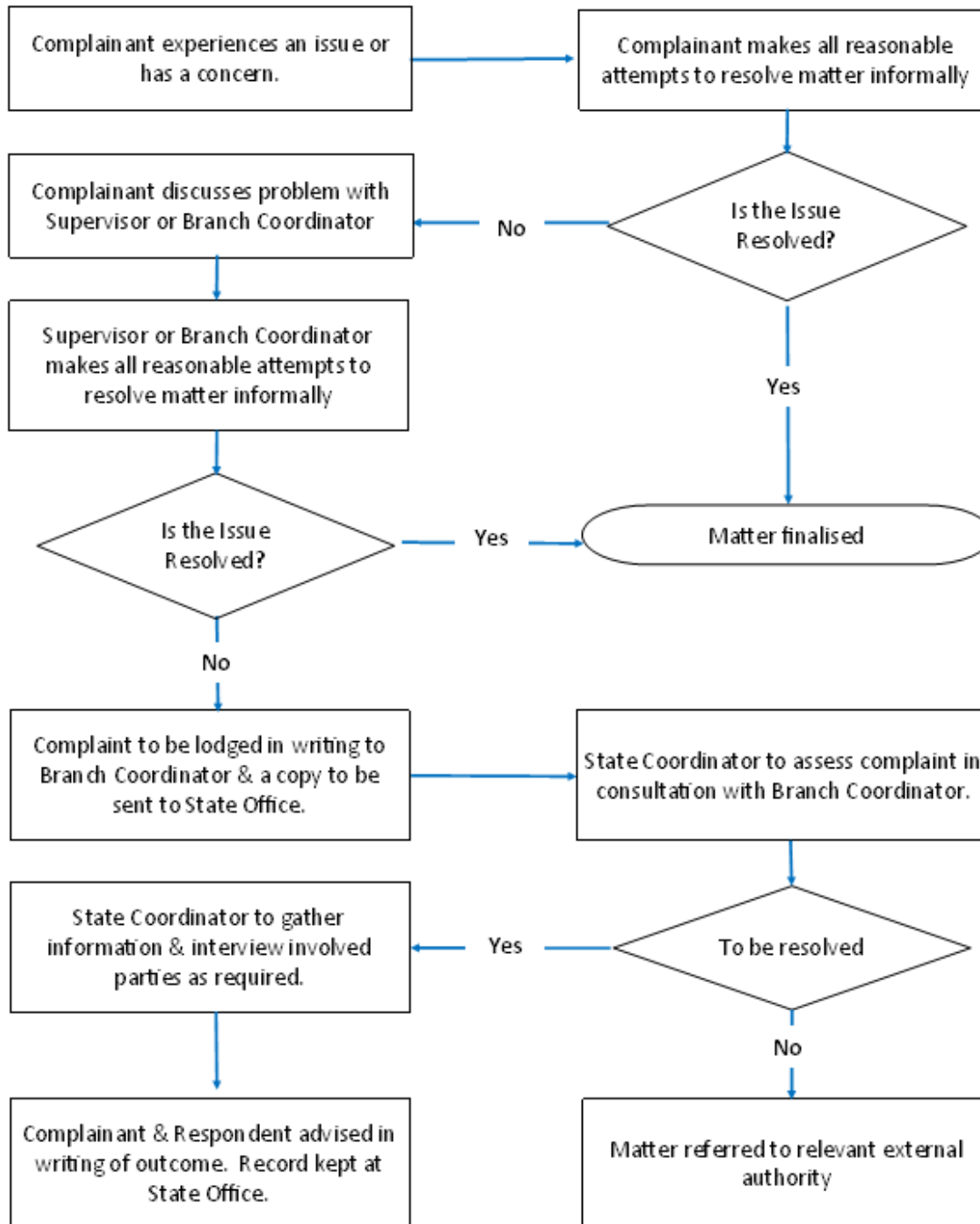
Depending on the situation there is likely to be various solutions. You should feel happy and safe whilst volunteering with Blue Light, and if a situation arises that effects your wellbeing it should be discussed with your supervisor or State Office staff.

ALL grievances will be handled with the highest of confidentiality, impartiality, sensitivity and within a timely manner.





## Grievances / Complaints Process







## Insurance

QBLAI has insurance policies covering Public Liability, Trailers and Vehicles, and Fire and Burglary.

QBLAI Volunteers are also covered under a Voluntary Workers Policy.

To be covered by our insurances, volunteers must.

