



SCOUTS South Africa 2023 Lekgotla Report



Introduction:

About us

SCOUTS South Africa (SSA) is one of the largest volunteers driven educational organisations in South Africa. SSA has more than 30 000 child and youth members and over 3 000 adults who volunteer their time - at no cost to the organisation - in townships, cities and rural areas nationwide. They are supported by approximately 15 full time staff members around the country.

For over 110 years SSA has been preparing children and youth to be independent people who are self-fulfilled and confident individuals and play a constructive role in society. The age-appropriate experiential learning programmes focus on leadership training, life skills and personal development activities. The adult training programmes educate and equip people with practical leadership, communication and vocational skills that are relevant and applicable in their daily lives and circumstances. The value system, training, exposure to outdoor adventure and environmental conservation that SSA provides, prepares members to embrace their social utility and to become active citizens that make positive impacts in their communities throughout South Africa.

SSA is affiliated to the World Organisation of Scouting Movements (WOSM) which operates in over 200 countries and territories and is recognised as an educational organisation with a strong focus on leadership development.

Pre-event planning:

The planning for the event was started approximately 3 months before the event was supposed to take place. The newly appointed CEO was also involved in the planning of this event. The KZN regional team also provided on the ground support. Support from the Chief Commissioner and Chief Scout also ensured the success of the event. The planning of the event however was not without its challenges. These are discussed further below.

The events:



SSA holds a Lekgotla every three years. This year's meeting was made up of three separate conferences, namely:

- The Regional Commissioners (RCs) and the Management Committee of SCOUTS SA (the MANCO) meeting.
- The Lekgotla itself.
- The inauguration of the Chief Scout of South Africa, Khonzaphi Mdaka.

Each of the three conferences will be dealt with separately.

Friday – MANCO / RC meeting



The meeting was attended by 23 RCs and MANCO from around the country. Discussions included the progress towards SSA's overall Strategy 1-2-3 goals. This progress towards the overall strategic goal was measured by the progress on the building blocks of the aforementioned goals. The discussion included feedback from the RCs about the status of Scouting within their respective Regions. The other members of the MANCO also presented their views on developments and plans within their respective portfolios.

The Chief Commissioner and the CEO also had an opportunity to present their views on the overall status of SSA. While these presentations were given, discussion and questions were encouraged. Questions of validity of data, property 'ownership' and the Scout programme were wrestled with.

The Chief Scout was also able to present this view on the Scout Movement in South Africa and presented an impassioned call to all present that the youth of the country need organisations like SSA, and it is up to us to continue to grow it.



Outcomes:

- The MANCO and RC teams had an opportunity to present their regional and programme successes and challenges.
- A realignment to the strategic goals of SSA for the MANCO and RCs.
- A chance for the leadership of SSA to meet in person and formulate strategies to meet the needs of the South African Scouting community.
- Discussion and finalisation that all members of SSA would need to have an active profile on SCOUTS.Digital by end March 2024. If a member does not have an active profile, then they will not be allowed to continue to serve in the Movement.

Saturday - National Lekgotla

This is a meeting of the national team with representatives of Scout Groups around the country over 2-3 days. Similar to an Annual General meeting, but because of the scale of SSA, it is not possible to have an AGM. The first ever Lekgotla was held in October 2017 in Kimberley.

The Lekgotla held at BP camp in KZN had the following attendance:



Province	Number of participants
Eastern Cape	2
Free State	20
Gauteng	17
KwaZulu-Natal	24
Limpopo	3
Mpumalanga	10
Northern Cape	11
North West	8
Western Cape	8
National	4

The participants above had registered but others (from within the SSA community) also attended.
The meeting was attended by over 110 participants from around the Scouting community of South Africa.

