Public Sector Community Event Policy

1. Goal

1.1. One of the Queensland Government’s objectives for the community is to build safe, caring and connected communities. Public sector employees’ participation in community events provides an opportunity to further strengthen the relationship between the public sector and local communities. This positive community engagement aligns with the Public Service Values:

- Customers first – know your customers
- Be courageous – Act with transparency
- Empower people – Lead, empower and trust.

2. Application

2.1. This policy has been approved by the Commission Chief Executive, Public Service Commission and the Commissioners of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Police Service. It applies to all public sector employees. This includes employees of the public service, police, hospital and health services, and public service offices under the Public Service Act Schedule 1.

3. Effective Date: 28 April 2017

4. Background

4.1. The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (the Act) and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (the Code) recognise that it is beneficial for employees to have appropriate engagement with the community.

4.2. The Act specifically recognises that public office involves a public trust. Public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials should seek to promote public confidence in the integrity of the public sector and be committed to honest, fair and respectful engagement with the community.

4.3. The Code supports the rights of members of the Queensland Public sector to contribute to public discussions on community and social issues in a private capacity, and to be active privately in a political party, professional organisation or trade union.

4.4. It also provides that, when acting in a private capacity, reasonable steps must always be taken to ensure that any comments will be understood as representing personal views, not those of government.

5. Policy

5.1. Public sector employees have the right to participate in significant community events, for example Brisbane Pride March, ANZAC Day, Labour Day, regional festivals and events etc., in a private capacity.

5.2. Subject to clauses 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, members of the public sector may wear their uniform to significant community events in recognition of their role and pride in the public service.

5.2.1. Existing uniform policies continue to apply (including those relating to the exclusion of accoutrements).
5.2.2. Where relevant, and in accordance with existing policies, timely notice of intention to participate in uniform must be given to supervisors to allow any security concerns to be addressed.

5.3. The government supports, where relevant, the use of branded vehicle/s in significant community events where operationally convenient and at no cost to the event organiser. Prior approval for use of an official vehicle must be obtained from the relevant employer.

5.4. These vehicles must always be available to be urgently recalled for duty should an emergency arise.

5.5. Where an employee attends a significant community event in uniform or in a branded vehicle, the attendance, their conduct and/or the nature of the event must not reflect adversely on the reputation of their employer or the public sector.

5.6. Participating in significant cultural events in a private capacity is voluntary and an employee will not be entitled to be paid or claim overtime or time in lieu.