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1.0 Welcome

Welcome to Neighbourhood Watch Queensland (NHWQ).

The guide forms part of the ongoing commitment the Queensland Police Service (QPS) has to support NHW in its efforts to strengthen and connect our communities for a safe and secure Queensland.

This Guide is available to all NHWQ participants by simply visiting www.nhwq.org.

The guide provides:
- Basic information about NHWQ in easy to read language.
- An overview of relevant state-wide policies and procedures for NHWQ.
- Flexibility for NHWQ groups and individuals, police and other local partners.

2.0 History of Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)

NHW developed as a reaction to the distancing of police from the community and an understanding that police needed to work more closely in partnership with the community. The earliest example of NHW was in Oakland, USA and was titled ‘Home Alert’.

Participants attended regular meetings, displayed window stickers, marked property, and acted as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the police. The most famous early scheme was initiated in Seattle, USA in 1973, after a full evaluation was conducted which showed encouraging results.

Pilot examples of NHW were introduced into Australia in Victoria and Western Australia in the early 1980s and officially established for the first time in Victoria following a successful pilot in Kananook in 1983.

The first trial of NHW in Queensland was in the Isle of Capri and Sorrento areas on the Gold Coast, following concerns about rising crime rates.

NHW was officially launched in Queensland on 22 June 1988.

NHW Queensland will continue to contribute positively with its partners to build strong and connected communities.
Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is both a philosophy and an approach to working together as a community to reduce crime and enhance community safety.

Neighbourhood Watch Queensland (NHWQ) encourages communities to work together to improve the safety of their families and other people, who live, visit and do business in their neighbourhood. It also encourages interaction and a shared sense of responsibility between individuals, neighbours and communities for preventing and reducing crime.

Traditionally NHWQ has focused on improving home security, reducing the fear of crime and reporting suspicious activity to police. As NHWQ has evolved, communities have become involved in broader safety issues - working together to identify and address local problems that may not involve crime.

NHWQ has been successful in building community cohesion and improving relationships between neighbours which assists in reducing crime and the fear of crime. It has a very strong and committed volunteer base and is an internationally well-recognised and established symbol within the community.

Neighbourhood Watch is apolitical, non-sectarian, and open to all community members in Queensland.

NHW social media, meetings, events or activities are not forums for political endorsement/electioneering or debate. This does not include support by elected members of various levels of government. For example, members of government are able to attend NHWQ meetings or events to provide advice or answer questions regarding the objectives of NHW, or through the provisions of resources or services that assist in the effective operations of the program in a community.
Unlawful discrimination of any kind is not tolerated by the NHWQ program.

NHWQ has no scope for vigilantism and activities of this nature are not tolerated.

Crime prevention is a community responsibility and a NHW area’s primary function in this regard is to report suspicious activity to police in a timely manner. If NHW participants act as vigilantes they may break the law, resulting in action being taken against them.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is committed to working in partnership with the community and greatly appreciates the outstanding contribution that the many NHWQ volunteers and participants make for a safer and more secure Queensland.

3.1 The vision of NHWQ is:
Strong and connected Queensland communities

3.2 The mission of NHWQ is to:
Encourage individuals, families, businesses and communities to work together to reduce crime and improve community safety.

3.3 NHWQ values:
- Engagement
- Participation
- Partnerships
- Diversity

3.4 Not for profit
NHWQ is a not for profit organisation, is not a registered incorporated body or the holder of an Australian Business Number (ABN). Your local NHW is not centrally funded and relies on donations from residents, business and community to assist in addressing local crime concerns.

4.0 Definition of Participation
NHWQ defines participation as an individual or a group of community members’ involvement in strategies to reduce crime and improve community safety, a crime prevention strategy, activity or project which
takes place through NHWQ. These may be undertaken on a regular basis and are:

- Of benefit to the participant and/or the community.
- Of the participant’s own free will.
- For no financial payment.

4.1 NHWQ participation

Any person who lives, visits or does business in Queensland can participate in NHWQ and help promote the program.

NHWQ participants are crime prevention, community safety and people focused and have a commitment to making Queensland a safer place.

Participants are committed to promoting a healthy and safe environment for all people.

Depending on their role in the NHWQ program, some participants especially area coordinators and online administrators, may need to undergo a criminal history check.

