



MEDIA RELEASE

Is Brisbane ready for the 'VolBiz' challenge?

Brisbane, 30 July 2009:

Brisbane businesses were today challenged by Australia's leading community bank to step out into the community and volunteer their services.

The challenge was issued by Bendigo and Adelaide Bank at the launch of VolBiz – a new state-wide register to make the process of volunteering more simple and straightforward for Queensland businesses. VolBiz was officially launched by Hon Karen Struthers MP, Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women.

Bendigo and Adelaide Bank State Manager Ashley Hood said the VolBiz concept was developed by the bank in response to the State Government's call for ideas earlier this year as part of its Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland Project

"VolBiz is a volunteer register that will actively direct businesses to areas of local need," Mr Hood said.

"Bendigo Bank has been joined by Volunteering Queensland, the state's peak body in volunteering, in this task of building stronger, more caring communities.

"Volunteering Queensland will manage and monitor this online register for businesses wanting to donate their time and services to the local community."

Mr Hood said the bank's strategy had always included working closely with communities to meet community needs.

"Bendigo and Adelaide Bank has created 'beyond banking' initiatives including telecommunications and youth mentoring, which inevitably benefit not only local communities but our own company and sets us apart from our competitors," Mr Hood said.

"A number of our Queensland branch staff volunteer several hours a week delivering meals to the elderly as part of the Meals on Wheels concept.

"For example, in Townsville, young people are working with a local radio station to produce Loop Live – a Friday night radio program run by young people, for young people, in conjunction with the Bank's youth mentoring program Lead On."

Mr Hood said that although the bank operated in competitive national, and volatile international markets, the concept of working and engaging with communities was at the core of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's business.

"I urge all Brisbane businesses to take the time to consider not only their individual skills but how they can be utilised in the community to benefit others in need," Mr Hood said.

"It can be as simple as the local mechanic offering to help repair the local sports field's ride-on mower or an accountant donating time to assist with the local RSL's accounting or a hairdresser donating their time and hairdressing expertise at an aged care facility.



“We congratulate the Premier, the Premier’s Department, Minister Struthers, the Department of Community Services and Volunteering Queensland for joining us in the mission of supporting Queensland communities and contributing to their prosperity.”

Mr Jelenko Dragisic, CEO of Volunteering Queensland said volunteering offered a unique space to exchange ideas between all sectors.

“Volunteering Queensland welcomes collaborative approaches which provide genuine opportunities for people to engage with their local communities,” Mr Dragisic said

“Creating social value is one of the most attractive and critical aspects of volunteering - ingredients that the VolBiz initiative brings together.

“Businesses and their staff can be instrumental in making a positive change in the area of community development.”

About VolBiz:

VolBiz is an online register which aims to support businesses, from larger corporates to small and medium enterprises, to link to volunteering opportunities in their local communities.

Registration can be done by filling out a registration form on the Volunteering Queensland website or by calling Volunteering Queensland on (07) 3002 7600.

About Bendigo and Adelaide Bank:

Queensland is Bendigo and Adelaide Bank’s largest market outside its home state of Victoria.

37 of Bendigo’s 88 Queensland branches are community owned.

14 Queensland communities are currently working towards opening a **Community Bank®** branch.

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