

Covering Advice for Rotarians regarding National Police Clearances

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ABUSE AND HARRASSMENT HANDBOOK AS PROVIDED BY ROTARY INTERNATIONAL.

Rotarians reading the handbook will notice that there are quite a few requirements detailed in relation to dealing with children and vulnerable persons. These guidelines have been written by Rotary International, and as such some points relevant to Australia should be mentioned.

NATIONAL POLICE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

National Police Clearance Certificates are obtained by attending your local police station to obtain an application form. District 9500 has a Volunteer Organisation Application Number (VOAN) which entitles the applicant to have a check conducted for free. In the Northern Territory, when enquiries were last made on 14/08/2007, there is no free waiver of fees and members or clubs will have to pay for the check to be conducted.

The VOAN number for the district is 1809

There is only one National Police Clearance Certificate regardless of which policing jurisdiction issues the certificate. If your certificate is still valid then you do not have to obtain another one. Although in real terms the National Police Clearance is valid for only three (3) months, Rotary District 9500 has determined that the certificate will be recognised for two (2) years unless requested to undergo another check. Checks take about four (4) weeks to obtain.

The following points should be kept in mind when using the VOAN number.

- That it is applied for a Rotary function involving children or vulnerable persons.
- You can not use the VOAN number to get a clearance for your employment. Any abuse of this may see the organisation have the VOAN revoked and everyone will have to pay for a National Police Clearance to be done.
- There is no financial remuneration provided to the applicant to carry out the work undertaken.
- There is to be no data base, record, copying or file maintained of the National Police Clearance. This does not prevent the applicant from showing the Club President or Committee requesting the check. All that can be recorded is that the check was done and the person is suitable.
- On the rear of the National Police Clearance Application there is a section for the Organisation Representative to sign. This authority has been delegated to Club Presidents to sign, as all it is certifying is that applicant, is applying for the clearance to undertake an activity involving children or vulnerable persons.\
- The certificates list convictions and not pending cases. If the club or District Committee believe that a person may need a further check as they may have a court case pending then a further check should be requested.
- Having a Restraint Order is not a criminal offence and will not be placed on your certificate. It only becomes a criminal offence once you break the order.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The handbook has lists a comprehensive amount of background checks on applicants wishing to host or participate in activities. District has several committees dealing with youth and vulnerable persons which have comprehensive policies for their activities. Applicants should consult the relevant District Group for guidance.

Club activities, should be guided by the guidelines in the "Abuse and Harassment Handbook." The minimum standard being National Police Clearance.

If the Club is sponsoring an activity carried out by a specialist organisation such as a driving education school, then it would be the responsibility of the specialist organisation to ensure that all their staff are suitably qualified and cleared. Dealing with reputable companies almost always ensures this.

Each club also is required to have Child Protection Officer in the Club.

If you have any further questions contact the District Child Protection Officer.