NHWQ participants do not need to reside within the geographical area of a NHW group to become involved. People from across Queensland can participate in NHW online (social media), individually or as a group, and can get involved, engage with other like-minded people and make a difference in their communities.

4.2 NHWQ Committee Representative

NHWQ representatives are people who have been elected to specific positions in either a local NHWQ group and/or at the NHWQ divisional or district level.

5.0 Structure of NHW in Queensland

The structure of NHWQ has been developed to ensure that communities are engaged and are working collaboratively with the QPS. Over time, NHWQ aims to:

- Increase community participation.
- Improve communication channels between all NHWQ partners.
- Build community capacity to problem solve at the local level.
• Establish partnerships between local NHWQ participants and groups, local police and other partners.
• Increase awareness of crime prevention and community safety strategies and information in the community.
• Improve district crime prevention officer support for NHWQ at the district level.
• Ensure transparency and strategic planning at a state level.

Information about specific roles and responsibilities are available by contacting your district crime prevention officer or visiting us at the NHWQ State Blog at www.nhwq.org.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities within NHWQ vary from area to area.

To enhance the effectiveness of NHWQ, police districts are encouraged to develop a NHW support plan with the assistance of the NHW groups/participants, OICs and SCCROs. Support plans outline the way the program operates, and the QPS support for NHW in each district.

Each plan is ongoing and flexible to ensure NHWQ keeps pace with the challenges of the modern environment.

The roles and responsibilities for volunteers within NHWQ groups launched prior to March 2014 may remain the same but are encouraged to transition to the new model. Any new participants or groups post March 2014 shall use this guide and be directed by their local District Crime Prevention Office.

If you have any questions in relation to roles and responsibilities please contact us at the State NHWQ Blog, via email NHWQ@police.qld.gov or talk to the OIC or SCCRO of your local police station.

7.0 Promotion

Volunteering Queensland (VQ) is the peak body for volunteering in Queensland and represents the interests of volunteers and community organisations. VQ connects people, resources and organisations to benefit and strengthen our communities through volunteering, projects and initiatives.

NHWQ volunteers are strongly encouraged to visit their website at
http://www.volunteeringqld.org.au/home/ and learn more about:

- Training and activities.
- Resources.
- Good practice.

NHWQ is an approved organisation with Centrelink to host job seekers undertaking voluntary work through the Department of Social Services, (DSS) Voluntary work initiative.

District NHW support plans contain further information about how you can participate in NHW. VQ can assist participants to develop skills that will assist NHWQ to face the challenge of enhancing its effectiveness.

7.1 Sponsorship

Sponsors of NHWQ are either those with whom a sponsorship agreement has been undertaken by the QPS or the NHWQ State Office. All sponsorship agreements are managed by the NHWQ State Office.

For further information about NHWQ current sponsors please visit the NHWQ Blog at http://www.nhwq.org

7.2 Supporters

Supporters of NHWQ can be any person, business or organisation that provides assistance to NHWQ financially or on any other basis. This may include (but is not limited to) meeting support, donations, local advertising or financial assistance for events.

NHWQ groups are able to utilise financial support to purchase light refreshments (non-alcoholic) at NHW meetings and events. However, financial support should be primarily used to develop and conduct local crime prevention and community safety initiatives.

Under no circumstances are NHWQ groups or volunteers to use financial support to purchase alcohol for meetings, events or activities. Any NHWQ groups or volunteers found to be using financial support to purchase alcohol may be subject to investigation and sanction.

NHWQ stakeholders are encouraged to seek local support. Any discussions or negotiations regarding local support should be recorded and local police should be made aware of the outcomes.
7.3 Endorsement
NHWQ, in line with QPS endorsement policies is not permitted to recommend or endorse the products or services of any person or business.

7.4 Grants
NHWQ groups are encouraged to apply for local, state and federal grants. Most grants will require an ABN or for the NHWQ group to partner with another crime prevention organisation that has one.

7.5 Public Liability Insurance
All NHWQ groups are covered by Public Liability Insurance. Please visit the NHWQ Blog to obtain a copy of the certificate of currency.

Any queries relating to the policy and any change of contact details for a NHWQ Group should be directed to AON Risk Services Australia Ltd on 1800 806 584. You should be fully aware of the scope of cover offered, any unacceptable risks and the mandatory exclusions.

NHWQ Groups are able to negotiate their own separate Public Liability Insurance policy through an approved Brokerage Company.

