

ENABLING SUSTAINABLE EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERING – CHANGING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



WHO ARE WE?



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THE VOLUNTEER TYPOLOGY



WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

What does it take to become an SES volunteer?



Recruitment

What keeps SES volunteers coming back for more?



Retention

What makes SES volunteers happy?



Wellbeing

How do we get more people to volunteer for SES?



Diversity

WHAT ARE WE DOING?



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

1) Recruitment

- a) Majority of units experienced issues in recruiting new members, even in the metropolitan areas
- b) Yet many volunteer units did not have a clear recruitment strategy or plan

2) Socialisation

- a) Most of the time informal
- b) Many units had an informal 'buddy' system in place
- c) Trying to increase new members' identification (e.g. providing uniform)

3) Engagement of members

- a) Some units found it hard to keep members engaged in the absence of call-outs
- b) Devising roles and responsibilities for each member

4) Leadership

- a) A strong need for balanced leaders: not too little (e.g. laissez-fair) not too much
- b) The more remote the community – the more important the leader

5) Affective experiences as a source of motivation

AFFECTIVE EXPERIENCES

Oh, it's just the challenge in dealing with half a dozen people along this street, who were all experiencing issues and dealing with them, and coming up with solutions and working out what you were going to do. And yeah, it was just exciting.

You know I thought, you know, joining there was you know, fun. But after being there for 5 years, I think you know, some of the volunteers, I think they run me down.

And it's, it's disappointing when you put up ideas and solutions that people think the way that they treat volunteers, is exactly the same way that you would treat an employee.

EMS VOLUNTEERS IN WA: FIRST YEAR SURVEY DATA

- 1) Sample: 539 volunteers (12%) response rate
- 2) 72% males
- 3) 45% in Perth metropolitan area
- 4) 60% working full time
- 5) 41% Bushfire service, 18% SES, etc.

REASONS TO JOIN AND EXPECTATIONS

- 1) What influenced you to join?
 - a) Help the community
 - b) Reputation of an emergency services volunteer
 - c) Meet new people
- 2) What did you expect to do in your first year?
 - a) Operational support
 - b) Emergency response
 - c) Undertake or provide training

THREE PROFILES



The focused volunteer

- Clear motivation and expectations
- 83% joined to help community
- 84% expect to undertake training

The overenthusiastic volunteer

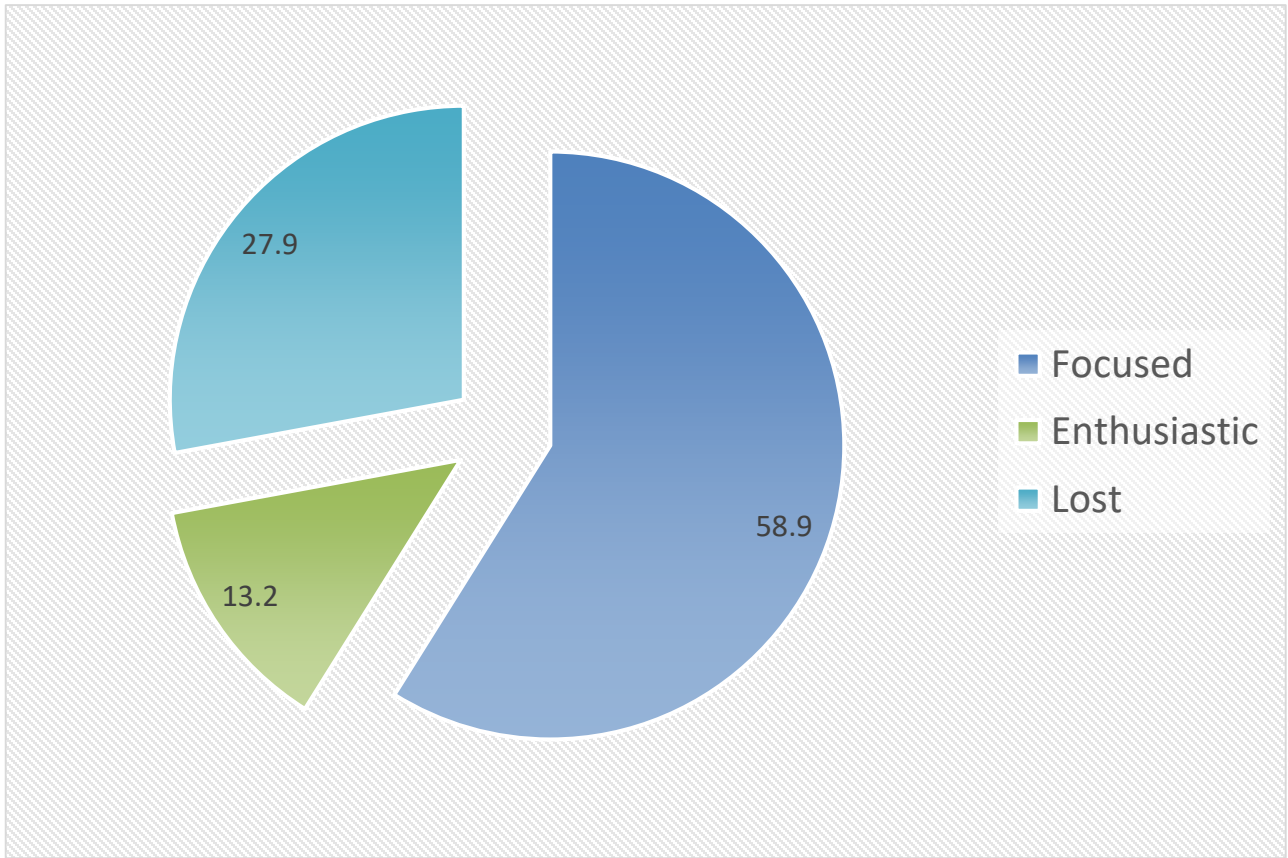
- 'Too much' motivation
- Expected to do nearly everything



