

**AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS TASMANIA DIVISION
AFTERNOON TEA TO MARK NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 27 MAY 2026**

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all here to recognise Australian Red Cross volunteers.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

Last week, Australia celebrated National Volunteer Week 2026, with the theme of *"Your year to volunteer"*¹. May I welcome today volunteers who have given their time, care and skills to help others.

According to Volunteering Australia, approximately 9.5 million people volunteered across our country last year. This amounts to an estimated 618 million hours of service each year.² This is an extraordinary number.

Australian Red Cross began as the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society at the outbreak of the First World War. It was recognised as a national society in 1927 and incorporated as the Australian Red Cross Society by Royal Charter in 1941.³

Volunteers have provided aid and care through both World Wars and conflicts, floods, fires, earthquakes, and the COVID pandemic. Volunteers have been at the heart of this organisation.

¹ <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/nationalvolunteerweek/> accessed 19 May 26

² <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/general-social-survey-2025-news/> accessed 19 May 26

³ <https://www.redcross.org.au/about/history-and-heritage/timeline/> accessed 19 May 26

Here in Tasmania, we face challenges of geographic isolation, an ageing population, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters. All of these make the work of Red Cross volunteers vital. May I note that in Tasmania, we have 689 of Australian Red Cross' 10,119 volunteers. That means we have nearly 7% of the national volunteer base, although our population is only around 2% of the national population.⁴

Shortly, I shall present awards to volunteers who have been recognised for their service over the years. Carole Harvey and Glenys Moore will receive Outstanding Service Awards, Ann Harvey a Tasmanian Service Award, and Denise Seward a Certificate of Commendation.⁵

As Patron of the Australian Red Cross Tasmania Division, may I thank everyone for their work and efforts on behalf of our community.

David ...

[OS to read citations]

⁴ Email Clair Wolczak 14 May 26

⁵ Ibid