7.6 Voluntary Workers Personal Accident Insurance
NHWQ Groups seeking to obtain voluntary workers personal accident insurance (VWPAI) are to contact AON Risk Services Australia Ltd on 1800 806 584 for renewing their insurance before 31July 2014. VWPAI is covered by Crime Prevention Programs Unit for the financial year 2014 – 2015. Any other insurance policy taken out by NHWQ groups will be managed and paid directly by them with the relevant insurer.

7.7 State Events
A NHWQ State event is conducted annually in a nominated area of Queensland. The purpose of the State event is to celebrate NHWQ achievements. These events can be, but not limited to, a conference, gala ball, celebratory events or specific launches.

NHWQ State events recognise the outstanding contributions that stakeholders have made. Each year one NHWQ community member and one NHWQ Liaison Officer (NHWQ LO) (nominated from each region) will be recognised as members of the year. This is done with the NHWQ state member of the year and NHWQ LO of the year award.
7.8 Activities

NHWQ activities will vary, but include crime prevention and community safety initiatives, online community engagement, launches of new NHWQ groups, know your neighbour campaigns, safety audits, community events such as school fetes and BBQs in the park, shopping centre displays and media promotion at a local, regional or state level.

7.9 Street Signs

As part of the Government’s commitment to the NHWQ program, NHW areas receive large and small street signs free of charge.

Local councils support NHWQ through the installation of street signs. Each District Crime Prevention Office coordinates the installation of signs with council, however they do vary from council to council.

Prior to making a request for street signs, and to ensure that they are installed in a timely manner, NHW areas should contact their local District Crime Prevention Office who manage and store these assets.

All NHW street signs remain the property of NHWQ.

7.10 Merchandise

NHWQ merchandise can be ordered at: www.nhwq.org.

7.11 NHWQ Householder Resources

For new NHWQ participants, NHWQ plaques, warning stickers, small property stickers and Policelink magnets may be sourced from your local DCPC. These resources are free, however as they are limited, requests should be reasonable.

To order plaques, stickers and magnets please complete the NHWQ requisition form which can be obtained from your DCPC and/or the NHWQ blog. Completed requisition forms should be forwarded to the local DCPC for processing.

All other resources including the ‘something missing card’, ‘suspect description form’ and ‘telephone contact card’ are available on the NHWQ blog for printing.
7.12 Media
All media handouts, notices, articles and interviews that relate to NHWQ should be coordinated by the DCPC and/or OIC/SCCRO.

NHWQ participants can promote local activities via alternative sources.

7.13 Newsletters
NHWQ newsletters may be a useful tool for promoting NHWQ and local community activities, community safety messages and crime issues.

NHWQ groups can draft newsletters and distribute these via their local NHW blog, email and/or by hand to residents who don’t have computer access. Newsletter articles are usually sourced from content that is populated onto the NHW blogs (myPolice and NHWQ State/local blogs).

Permission to use information from other external articles must be obtained from the author to comply with copyright.

Hardcopy newsletters are to clearly show the official NHWQ group name, and the writer and source of all articles.

Newsletters are published on the local NHW blog at a frequency determined by the area committee in consultation with the DCPC. It is recommended that any newsletter distribution list includes the local:

- OIC of your local police
- SCCRO
- DCPC

7.14 NHWQ Logo
The NHWQ faces logo is a registered ® trademark in Australia by Victoria Police. The QPS has been provided with the authority to use, and permit the use of the trademark.

Where a product with the NHW faces logo is produced the authority of the Inspector, CPPU is required. Any unauthorised use of the logo may result in breach of copyright.

7.15 Supporter Logos
Supporter logos should not be used on any NHWQ promotional material, however advertisements highlighting the key role that supporters play within NHWQ is encouraged.
7.16 Working Together Logo
Authority to use the Working Together logo remains with the Inspector, CPPU and/or their delegate.

7.17 Queensland Police Service Logo
Authority to use the QPS logo remains with the Deputy Commissioner (Specialist Operations), Queensland Police Service and/or their delegate.

8.0 Different Types of Participation

8.1 How can Individual community members participate?
Any person who has internet access can participate in NHWQ. All you need is a browser and an interest in preventing crime and keeping you, your family and your property safe.