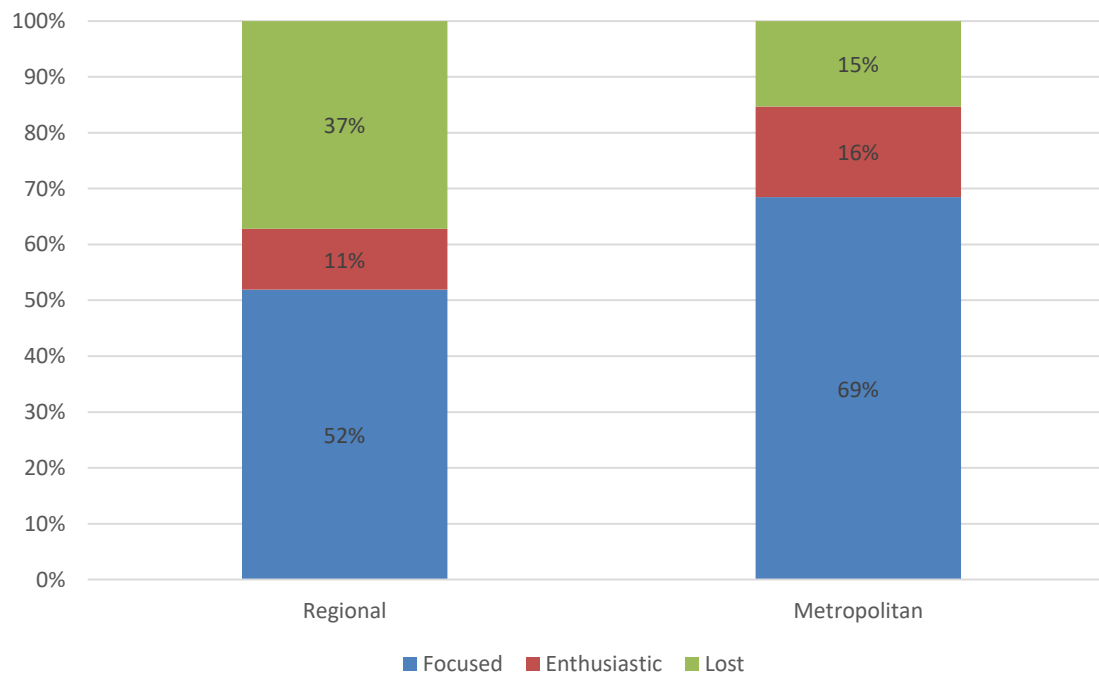
The lost volunteer

- Not sure why they are there
- Only activity expected is emergency response

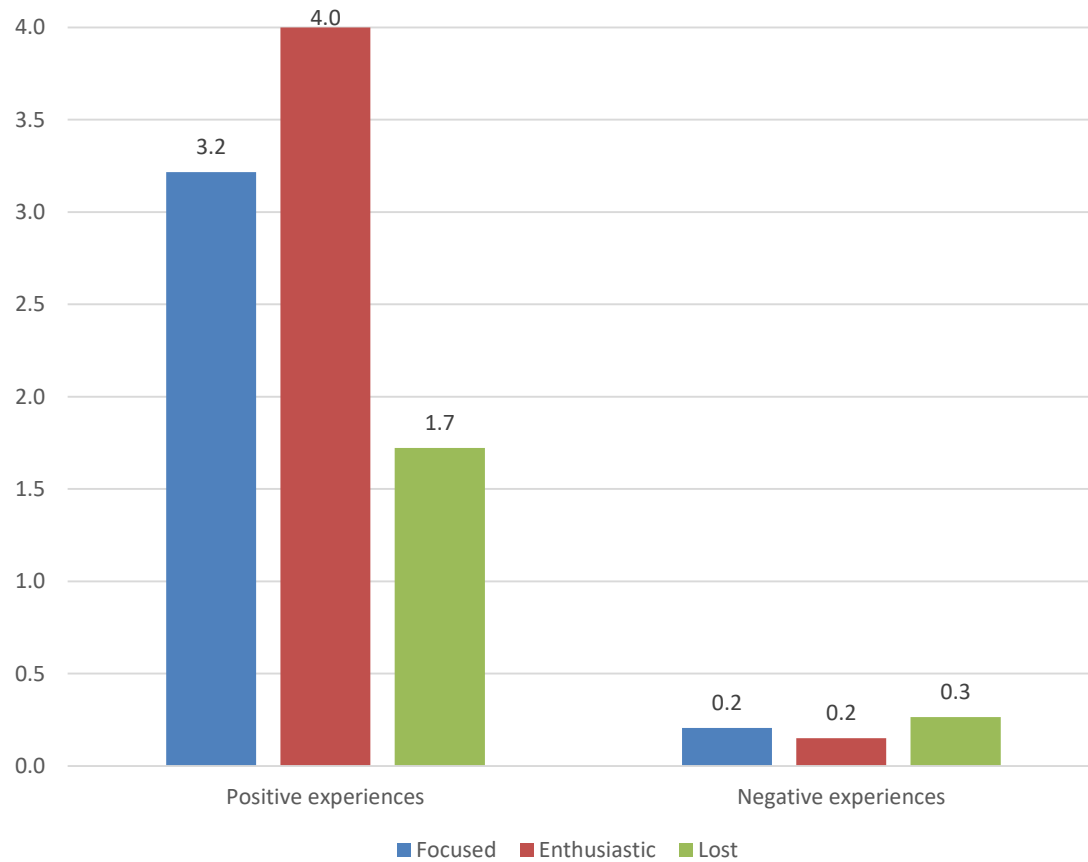




WHERE ARE THESE VOLUNTEERS?

