



**SCOUTS**<sup>®</sup>  
South Africa

# Safe Scouting Policy

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## **Preamble**

The Scout Movement is by its very nature an outdoor and adventure organisation, where leaders are encouraged to provide physically challenging and adventurous activities to assist in the personal growth and development of young people. SCOUTS South Africa recognises that such activities are not always risk-free and is committed to ensuring that any such risks to the wellbeing of our members, are managed and mitigated as far as is reasonably practical.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to;

- Provide a framework of principles that guides our approach to ensuring that all Activities are provided in a safe and responsible manner, without unnecessary restrictions.
- Outline the steps to be taken to identify and manage any risks to the wellbeing of our members, through the proper planning of Activities and a process of review and approval of the Activity before it takes place.
- Ensure that Members, both leaders and participants, understand their responsibilities, are adequately trained and are competent to undertake the Activity.
- Ensure that participation in Activities takes place based on informed consent by the Members' parent / legal guardian.
- Ensure that Activity Leaders comply with any applicable legislation, relating to the Activities being undertaken.

## **Scope of the Policy**

The Safe Scouting Policy and associated Practice Notes applies to all youth and adult Members engaged in Activities provided by the various branches and units of SCOUTS South Africa. To develop an environment where Safe Scouting is practiced, all members need to understand, support and comply with the Policy requirements.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with SCOUTS South Africa's Organisational Rules (OR).

Practice Notes and appendices associated with this Policy are operational and may change from time to time as required. Any changes will be communicated through the structures of SCOUTS South Africa, and the most up to date version will always be available on the national website.

A glossary of 'Terms and Definitions' specifically used in this Policy, which are not defined in SCOUTS South Africa's Organisational Rules (OR), is provided at the end of the Policy, to clarify interpretation and assist with understanding of the provisions.

## **Revision Approval**

This revision of the Safe Scouting Policy was approved for publication at the SCOUTS South Africa Management Committee meeting on 22 February 2022 by the committee comprising: Mr Khonzaphi Mdaka, Mr Gary Pienaar, Mr Cameron Belling, Ms Joy Hutchinson, Ms Nkulu Majola, Mr Craig Rens, Ms Milly Siebrits, Mr Theo Rijs, Mr Lawrence Stanton, Mr Peter Statham, Mr John Sturgeon, Mr Kevin Trollip.

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. The Principles of Safe Scouting**

Safe Scouting is built on the following key principles;

- Thorough and careful planning of all Activities by Activity Leaders to ensure that any potential risks are identified and mitigated;
- A systematic review of the planning for the proposed Activity, through the Activity Permit approval process;
- Informed consent from all participants, including informed consent from Youth Members' parent / legal guardian, before the Activity takes place.

## **1.2. Large Scale Events**

Regional Activities, involving 100 or more people, and any National and International Scouting Activities are classified as Events. The Practice Note 'Management of Events', is then applicable.

# **2. Responsibilities of Activity Leaders**

2.1. The Activity Leader must, in so far as is reasonably practicable and to the extent of their role, ability and understanding:

2.1.1. Possess the necessary skills, competencies and/or training required to lead the Activity being undertaken OR ensure that the activity is under the supervision of a competent and suitably trained person.

2.1.2. Properly assess the risks inherent in the Activity being undertaken and, where necessary, obtain the advice of a competent person to ensure a proper assessment of the risks. This assessment should be suitable and sufficient for the type of Activity, those with higher risk requiring a far more in-depth assessment.

2.1.3. Ensure that clear instructions, information and adequate training are provided to all participants, to ensure that they are competent and able to undertake the Activity. Where necessary a suitably competent person may be asked to assist with the preparation and training of the participants.

2.1.4. Prevent accidents by managing any health and safety risks during the Activity, including ensuring that any equipment used during the Activity is suitable, properly maintained, and used in the correct manner OR by ensuring that a suitably qualified person has assessed the suitability of equipment, its proper maintenance and correct usage.

2.1.5. Review the Activity risk assessment as often as necessary, particularly when circumstances and conditions change. Should the circumstances warrant, change or stop the Activity, if the increase in risk is deemed unacceptable.

2.1.6. Ensure that any necessary approval for the activity is obtained in terms of this policy.

- 2.1.7. Ensure that sufficient information is provided to participants, and in the case of Youth participants to their parents or guardians, to allow them to give **informed consent** to take part in the activity. Particulars of **informed consent** are provided below.
- 2.1.8. Ensure that a system is in place to keep track of youth members during the activity, including (where appropriate) the buddy system as detailed below.
- 2.2. The 'Buddy System' is of fundamental importance in ensuring the safety of Youth Members. It is recommended that it be implemented whenever there is a possibility of Youth Members dispersing over some distance, or being out of sight of the Activity Leader, or while taking part in water activities or other high-risk activities. The Buddy System requires youth members to be buddy up in groups of two (there may be a single group of three in the event of an odd number of youth participants), so that they are able to look out for each other and call for help if necessary. It is recommended that a system is implemented to ensure that no Youth Members have gone missing, especially after water or other high-risk activities.
- 2.3. In the case of National and Regional events, it is recommended that these events' administration is run via the MMS Database. The final list of all participants in any such event will be stored in line with the data storage policy of the MMS.
- 2.4. A Youth Member designated as the Activity Leader for any Activity takes on the same responsibilities as an adult Activity Leader.