NHWQ recognises that not all people in Queensland live within the boundaries of an established NHW area. Therefore, it is important that all people who live in and visit Queensland can participate in the NHWQ program. This may be as simple as receiving a weekly email on crime prevention and community safety tips.

Joining the conversation online through the NHWQ State Blog means you can learn different ways to protect yourself from crimes that are avoidable. You can also get involved through online forums, volunteer your time at NHWQ activities and events, engage with other likeminded people through online webinars, or simply learn some new crime prevention tips from our catalogue of resources and factsheets.

It’s easy to join the conversation. Just visit the NHWQ State Blog at www.nhwq.org.

When you click ‘Subscribe’, all you need to do is enter your email address and let us know how frequently you want to receive email notifications.

Your level of participation in NHW is entirely up to you. You can choose the frequency of email updates you receive (‘immediate’, a ‘daily digest’ or a ‘weekly digest’). And if you are unhappy with your choice, you can always change it.

You will also receive email invitations to Queensland Police Service
Divisional crime forums and other membership offers as we go along. You will also be advised of active NHW groups in your area and you might want to join them.

We’d love you to get involved in all our activities but we understand that people are busy and don’t always have the time. That’s what makes the NHWQ online option so easy to use. You can get involved at home, on the bus or while you’re having a picnic in the park. It’s all up to you.

8.2 How do I start an online NHWQ Group?

You and other likeminded people may be interested in starting an online NHWQ blog to connect with your local community. If an online group doesn’t already exist in your area, the process to start one is quite simple.

Firstly, you and other likeminded people should express an interest in starting an online group by approaching the local QPS District Crime Prevention Coordinator (DCPC) or Station Community Crime Reduction Officer (SCCRO). The DCPC or SCCRO will sit down with you and discuss different requirements to get your online group off the ground. This includes:

- Identifying a need in your local area.
- Who will be your target audience? Understanding your local community (age, gender etc.). You will need to focus your online efforts that will attract people to your blog.
- Who will undertake what roles (you will need people to help).
- You and other people involved in the blog will need to complete a volunteer application form (criminal history check).
- You will need to complete relevant social media training and also sign a consent form for the proper use of social media.
- Who will administer an email list of all members of your local NHWQ blog?
- What are the local crime and community safety concerns?

Once you have discussed these with your local DCPC or SCCRO, and all requirements have been met, a NHWQ myPolice Blog will be created for your area. The DCPC or SCCRO will then direct you to the online portal to sign up for access to your blog. You will be given either NHWQ administrator or contributor access, depending on your role within the online group.

The Guide is a useful tool in planning out your online NHWQ group and what you want to achieve through this.

It’s also important to gain the support of your local community and plan ahead to initiate interest in your online presence. You can advertise the launch of your NHWQ blog on your district’s myPolice blog, through emails and also by traditional methods like the distribution of flyers etc.

Your online NHWQ group might decide to opt for community events (clean up days, trivia nights, sausage sizzles or family fun days) as a way to engage with the local community and to bring people together.

If there is further interest from the community, you have the option to establish a committee. A community meeting can be facilitated by the local DCPC or SCCRO where they can explain more about NHWQ and how it works.

8.3 How do I start a formal NHWQ Group?

You may be an active online NHWQ member and would like to establish a physical Neighbourhood Watch group, or prefer to start up an actual group before joining the online community, this is how you can.

Any resident of Queensland who is people focused and has a commitment to working with others to make the State a safer place can establish a NHWQ group.

NHWQ is about people and for it to be effective participants must have a focus on:

- Engaging with people in their neighbourhood (face to face or online).
- Bringing people together in their neighbourhood.
- Building peoples’ sense of belonging to their community.

NHWQ is about promoting a healthy and safe environment for all people. It is apolitical, non-sectarian and open to everyone who has a genuine interest in creating a safer and stronger community.
Unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, vigilantism and any other type of negative behaviour that victimises any person or group of people is not tolerated.

Prior to the QPS supporting a NHWQ group, certain criteria must be met. This includes the support of the:

- Community (neighbours, businesses, community groups).
- Local District Officer of Police.
- Local DCPC.
- OIC of your local station.