- Be aged between 18 and 89 years. Some restrictions come in to place for volunteers aged 75 to 89.
- Have filled out a Volunteer Registration Form with QBLAI.
- Have completed the QBLAI induction (this booklet).
- Be participating in a task during, or in preparation for an official Blue Light event.
- Be complying with QBLAI policy and code of conduct as described in the Procedures Manual.
- Be the holder of a current Positive Notice Blue Card linked to QBLAI.
- If using your own car, you are required to have your own comprehensive car insurance policy, however injuries sustained as a result of your voluntary duties will be covered by our personal accident policy.
- If you sustain an injury whilst undertaking your voluntary duties for QBLAI, you are covered under our insurance policy, but you first need to claim from Medicare and your Health Fund (if applicable).

For further information regarding QBLAI's Insurance Policies contact State Office. Queries will be forwarded to our insurance broker for clarification.





## Incident Reporting

All accidents, incidents and injuries must be reported to your supervisor immediately. This includes incidents involving yourself, fellow volunteers and supervisors, and young people.

The Branch Coordinator or Supervisor will then assess the need for an Incident Report (BL7).

If required, a copy of this form is to be sent to QBLAI State Office ASAP. From there it is reported to our insurance company, and then kept on file in case of future claims. This is an important part of meeting our Public Liability Insurance requirements.

The vast majority of incidents are minor, a scraped knee or a stubbed toe. A BL7 Incident Report must be completed for anything that could possibly result in a claim against QBLAI, now or in the future.

### Examples of incidents that should **ALWAYS** be reported to State Office:

- Any head injury.
- Any injury/sickness requiring medical attention (i.e. Trip to the Doctor, an ambulance called).
- Any assault resulting in injury.

### Examples of incidents that do **NOT** need to be reported to State Office:

- Insect bites (unless needing medical attention).
- Small scratches only requiring a bandaid.
- Arguments between children.
- Lost or stolen property.
- Participant's bad behavior resulting in a ban.

Minor incidents that do not need to be reported to State Office **SHOULD** be noted at a Branch level. A notebook should be kept with the first aid kit, and a note made for each time it is used.

Details should include:

- Date and Time of incident.
- Nature of incident.
- Victims name and age.
- Treatment given (i.e., bandaid applied; told to rest in quiet area).

Every Blue Light event must have a first aid kit available, and a designated First Aid Officer. The safety of our Volunteers and patrons should be our number one priority.





## Workplace Health and Safety

QBLAI is committed to providing a safe environment for all volunteers and patrons participating in its activities. Section 4 of the QBLAI Procedures Manual covers topics such as:

Activity guidelines	Incident reporting	Conditions & duties
Volunteer briefings	Risk management	Emergency procedures

Volunteers should always have access to the QBLAI Procedures Manual. Volunteers should primarily look out for the health and safety of themselves and that of fellow volunteers and the children in their care.

### Manual Handling

Manual handling results in around 1/3 of all occupational injuries within Australia. Please take care in any activity involving manual handling, which can be:

Lifting	Lowering	Pushing
Pulling	Moving	Holding
Carrying	Restraining	

For QBLAI volunteers this could involve the positioning of audio-visual equipment such as speakers and lights, lifting cartons of soft drink or other canteen supplies, shifting of tables, chairs, or other furniture, or loading equipment for excursions or camps.

Always assess any task involving manual handling and be aware of the dangers. You should consider your own stature, strength, and that of others in the workplace. Never lift or move anything you are not sure of. It is always better to ask for assistance or utilise mechanical means of shifting an object than to risk injury.

Correct lifting techniques should always be employed – an object does not have to be heavy to cause an injury.

### Potential Hazards

Awkward positions	Duration of task	Slip, trip or fall
Sustained grip	Back strain	Heavy loads
Sprains or strains	Crushed fingers	Dropping Equipment





## Pre-operational Safety Checks - Plan your activity before you start:

- Reduce the number of times objects are moved.
- Identify weight, size, and recommended handling instructions for all relevant objects.
- Reduce bending or reaching by storing objects at waist height.
- Allocate sufficient time and staff to complete activities.
- Check route for clearances and obstacles. Confirm the route if team lifting.
- Wear non-slip, fully enclosed shoes suited to the task.
- Use a lifting aid (hand truck, cylinder trolley, chair trolley etc.) whenever possible.
- Break down large and heavy loads into more manageable sizes and weights.
- Keep the arms and elbows close to the body.

## Operational Safety Checks - Lifting loads by yourself:

- Know your limits. Test the load to ensure that you can handle it safely especially if the load is too heavy or has an awkward shape. If you cannot manage or are not sure, ASK FOR ASSISTANCE.
- Use your body weight to start the load moving if using a trolley. Push rather than pull whenever possible.
- Use a wide stance and make sure you have a firm footing.
- Tighten your stomach muscles.
- DON'T hold your breath – exhale at the moment of greatest exertion.
- Make certain your balance is good and you have a good grip. Watch where you are going.
- Keep the load close to your body to reduce strain and keep the heaviest side of the load next to your body to avoid uneven forces on the spine.
- Keep your head level and trunk tall to maintain the spine's natural curvature.
- Lift steadily with your legs – NOT YOUR BACK.
- Keep your shoulders level and facing in the same direction as your hips.
- Point your feet in the direction of the move – DO NOT TWIST. Take extra care with awkward loads.
- Place the load down by using your leg muscles and maintaining the spine's natural curve as much as possible.