The Lekgotla kicked off with a presentation and welcome from our Chief Scout. Participants were placed in various working groups / breakaway sessions and discussed what was working, what needs to be tweaked and what actions needed to be stopped in the following strategic objectives:

- Growth
- Attractive and relevant programmes
- Adult volunteer experience
- Properties
- Finances
- Stakeholder engagement
- Creating an enabling environment
- IT
- Organisational culture





Feedback from these groups was also given to the plenary. This information will be used to create SSA's new strategic plan (2025 – 2027) due next year. This feedback is of critical importance as it is the voice of the groups on the ground who are working with young people around South Africa.

Various presentations by the SA Scout Foundation and their Small Grants programme were also done. Added to this, feedback on the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) policy by the CEO.

An evaluation of the programme and event was also conducted with all participants and the feedback.

The day ended with a wonderful campfire and an opportunity to bond by watching a national sporting event together. The action of the campfire is particularly important as it fosters a feeling of togetherness with the participants – the same is said by watching the sporting event (Rugby World Cup 2023).

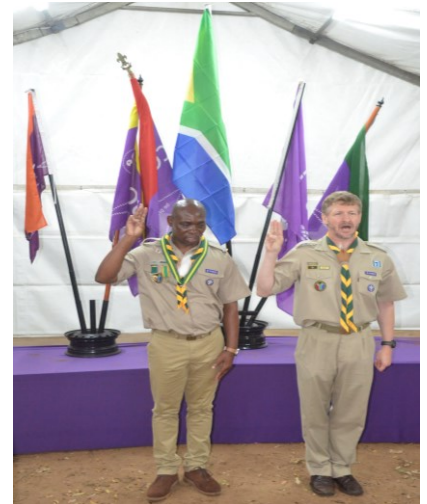
Outcomes:

- Review of what is working within the regions – what needs to be changed and what needs to be continued and built upon
- An opportunity for leadership of SSA to present the progress towards the strategic goals.
- Inputs from the groups directly into the formulation of SSA's next strategic goal document.
- Feedback to the groups on various policy issues (such as POPI)
- Agreement to all participants that ALL SSA members will have an active SCOUTS Digital profile by March 2024.

Sunday – Chief Scout Inauguration

While our Chief Scout, Khonzaphi Mdaka, has been in post for a while now, SCOUTS South Africa took this opportunity to officially conduct his inauguration. The inauguration was opened by a flag procession by Scouting youth and a prayer from Reverend Mike Vorster (who was in fact a Scout in his younger days).

Speeches from the previous Chief Scout, Brendon Hausberger, and the newly inaugurated Chief Scout, Khonzaphi Mdaka, were very well received. Faith leaders from various faiths prayed for not only our Chief Scout but also for the Scout Movement in South Africa. A Scouting choir from the KZN Scouting-in-Schools channel and indigenous young dancers from the KZN province ended off the inauguration programme.



Thank you & post event reflections:



A sincere thank you to our funders for the support to be able to hold an in person Lekgotla, making it possible for members of SSA to hear report back on how SSA has done to move towards its strategic goals and also to have an input into our upcoming strategy planning.

Thank you to the KZN Scout Region and the team at BP Camp for hosting the event and for ensuring its success.

The following issues were challenging and need to be considered and addressed for future events:

- Cost of travel – while the Lekgotla is a key event, the cost of travelling to the venue is prohibitive for many members of SSA. This must be taken into consideration when planning the event in the future (the location especially).
- The volunteerism nature of SSA. While the volunteers in SSA add a huge amount of value to the programme, events such as these would need a full-time staff member to organise the event. This could be adjusted and budgeted for in the original budget. Volunteers often have other jobs which they are working at and therefore would not have a huge amount of time to deal with the many logistics needed for a meeting such as this.
- Allowing enough time for the event. We unfortunately only had one day for discussions at the Lekgotla. One day is the minimum that can be taken for Lekgotla, however having more than one day to deliberate, to get informed inputs from the participants, and to begin to formulate a 'skeleton' of a working strategic plan document will be useful.
- Allocation of roles at the Lekgotla. – who does what
- The importance of an active 'ground force' – locally active team who is able to sort out the venue / campsite and is able to report back to the event organiser on a weekly basis.