**Step 1**

**Identifying the need for a NHWQ group**

Your local DCPC will advise you on the following process for establishing a new NHWQ group in your area.

a. Identify five or more other like-minded community members and meet with them to discuss local crime and community safety issues and how a NHW group could address these.

b. Identify key community partners like the local council and others who could be involved in supporting a NHWQ group.

c. Consider some key questions:
   - Can you spare the time required to get a NHW group started?
   - Do you or other community members have the skills required to manage NHW social media channels i.e. a blog?
   - Are you prepared to engage with other community members?
   - Is there an existing active NHW group in your division and could you add your area to that group?
   - Are there other volunteer community groups that are looking at community safety issues and could you join them?

d. Plan out a preliminary geographical area that you want your NHWQ group to represent (Remember that the group can operate outside any geographical boundary).

All NHWQ areas fall within a police division and they are not limited to any number of homes or streets. The size of NHWQ areas are dependent on each police district’s needs. For example, a NHW area...
could be made up of streets surrounding a park, school, shopping centre, a single block of units, nursing home or even a small town.

After considering these issues you may find that a NHWQ group is not needed at this time. However, you can still participate in NHWQ by joining the conversation online.

If you think a NHWQ group should be established, you should contact your local police station to find out how the QPS supports NHWQ and specifically how they can support you.

Step 2

Gaining support

a. You now need to communicate your intention to start a NHWQ group to your neighbourhood. You should invite all the residents within your proposed NHWQ area to a social meeting i.e. a local park (weekend BBQ) or library.

Most people will not get involved in community groups unless they can determine (early on) a positive outcome for themselves and/or their family and that it’s not a huge impost on their time. So, the invitation should be personal and clearly articulate the specific crime and community safety issues you have and the anticipated outcomes.

You should also advise your local community that they don’t need to attend NHW meetings or even get actively involved in planned NHWQ activities for it to work. They can participate online in the comfort of their own homes, or when they are out and about. There are no boundaries when it comes to participation or engagement in your local NHW group.

b. This is an opportunity to gauge local support and you should invite your local police to come along and explain in detail how the QPS can support a NHW group in your community. This support may include, but is not limited to:

- What assistance local police will provide prior to and after your NHWQ group is launched.
- Key points of contact and a communication plan for how issues are to be resolved.
NHWQ will work as long as there are enough residents who are committed to making their community safer.

Practically, this is achieved by residents:
- Talking to their neighbours (whether they are next door or online).
- Spending time outdoors and becoming familiar with their local environment.
- Reporting suspicious activity to police, or online, in a timely manner.
- Applying crime prevention strategies around the home or business.
- Educating others about what they can do to prevent crime.

**Step 3**

**Developing an action and communication plan**

The third step involves developing an action plan for the NHWQ group. This is the time to decide how the top concerns and issues of the area will be addressed.

This action plan will include the decisions regarding number of volunteer positions i.e., area coordinator, social media coordinator, events coordinator and secretary/treasurer.

Other important considerations that need to be discussed prior to and resolved at the community meeting include:
- Do you need to appoint a treasurer?
- How will you fund NHWQ activities i.e. crime prevention activities, community events, printing etc. (through local supporters, grants etc.)?
- How will you cover the costs of running a NHWQ group (e.g. newsletters, meetings)?
- Will you meet face to face (where?) or online?
- Will you have an official launch?
- How will you promote the new NHWQ group to the community?

It is good to have an evaluation plan to be decided upon. It is recommended that a NHWQ group evaluates their performance every 12 months. This may be as simple as holding an end of year social celebration or meeting more formally with key stakeholders (police, local...
council and businesses) to review outcomes and to develop a plan for
the next 12 months.

Step 4

The Community Meeting

The fourth step involves holding a community meeting and speaking
with representatives from other community partners. During this step
you need to consult with local police to determine a geographical area,
identify relevant NHWQ roles and invite all residents to a community
meeting to gauge the support for NHWQ in the neighbourhood.

You should also invite your local council representatives and other key
government and community groups.

This meeting will be coordinated by both the police and the interested
community members. It is important that all persons in the proposed
NHWQ area are invited to attend this meeting. You may wish to place
advertisements in local community newspapers and/or speak to your
DCPC about promoting the meeting on the District myPolice blog and
neighbourhood watch blog.

At the meeting, NHWQ online is fully explained by the DCPC. Other
speakers may include other local police and the Area Coordinator for an
existing NHWQ group.

If the local police decide that adequate support from the community has
been obtained, then a NHWQ area coordinator must be elected at the
community meeting (by simply taking nominations and voting).

