



NPWS Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the arrangements and processes that the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) has in place to provide a fuel subsidy to National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) volunteers.

This procedure supports the DEW Working with Volunteers Policy.

Procedure

NPWS volunteers (includes Friends of Parks & Nature & Nature (FoPN¹) volunteers, volunteer rangers (VR), campground hosts (CGH) and NPWS individual volunteers² are eligible for a fuel subsidy for the use of private vehicles associated with approved³ volunteer activities, including travel to/from, according to the following guidelines and summarised in Table 1:

1. A subsidy rate of 35c per km is applicable;
2. For FoPN volunteers only - fuel costs for the first 300 km (return trip) travelled between home/GPO and approved onsite activities will be borne by the volunteer. Such travel between home/GPO and approved activities greater than 300km will have maximum subsidy caps of \$300/vehicle/year and \$2000/group/year respectively, and additional fuel subsidies (up to \$2000/group/grant) may be negotiated in exceptional circumstances e.g. where the volunteer has been directed to a remote⁵ location.
3. For VR, CGH, and NPWS individual volunteers only - fuel costs for the first 200km (return trip) travelled between home/GPO and approved onsite activities will be borne by the volunteer. Such travel between home/GPO and approved activities greater than 200km will be subsidised as these volunteers are being directed by DEW to attend a particular location at specific times to meet program requirements, however, a maximum cap of \$400/return trip applies.⁴
4. Additional fuel subsidies (above that set out in this procedure) involving the use of a volunteer's private vehicle for approved on-park work-related travel may be negotiated (in advance) with and subsidised by the relevant region or the Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Fund.⁴
5. Calculation of total kilometres travelled will commence from the volunteer's normal home residence (if in South Australia) to the site. For interstate volunteers, calculation of the total distance travelled will commence from the Adelaide GPO to the site.

6. Kangaroo Island ferry costs will be fully reimbursed for VR and CGH who have been directed to travel to or from the island for a minimum of 5 days unless otherwise negotiated prior to the trip commencing.

Table 1: Summary of fuel subsidy guidelines

	Friends of Parks & Nature volunteers	Volunteer rangers, campground hosts and NPWS individual volunteers¹
Approved activities³	35c/km (cap \$2000/group/year)	35c/km (no cap)
Travel to and from approved activities	35c/km for travel >300km (total return trip) to/from home/GPO (caps of \$300/vehicle/year and \$2000/group/year) (additional funds negotiable for remote travel) Subsidies for fuel costs for the first 300km are not covered	35c/km for all travel where total return trip >200km to/from home/GPO (cap of \$400/ return trip) KI ferry costs for VR and CGH when directed to travel to and from the island for a minimum of 5 days unless otherwise negotiated
Administration	Via a grant process twice/year for anticipated fuel costs. To be funded from the Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Fund ⁵ .	Via invoices paid twice a year for fuel costs already incurred. Funding for VRs and CGH's provided from the respective programs. Individual volunteers funded by requesting region, or Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Fund.

Administration:

1. Administration of fuel subsidies will be via:
 - a. **For FoPN volunteers** – payment via a Smarty Grant (“fuel subsidy grant”) with funds paid to the group (or to the group’s sponsor, for unincorporated groups). This grant process will be implemented twice a year following an approved simple one page application process for anticipated travel during the grant period; and

- b. **For VR, CGH and NPWS individual volunteers** - payment on receipt of invoice for mileage already completed. This also requires an annual statement of supplier form for those volunteers without an ABN.
2. Fuel subsidies for FoPN volunteers that were previously requested through small grants and partnership grants processes will be phased out to ensure a consistent process in assessing applications under the NPWS Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Procedure going forward.
3. This procedure will be reviewed 12 months from implementation and as required, such that amounts and guidelines for payment may be altered if required.
4. Volunteers must maintain their own proof of attendance and mileage and provide upon completion of activity journey. FoPN volunteers and individual volunteers (i.e. engaged directly by regional staff) can obtain this through registering their attendance via the Volunteer Safety Procedure and by keeping a travel log. Volunteer rangers/CGH will record this information via their My Impact/Better Impact shifts.
5. Travel to and from the park must be via the most direct route. Routes and travel logs may be audited periodically to confirm mileage and to confirm that the most direct route has been undertaken in a cost effective manner.
6. When assessing fuel subsidy grant applications for FoPN volunteers, the following will be considered:
 - a) Funding for fuel subsidies already received in the financial year or from another source for the same travel.
 - b) Priority (provided by the relevant region staff) of the proposed works to be undertaken.
 - c) Total amount of funding available for payment.
 - d) Demonstration that the volunteers have car pooled and maximised cost effectiveness where possible.

Definitions:

¹ **Friends of Parks & Nature (FoPN) volunteers** includes members of the group as well as individuals that are not members but that are assisting with the group's activities.

² **NPWS individual volunteers** includes those recruited and managed by NPWS ranger staff.

³ **Approved activities** are those that are endorsed through the NPWS Volunteer Safety Procedure, and the group's approved annual program

⁴ **DEW-endorsed trip** / onsite activity is one that has been approved by a DEW staff member through the NPWS Volunteer Safety Procedure, and the group's approved annual program

⁵ **Remote** is defined as that which a DEW staff member considers remote because of time, location or nature of the work.

⁶ **Volunteer Fuel Subsidy Fund** is a budget administered by the Volunteer Programs Unit, separate from specific program budgets such as CGH and VR programs, for the purposes of supporting fuel subsidies to volunteers.

Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Executive Director, National Parks & Wildlife Service	Responsible for ensuring that business processes and resources are in place to permit the implementation of this procedure.
District Rangers / Unit Managers	Responsible for the implementation of this procedure for all processes involving volunteers working in DEW NPWS business where relevant.
Volunteers	Responsible for complying with all relevant DEW policies and procedures
Volunteer Programs Unit	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice on this procedure • communicating departmental requirements as part of this procedure • reviewing and updating this procedure for continuous improvement. • Administer fuel subsidy payments for FoPN volunteers, VR and CGH
NPWS Regions	Administer fuel subsidy payments for NPWS individual volunteers recruited and managed by the region