**Team Lifting:**

- Team lifting should only be used as an interim control measure until the task can be completed using mechanical equipment.
- Use mechanical aids whenever possible before resorting to team lifting. Use professional removalists for larger jobs (e.g., filing cabinets, large furnishings).
- Ensure the lifters are of similar height and capability where possible for team lifting.
- Ensure the number of lifters is in proportion to the weight of the load and the difficulty of the lift.
- One individual needs to be responsible for coordinating, planning, and communicating during the lift the lift. Ensure team members know their responsibilities during the lift, including what to do in case of an emergency.
- Ensure there is enough space is available for the handlers to manoeuvre as a group.
- Lift the load simultaneously so the load is shared equally and will not shift to one person.
- Walk in step to avoid tripping. Avoid team lifting on routes that travel steps or on slopes where most of the weight will be borne by the handler at the lower end.





## Risk Assessment & Safety

A Risk Assessment is essentially a document outlining the risks associated with a particular task, activity, situation or location. The risk analysis identifies the potential of or risk arising to one's safety from the work you plan to undertake, the risk assessment then outlines the precautionary action one should take to minimize harm.

**A Hazard** is the task, object or circumstance that has the potential to cause harm, for example working in extreme heat or cold, or near traffic, or lifting heavy objects.

**A Risk** is the harm or result that could occur when people interact with the hazard, for example heatstroke, traffic injury or strained back.

**Risk Control** is the strategy implemented to eliminate or minimize an identified risk.

QBLAI has an online partially pre-populated Risk Assessment Form that can be accessed at:  
[https://bluelightqld.formstack.com/forms/blue\\_light\\_risk\\_assessment](https://bluelightqld.formstack.com/forms/blue_light_risk_assessment)

The Risk Assessment is also available through the website [www.bluelightqld.org](http://www.bluelightqld.org).

It should cover the majority of activities that could be run under the Blue Light banner, and space is provided for anything not covered to be added.

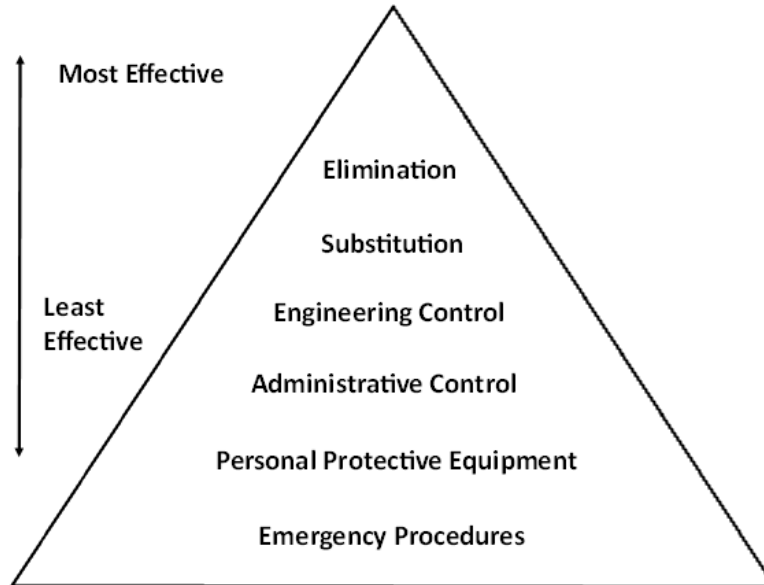
The Risk Assessment should be completed by the Branch Coordinator or other person as delegated by the Branch Coordinator.

***The online Risk Assessment form must be completed and submitted for approval PRIOR to every event.***





## Risk Management / Hazard Control Triangle



**Elimination** completely removes the hazard, or risk of exposure to the hazard.

**Substitution** involves replacing a hazardous substance, machinery, or work process with a non-hazardous one. Example: moving equipment in smaller lots to reduce manual handling injuries.

**Engineering Control** is the next best thing if a hazard cannot be eliminated. Example – use shade cloth for sun protection, install a fan to alleviate heat stress in hot weather.

**Administrative Controls** means introducing work practices which reduce risk and limits the exposure of the employee to the risk. Example – reduce work hours in hot weather, more frequent breaks.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** such as safety hats, safety glasses etc. should only be used where other methods are not practicable. When used it should be practical, fit properly & be used correctly.

**Emergency Procedures** and back up procedures should always be in place – never assume an accident won't happen.