All other positions (social media coordinator, events coordinator and
secretary/treasurer [if needed]) should be filled at this meeting as well. If
not, positions can be advertised in local newspapers, the local myPolice
blog or other traditional methods.

If the local police decide that the community meeting has not attracted
sufficient numbers, those interested, who are not already an online
participant, will be encouraged to join the NHWQ conversation online
and become members of the program through social media.

The NHWQ area coordinator is responsible for overseeing the NHW
area. While the duties are essentially a coordinating role, they also have
final approval of the social media (online) channels used by the NHWQ
area. They can also contribute content to the local NHWQ blog and are the main point of contact for the local community.

9.0 Active groups

Active NHWQ groups include those, but are not limited to those who:

- Have an elected Area and Social Media Coordinator as key points of contact.
- Have an elected events coordinator to manage local NHWQ activities and initiatives.
- Have an elected Treasurer (only required if NHWQ group is managing any financial resources).
- Have other community members in elected positions identified as essential by the local NHW group (i.e. secretary and or treasurer).
- Nominate one representative to attend district crime/NHW forums as required.
- Comply with divisional/district NHWQ requirements.
- Conduct a minimum of four community safety initiatives a year (may include community events, safety audits, promotional activities etc).
- Hold an Annual General Meeting.
- Provide crime and community safety information via an online presence. This can be achieved through a local NHW blog.
- Work in partnership with all NHWQ stakeholders.

The diagram below provides an example of what an active NHWQ may look like.
To support its vision, NHWQ volunteers will typically:

- Advise new residents via a local NHWQ blog about NHWQ and informing them of local crime and community safety issues.
- Invite guest bloggers to write NHWQ specific articles, or presenters to speak at functions on issues relating to the vision of NHWQ.
- Encourage community members to display NHWQ and police property identification stickers on windows, doors and sheds.
- Conduct crime prevention and community safety initiatives (i.e. safety audits, property marking, one way screw activities etc).
- Hold community events (i.e. displays, BBQs in the park etc.) to promote NHWQ.
- Use and promote an email list for communication between residents.
- Liaise with the local police and other key stakeholders to develop strategies to address local needs.
- Encourage members to mark their property for identification (and register their details with police)
- Promote local NHWQ achievements through the local NHWQ blog.

**Area Coordinator**

The role of the area coordinator is the pivotal position in any local NHWQ group. The area coordinator has overarching responsibility for the day to day running of the group and is the main contact point for police and the community. The main functions of the area coordinator are:

1. Overseeing the operation of the NHWQ group. This includes adhering to all NHWQ policies and guidelines.
2. Overseeing the NHWQ group meetings (online or face to face)
3. Communicating with local police, SCCRO or DCPC and attending District Crime/NHW forums.
4. Communicating with the Divisional Officer in Charge (OIC).
5. Working with the social media coordinator and providing content input into the local NHW newsletter.
6. Final approval of all group created NHW blog articles.
7. Working with the events coordinator in the development and implementation of crime prevention and community safety initiatives.
8. Improving engagement with the community through relevant blog articles, presence at community events, and promotion of NHW to the broader community.

**Secretary**

The role of the secretary is essential to maintain a crime prevention and community safety presence in the community. As secretary you will be working closely with the area coordinator, social media coordinator and events coordinators.

The main functions of the secretary are to:

1. Manage with incoming and outgoing hard copy correspondence,
2. Prepare meeting agendas and reports in consultation with Area Coordinator,
3. Keep an email register of members, and those who attend the meeting (face to face or online) as required for insurance purposes.

**Social Media Coordinator**

The role of the social media coordinator is essential to a well run NHWQ. As social media coordinator you will be working closely with the Area Coordinator and will be responsible for a wide array of duties. The main functions of the social media coordinator are to:

1. Manage with incoming and outgoing online correspondence on the local NHW blog, email and other social media channels, and any other reporting as required.
2. Prepare blog articles, meeting agendas and records in consultation with the Area Coordinator.
3. Maintain records of (online or face to face) NHW meetings and provide these when requested by any NHWQ member.

**Events Coordinator**

The role of the events coordinator is essential to maintain a crime prevention and community safety presence in the community. The events coordinator works closely with the area coordinator, other volunteers and event partners. The main functions of the events coordinator are to:

1. Develop strategies, in collaboration with the local NHW group committee, event partners and the community, that address local crime and community safety concerns.
2. Promotes events to the local community through the local NHW blog,
other social media channels and via local businesses and council.

