

THE FLAME NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 9



President's Report

Welcome to a bumper newsletter filled with new initiatives, event highlights, special announcements and gratitude.

As the newly appointed President of Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) Victoria, I am honoured to have stepped into this role, and I have very clear goals I want to achieve to benefit the athletes, Special Olympics programs and our team to ensure LETR remains sustainable and continues to grow. Stepping up with me are Chelsea McKay and Trelawney Dewe as Vice Presidents. Both are dedicated, self-motivated committee members who exemplify unified leadership. The support from Victoria Police members has been outstanding, fuelling the success of LETR activities. The generosity of Victoria Police employees, supporting Special Olympics and the Torch Run, demonstrates their commitment to inclusion and development through sports. Every dollar donated through workplace giving directly benefits the sustainability of both the LETR and Special Olympics programs that directly support our athletes.

We are immensely grateful and look forward to continued collaboration, especially as we gear up for the 50th anniversary of Special Olympics Australia and National Games being hosted in Melbourne in 2026.

Recently, at the LETR International Conference in Minneapolis, we placed in three different categories for photography awards: with one first place and two second place awards. Thanks to our photographers, Peter Blakeman and Krystal Diep. This is the first time LETR VIC has placed in these renowned photography awards.

The next newsletter will be released in March; so I wish you a safe and happy holiday period and hope you enjoy some quality time with your loved ones. Thank you to each and every one of you who support LETR. We are most grateful and look forward to an epic 2026.



Kate Lockyer

**LETR (Torchrun)
President**

We're with you every step of the way.

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Dates for the fridge

5 DEC

International Day of People with a Disability – CBD Torch Run

REGISTER

3 DEC

Academy Torch Run

REGISTER

2026

Special Olympics Australia turns 50!

WE CAN'T WAIT TO CELEBRATE WITH YOU!

See all at vic.torchrun.org.au/upcoming-events/

What's New at LETR

Chief Commissioner champions Torch Run Victoria



LETR is thrilled to announce that Victoria’s new Chief Commissioner of Police, Mike Bush, has joined as our new Patron. As Patron, Chief Commissioner Bush will play an important role in supporting LETR’s mission to promote inclusion and raise funds for athletes with intellectual disabilities through Special Olympics Victoria and Special Olympics Australia.

His appointment marks another exciting chapter in LETR Victoria’s ongoing directive to celebrate the courage of our athletes, their community, and their inclusion across the State.

We look forward to working with Chief Commissioner Bush to grow this impact even further. Together, we can continue to light the way for a more inclusive future.

Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics

A worldwide foundation of Law Enforcement employees, The Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) is the largest grassroots awareness and fundraising vehicle for Special Olympics.

We help to provide opportunities for inclusion and improved quality of life for children and adults with intellectual disabilities through support for Special Olympics programs and championing fundraising initiatives.

With more than 1.9 million athletes in 35 countries, Special Olympics programs in the Oceania region are expanding rapidly. Across the region, our goal is to promote respect, inclusion and human dignity for people with intellectual disabilities through sport.



What does this mean though?

LETR is proudly driven by Victoria Police staff (sworn and unsworn members and community members) who volunteer their time to lead and grow this movement. Their commitment goes beyond the badge—they run, fundraise, advocate, and stand shoulder to shoulder with athletes, families, and supporters to build relationships and a more inclusive world.

Curious? Get in touch to see how you can help us!
secretary@torchrun.org.au



New Initiatives

Support for Victoria Police Employees

Are you a carer of an immediate family member with an intellectual disability and/or autism? Are you a past or present serving member of Victoria Police, or a current employee (VPS) of Victoria Police? If so, you are eligible for LETR support.

As strong advocates for Special Olympics, the LETR has witnessed firsthand the positive impact of Special Olympics programs. If you have a loved one with an intellectual disability and/or autism, we want to help connect you with this incredible community.

Let us help you take the first step—because when we support each other, everyone wins.

What your loved one will receive:

- 1 Years Special Olympics Registration (8yo and above- no maximum age limit) valued at \$100
- 1 Club Uniform Polo valued at \$30
- 1 LETR Merchandise Pack valued at \$50
- 1 FREE ticket to The Angela Taylor Memorial Run/Walk Blue Ribbon Foundation Fun Run in the first year of being a Special Olympics Athlete (Value \$38)

We have extended this support to our legatees, past and present employees, law enforcement partners and their families such as AFP, Corrections Victoria, G4S, and Immigration.

We would love to support you by connecting you and your loved one with Special Olympics. For more information please go to our website [Support For Victoria Police Employees – Victoria Law Enforcement Torch Run](#). If you have any questions or if you would like support signing up, please contact our Business Manager, Elissa at secretary@torchrun.org.au





Taking the Plunge 2025

It was an early morning, in the middle of a Melbourne winter but that didn't stop almost 190 participants from diving headfirst into the icy waters of Port Phillip Bay to raise a record \$90,000 for the incredible athletes of Special Olympics Victoria.

Thank you to our amazing volunteers: we could not have put this event on without your support. A big cheer for the South Melbourne Life Saving Club for being the perfect hosts and for your lifesavers on shore and on the jet skis. Thank you Bankvic, for being wonderful sponsors and for freezin' for the best kind of reason with us!

We also thank Deputy Secretary Karl Kent, Acting Deputy Secretary David Butler, Acting Deputy Commissioner Chris Gilbert and Deputy Commissioner Wendy Steendam, for their on-going support and leadership – we hope you had warm clothes!

