

What roles do volunteers have at the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron?

There are a number of areas within the RQYS organisation which require volunteer input, including Sailing Volunteers (who staff general sailing events such as Wednesday and Thursday night sailing, weekend sailing, and regattas or competitions); Sailing Academy Instructors; the Works Committee (providing assistance with an annual clean up of the Squadron and Canaipa grounds, equipment and facilities); and helping out with social activities, which are organised several times a year.

This page details some of the roles you could experience as a Sailing Volunteer. We are very keen to hear from anyone interested in becoming a volunteer, and will try our best to find a role for you depending on your interests.

On-shore Roles for Sailing Volunteers include:

- Ramp Marshalls, who assist race competitors to prepare their vessels on the Squadron lawn, and launch them into the marina
- Radio Operator
- Regatta Administration – including input of race results into a computer database; posting of sailing instructions and other information for competitors; distributing lunches for volunteers, and many other vital tasks

Off-shore Roles include:

- Race Officers – coordinate racing on the water, usually stationed on the start boat
- Timers and recorders – responsible for recording the start and finish times, [boat] class and sail number for each competitor in a race. Usually stationed on the start or finish boat for the duration of the day's racing (around four to six hours).
- Signallers – learn and use the various flag and sound signals employed throughout a race, to communicate with competitors on the water.
- Skippers and crew members on the inflatable course laying and patrol boats

Do I need to have any prior sailing experience or training?

All the necessary equipment and training is provided (e.g. Blue Card application, first aid) – all you need is the desire to assist, while achieving your personal goals. You do not need to have any prior experience in sailing, although experience is always helpful.

What level of commitment is required?

Volunteering at the Squadron is very flexible, and although some level of regular commitment is expected, volunteers can choose the extent of their involvement. For example, a volunteer could be involved with club racing every Saturday, and/or choose to participate only in large regatta events when required.

What happens once I become a volunteer?

Once you register your interest with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, they will invite you to come along to a club sailing event, on a day that suits you. You will be given the opportunity to go out on the water on either the Start or Finish boat for the entire race, which could be up to approximately six hours, or partake in on-shore duties if that is your preference. We will ensure you are paired with a senior volunteer who can explain your role and 'show you the ropes', while answering any questions you may have. Once you are sure you would like to join us, we will collect your contact details and you will become part of our volunteer team. You will then have access to any necessary training, a volunteer's manual, and an online volunteers' forum.

Our volunteers have a great sense of camaraderie, and RQYS aims to maintain this by encouraging everyone to work together as a team. Our volunteer team enjoys a great social atmosphere, with post-race get togethers and an online forum where volunteers can share their thoughts and communicate effectively.

What does it cost?

You will be a valued member of a growing team of volunteers providing essential services to the Squadron; therefore we do not require you to pay any fees for regular involvement.

How do I find out more?

Please contact the Marine Sports Office at volunteers@rqys.com.au or phone (07) 3396 8666 to speak with our Volunteer Co-ordinators, who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.