3. Organises sub-committees and volunteers to run events and activities.

4. Documents the learnings of these events through blog articles, images and other sources (feedback).

5. Provide information to the local DCPC and OIC on project milestones and outcomes.

6. Documenting event plans for NHW activities and confirming contact has been made with the AON Risk Services Australia Ltd on 1800 806 584 (to meet any request associated with the insurance provided).

10.0 Closure

The decision to close a NHWQ group is one that should be taken after consultation with the local community and other local stakeholders. Once a decision has been made to close a NHWQ group, the OIC of the relevant police division should consult with the DCPC and the community and develop a process to close the NHW group.

The mandatory requirements for group closure are:

- Financial resources (money, assets and promotional material) are returned to the local DCPC for distribution to other NHW groups, the district NHW committee and/or a non-profit organisations.
- The CPPU (via the DCPC) is notified (e-mail or report) of the reasons why the NHW group has closed (dot points).
- Close the local NHWQ blog (is applicable).

Although a NHWQ group may close, community members who are interested in making a difference can join the NHWQ program online and continue to engage with their local community.

NHWQ recognises that not all people in Queensland live within active NHW areas and individuals should be given the opportunity to participate and learn ways to keep themselves, their families and property safe.

NHWQ groups that are incorporated will need to comply with any other requirements outlined on the Office of Fair Trading Queensland website at www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au
Street signs once erected will remain in place as a visual reminder of NHWQ to the community.

11.0 Communication

Any issue in relation to NHWQ should be handled at a local level by the community. If the issue cannot be resolved it should be directed to the OIC of the police division or the local DCPC. If further clarification is required, the local DCPC will contact the NHWQ State Office for advice.

Information about the specific roles and responsibilities within your community are available by contacting your local police station or local NHW group.

11.1 Meetings

The meetings which require voting are:

- The Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- Electing casual vacancies.
- Managing financial resources (spending money, movement of assets).

An AGM must take place during the period nominated by your OIC (generally September/October period). If your NHWQ group is incorporated then you must comply with the relevant requirements of incorporation rules.

The purpose of an AGM is to either re-appoint or elect new people to committee positions and to provide an opportunity for your group to report to the community the work you have successfully undertaken during the past 12 months. The meeting will confirm the appointment of all nominations by vote.

General NHWQ group meetings are arranged by the area committee and will be held as often as necessary to ensure the efficient operation of the group. Meetings can be held online or face to face.

11.2 Voting

There are several ways in which a vote can be cast - by voice, show of hands, secret ballot or email (secret). The chairperson (area-coordinator or representative) usually determines the voting method which is most appropriate, however members may call for a secret ballot at any time.
A secret ballot is used to protect the confidentiality of voters, and is usually used during election or nominations of a position. The chairperson declares the results of the motion as either carried/lost/elected etc. On most occasions numbers are not provided.

In cases of tied voting, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

Every member has one vote. Motions are required to be seconded by another member before discussion and voting.

Voting may be by ballot, show of hands or by email as determined by the area coordinator (Chair) or as agreed by members.

Police representatives do not vote at NHWQ meetings. However, when participating as a community member (e.g. a NHWQ resident) they have the same rights as other NHWQ members.

Area coordinators, or their nominated deputy, shall occupy the Chair with the right to a casting vote.

11.3 Elections
Nominations for all positions within the NHWQ committee will be called prior to and at the AGM. This does not preclude new positions being created at other times during the year.

Contested and uncontested positions will be filled by vote.

Minutes of the meeting should record the names of any persons elected or appointed to official positions (for insurance purposes).

11.4 Records
Records of meetings, copies of correspondence and financial records should be kept by NHWQ groups for future reference. This will ensure an accurate record of meeting outcomes, people responsible to further any actions and to measure achievements. They should include:

- What the task was?
- Who was responsible?
- What was the result/outcome?

NHWQ group records should be made available upon request to any member who wishes to view them.
Any transfer of assets should also be recorded.

NHWQ groups that are incorporated must adhere to the relevant requirements which are located on the Office of Fair Trading website.

Financial reporting must be conducted every year. Incorporated groups must comply with the requirements outlined at the Office of Fair Trading website.