Our biggest thanks go to our rockstar athletes! Your courage, determination, sense of fun and resilience was nothing short of awe inspiring.

And again, the best costume goes to the Barwon Bravehearts! They really are setting the standard for costumes, and it is very high. I wonder if next year could be a three-peat or if they will be toppled from the top of the Best Costume ladder? Check out their winning traffic cones costume on the back page of this Issue!

Save the date: the next Polar Plunge is 11 July 2026



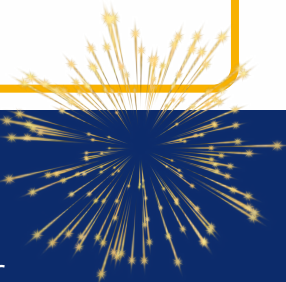
How do I get involved?

We advertise events regularly via our website. Connect with us and register to attend an event. From here, you might consider joining our General Committee or Executive Committee if you're interested when positions are available.

vic.torchrun.org.au/volunteering-with-letr-vic

Thank you WPG and Volunteers

To our incredible Work Place Givers and volunteers—thank you! Your generosity, time, and unwavering support are the heartbeat of our mission. Whether you're behind the scenes or front and centre, your impact ripples far beyond what you see. You remind us that kindness is powerful, and community is everything.





Sensational State Games

More than 500 athletes converged on the gold rush town of Ballarat for the annual Special Olympics Victoria State Games.

Victoria Police members joined the athletes for the four-day event, with Acting Inspector Sarah Tully leading the Saturday Torch Run and Assistant Commissioner Michael Grainger opening the event.

The tennis players opened the Games in Ringwood on September 28th and the competition continued into the following weekend at Ballarat, with nonstop action across golf, basketball, athletics, netball, football (soccer), table tennis, bocce, bowling, gymnastics and swimming!

The Special Olympics State Dinner capped off the celebrations with dancing, laughter and pride as LETR legend Mick Olsen was inducted into the Special Olympics Victoria Hall of Fame.

A huge thank you to the members from the Ballarat area who joined with the LETR family in an amazing weekend of sport and inclusion.



Thank you to the Lamers Foundation. With your support, we were able to purchase this wonderful marquee. We think it looks splendid!



Oh What A Night!

LETR's fourth annual Gala Ball did what nobody expected it would do – it outshone, out-danced and out-sparkled all previous events.

Held at Zinc at Fed Square, it was a party from start to finish with fabulous food and wine, great music from the famous Baker Boy Band and tributes to outgoing Executive Committee members and LETR legends, Matt Volk and Mick Olsen.

The Flame can't go past a shout-out to the new Chief, Commissioner Mike Bush, for his awesome dance moves.

Thank you to the Executive Command members that joined us, our wonderful Bankvic sponsors, and old friends and new, for joining in the celebration.

And that conga line, perhaps our best yet!





LETR International Conference 2025

Our LETR team – Mick, Matt, Tegan, Tiny, Jacqui and Athlete Leader Jo Cuddy - represented us proudly at this year’s LETR International Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota USA.

It was a very busy week for the team: they participated in an Opening Ceremony, conference sessions with a lot of learning, the legendary t-shirt exchange, Host’s Night at Surly’s, a Live & Silent Auction, a Torch Run, a Polar Plunge, a city-wide Scavenger Hunt and the Hall of Fame Dinner. They represented LETR Victoria splendidly!

We also received the Sapphire Award for raising over \$250,000 last year. Together, worldwide LETR Raised over \$70 million last year, bringing the lifetime total to over \$1.1 BILLION for Special Olympics.

Our International Scholarship winner Jo wrote a story for Special Olympics Australia on her experience. You can read her story here:

<https://www.specialolympics.com.au/news/joanne-cuddys-letr-international-conference-experience-16-18-october-2025>



Special Olympics Victoria Clubs

Ballarat: Basketball, gymnastics, swimming.

Email: ballarat.chair@specialolympics.com.au

Barwon: Athletics, basketball, golf, gymnastics, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: barwon.secretary@specialolympics.com.au

Bendigo: Swimming, tenpin bowling.

Email: bendigo.chair@specialolympics.com.au

Dandenong Casey: Basketball, bocce, gymnastics, swimming, tenpin bowling.

Email: dandenongcasey.sport@specialolympics.com.au

Echuca: Basketball, bocce, golf, netball, swimming, tenpin bowling.

Email: echuca.secretary@specialolympics.com.au

Melbourne Eastern Ranges: Basketball, bocce, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: melbourneeasternranges.membership@specialolympics.com.au

Melbourne Inner East: Athletics, basketball, bocce, cricket, equestrian, football (soccer), gymnastics, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling, winter sports.

Email: melbourneinnereast@specialolympics.com.au

Melbourne North: Bocce, tenpin bowling.

Email: melbournenorth.secretary@specialolympics.com.au

Melbourne Southern: Basketball, bocce, football (soccer), swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: melbournesouthern.secretary@specialolympics.com.au

Melbourne West: Athletics, basketball, bocce, gymnastics, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: melbournewest.secretary@specialolympics.com.au

Ovens & Murray: Athletics, basketball, bocce, gymnastics, powerlifting, swimming, table tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: ovensmurray.sport@specialolympics.com.au

Westernport: Athletics, basketball, golf, swimming, tennis, tenpin bowling.

Email: westernport.secretary@specialolympics.com.au



Special Olympics Victoria can be contacted
via: info.vic@specialolympics.com.au





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vic.torchrun.org.au/vicpol-salary-deduction

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Contact: info.vic@specialolympics.com.au

Website: specialolympics.com.au



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