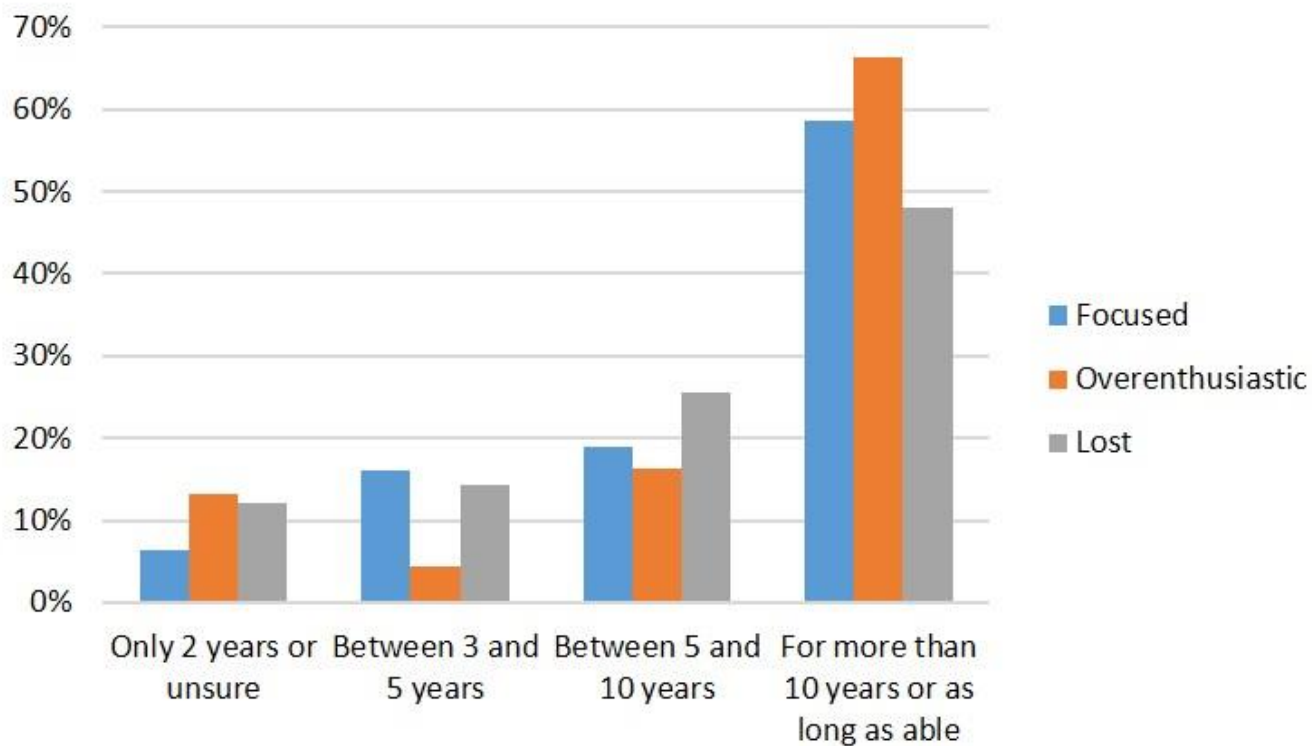


OUTCOMES: EXPERIENCES

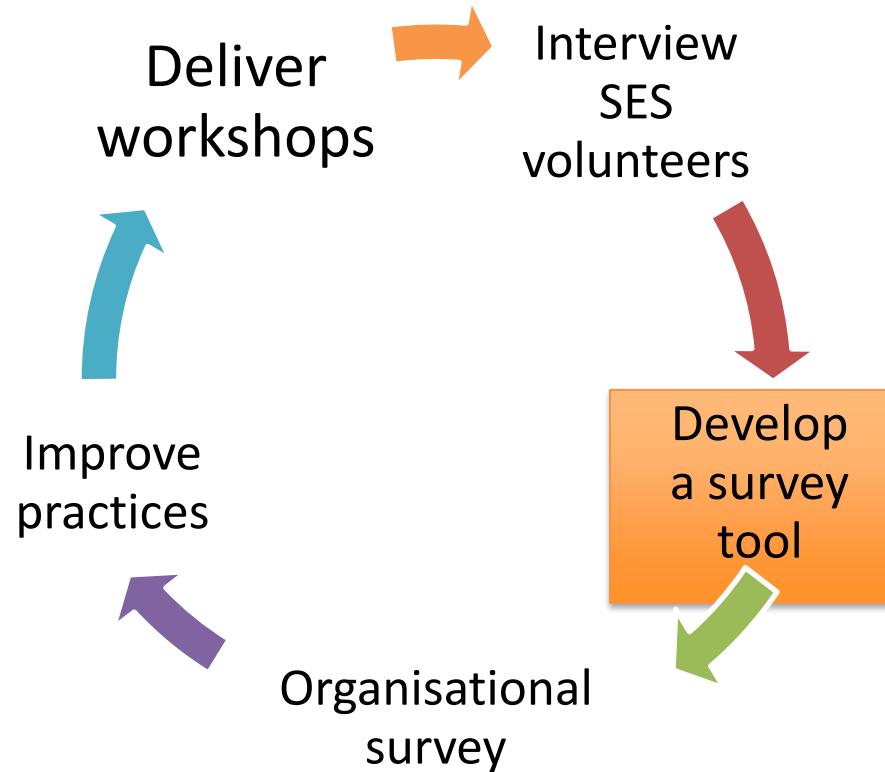


OUTCOMES: INTENT TO STAY

Figure 3: Intention to stay by profile



NEXT STEPS



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THANK YOU!