A financial record listing the current balance of the NHWQ account and all receipts and expenses since the previous report should be submitted on a quarterly basis to the local OIC.

All NHWQ groups (including non-incorporated) must keep a record of how they have managed their finances. These records should be kept by the social media coordinator or events coordinator (or appointed treasurer) and the current balance following the AGM advised to the OIC and/or their representative of the local police division.

A DCPC may request a current balance and relevant records at any time.

12.0 Removal of committee members

Any committee member who discredits NHWQ by their actions and/or behaviour may forfeit their position at the discretion of the area committee in consultation with the OIC of the local police division.

Any committee member who does not effectively carry out their duties or is considered to be disruptive to NHWQ may be asked to resign or, if necessary, removed from office by the vote of at least three-quarters of the area committee.

Any removal of a committee member will be carried out in a discrete manner. Should the committee member wish to dispute the decision of the area committee, the matter may be taken to a general meeting for ratification by a majority vote. Any person so removed from an official position is to be named in the minutes of the appropriate meeting.

Any committee member who is using NHWQ for political endorsement and/or electioneering or debate may forfeit their position at the discretion of the OIC of the local police division.
A committee member may also be removed from office at the discretion of the OIC of the local police division. In this instance, the committee member will be deemed to be disruptive to the success of the local NHWQ. The OIC may also suspend a committee member from office if there is evidence that the committee member:

- Misappropriated NHWQ funds
- Did not follow proper procedure for election to a NHWQ committee
- Is disruptive and/or abusive to other NHWQ committee members.

In the case of misappropriation of funds, if proven, a NHWQ committee member or members will be removed from office at the discretion of the OIC.

13.0 Mapping

All NHWQ groups are aligned to police divisional boundaries. This promotes consistency and provides the QPS options when distributing crime and community safety information to NHW groups, with a divisional focus as well as at a group level.

In consultation with local NHW groups, police divisions will develop their own communication and action plan as to how and in what form they provide crime and community information to NHWQ groups.

Examples may include:

- Quarterly invitation to Divisional Crime/NHWQ forums with one community representative from each divisional NHWQ group attending. That information is then taken back to the NHWQ group by the community member.
- Monthly or quarterly e-mail sent by OIC and/or SCCRO (delegated liaison officer) to each NHWQ group.

These examples promote effective and efficient communication between police and the community.

14.0 Incorporation

NHWQ is not incorporated.

The decision to incorporate your NHW group should be carefully considered. The main reason why groups make the decision to
incorporate is the desire to limit the personal liability of the committee members. While this is an important factor, other considerations i.e. cost, ongoing statutory fees, accounting and auditing fees, compliance with regulations and member’s entitlement to a financial interest in the association are relevant. If the wrong legal structure is chosen, it may be a very expensive and time consuming exercise to transfer the adopted legal structure to a more suitable one.

For further information on incorporating your NHWQ group, please contact the Office of Fair Trading on 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or visit their website at www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au.

15.0 Privacy

The Right to Information Act 2009 and the Information Privacy Act 2009 provide safeguards in the proper use and handling of personal information. Any request for disclosure of personal information made by a member of the public or external body needs to be considered in accordance with these legislative requirements.

The Queensland Police Service collects, stores, uses and discloses personal information of NHWQ volunteers for the sole purpose of promoting and effectively supporting the NHWQ program.

Your District Crime Prevention office can assist with any enquiries on the proper use of information.

16.0 Training

Social media training is provided by the Crime Prevention Programs Unit (CPPU). If you are starting a NHWQ group that will be utilising blogs, training dates can be discussed with your local DCPC.

Relevant training for NHWQ volunteers is provided by a variety of partners. Local training needs should be identified and addressed at the local level by NHWQ groups. The coordination of training for volunteers is coordinated by your District Crime Prevention Office.

Organisations such as Volunteering Queensland work towards making volunteering easy and association with them is strongly encouraged.
17.0 Evaluation

Achievements and activities for the year

After an AGM, active NHWQ groups should provide information to the OIC of the police division (hard copy or electronic) outlining:

- What outcomes the NHWQ group achieved for the year (dot point).
- Priorities for the next 12 months (linked to NHWQ Strategy).
- Contact details of all committee members.
- Current financial balance.
- Any suggestions to improve the NHWQ program in QLD.