

**2019 TASMANIAN VOLUNTEERING AWARDS
REMARKS BY HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR
THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC, GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, MONDAY 20 MAY 2019**

Good afternoon. As the Patron of Volunteering Tasmania, I am delighted to welcome you all to the 2019 Tasmanian Volunteering Awards ceremony.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land, the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

May I acknowledge among you:

- the Honourable Jacquie Petrusma MP, representing the Premier of Tasmania the Honourable Will Hodgman MP;
- the Honourable Guy Barnett MP;
- David O'Byrne MP;
- Ella Haddad MP;
- Alison Standen MP;
- Senator Catryna Bilyk;
- Michelle Ewington, Volunteering Tasmania Board Chair and fellow Board members, and CEO Lisa Schimanski;
- And all award sponsors.

This is the fourth year of the State volunteering awards and they now have a strong sense of identity. I am sure that this can be attributed in no small measure to the long history of volunteering in Tasmania; together with the enthusiasm that is so much part of the culture of volunteering.

And as you will have seen in the booklet prepared for today's ceremony, the diversity of the finalists – in age, gender, locality of volunteering, type of volunteering, length of volunteering – is further evidence of how robust this sector is in Tasmania.

Today is the first day of National Volunteer Week. This official recognition for volunteering excellence is an excellent way of ensuring that individuals are appropriately acknowledged for what is often many years of dedicated volunteering – although that is not of course the only measure of worth in volunteering.

It is also the case that, because of the unique nature of this sector, these awards are not in any way intended to demonstrate being “the best” – on the contrary, they celebrate all volunteers, older and younger, experienced and learning.

In my time as Governor, Dick and I have met a huge range of volunteers, in almost all areas of the island, and we are enormously impressed by their work and what it means for the wellbeing of individual Tasmanians and our community as a whole. The number of volunteers and the amount of volunteering in our community is a refreshing counter to the perception that individuals in our society are becoming more narcissistic, more isolated and focused on themselves rather than others.

An awareness of the contribution of volunteers is one of the most striking observations of occupying the role of Governor.

And so it is in that spirit that Dick and I congratulate the finalists today; and indeed all Tasmanians who work for and are otherwise associated with Volunteering Tasmania, including, importantly, the sponsors and the Tasmanian Government.

Thank you.