When a Youth Member is the Activity Leader, the responsibility of the Adult Member approving the Activity Permit is to ensure that all the necessary safety precautions have been put in place and that the Activity Leader is competent to lead the Activity.

- 2.5. Activity Leaders running training courses, activities and events involving Adult Members only, are still required to consider all the provisions contained in this Safe Scouting Policy, to ensure the safety of all participants. Adult Members are deemed to give their consent to participate in an activity and to accept the reasonable risks inherent in that activity when they take part in the activity. In so doing they hold SCOUTS South Africa, its scouters, members, employees and agents blameless in respect of any injury incurred as a result of participation in the activity in question.

### **3. Informed Consent**

All SSA Activities are undertaken on the understanding that participants in those activities do so willingly, of their own free will and with the knowledge that by undertaking such activities they consent to the reasonable risks associated with those activities and hold SSA, its Scouters, members and agents blameless for any damage that might arise from participation in those activities. People under the age of 18 generally cannot provide their own consent and accordingly Youth members require their parents' / legal guardians' consent to participate in any Scouting Activities.

For consent to be freely given, it is important that all consent is **informed consent**, meaning that the person giving the consent is aware of the nature of the activity being undertaken with sufficient detail to be aware of the inherent risks of the activity and to accept those risks. This includes a broad knowledge of the type of activities regularly undertaken at the meeting place of the unit in question.

Activity Leaders must ensure that all relevant information is provided, so that the participants, parents or legal guardians have a clear understanding of the Activity being undertaken, before consent is given. This is generally achieved by written communication prior to the activity. In the case of Youth Members confirmation of their parents' / guardians' consent on behalf of the Youth Member is required in writing as set out below:

### 3.1 Regular Unit Activities

3.1.1. Parent consent for regular activities is provided and covered by the SSA forms as detailed below. Details of what constitutes a "regular activity" are set out in the glossary / definitions at the end of this document.

3.1.2. Activity leaders should note that a change in venue might result in an activity that would ordinarily be seen to be "regular" to be "out of the ordinary" and hence require specific consent. Cooking at a Scout hall on an open fire would generally constitute a "regular activity", doing the exact same activity at a strange venue would require specific consent because the parent needs to not only consent to the activity, but also to the venue where the activity is taking place.

3.1.3. Specific consent is not required for **regular** activities at the following venues:

- At the regular meeting place(s) of the unit in question;
- All properties owned, leased or controlled by SCOUTS South Africa within the same district as the unit in question;
- At the private residences of members of the unit in question;
- At all public parks, streets and similar venues located in the same district as the unit in question.

3.1.4 A Youth Member's parent / legal guardian is required to complete a new '*Application for Youth Membership*', giving such consent, at the point that the Youth Member enters each branch – i.e. at the start of Meerkats, Cubs and Scouts. Should they move units while in a branch, they will need to complete a new '*Application for Youth Membership*', when joining the new unit.

The '*Application for Youth Membership*' form completed for the previous unit will cover visits to the new branch, but prior to getting invested into the new branch a new '*Application for Youth Membership*' form needs to be completed.

- 3.1.5. Youth who are not Members of SSA (i.e. recruits or visitors) may only attend regular Activities if their parents / legal guardians have done one of the following:
- a) Completed the relevant '*Application for Youth Membership*' form for the unit in question in anticipation of getting formally invested; OR
  - b) Completed a standard SSA '*Parent Consent and Indemnity Form - Events and Activities*' for the day of the visit in question. In this case a separate form will be required each time the visitor visits.
- 3.1.6 These forms do not cover any dangerous or risky activities not forming part of the regular activities even if they are undertaken at a unit's regular meeting place. Such activities should be treated as an activity under paragraph 3.2 below. When in doubt, the Activity Leader should ask him / herself if the parent or guardian who signed the consent form could reasonably expect that consent to extend to the activity in question, or whether additional consent should be obtained. When in doubt an activity should be treated as an activity under paragraph 3.2 below.
- 3.1.7 Unit leaders are reminded that irrespective of forms completed by the guardian or parent of a Youth Member, that consent needs to be **informed** and that parents or guardians need to be aware of the type of activities that a unit considers to be "regular" activities and that parents or guardians should at all times know where activities are being undertaken.

## **3.2 All Other Activities**

- 3.2.1. For all other Activities, the current '*Parent Consent and Indemnity Form - Events and Activities*', must be completed and given to the Activity Leader before the parent / legal guardian hands over responsibility for the Youth Member to the Activity Leader (i.e. appoints the Activity Leader to act in '*Loco Parentis*' for their Youth Member).
- 3.2.2. Meerkats participating in any outdoor Activity not at their Regular Meeting Place, must always be accompanied by a parent, guardian or responsible adult family member. In the event that the Meerkat wishes to be accompanied by some other adult not mentioned above (for example a family friend or an employee of an orphanage), directions should be obtained from the RTC Meerkats or the RC as to the suitability of such person.
- 3.2.3. The directions of the Activity Leader shall always be respected, as they are responsible for the safety of the group as a whole. A parent, guardian or other adult in charge of the Meerkat may, at their own discretion remove their Meerkat from the Activity if they disagree with the directions of the Activity Leader.
- 3.2.4. Activity Leaders are reminded that all consent needs to be **informed consent**. For example, consent provided for "a camp" could reasonably be understood to include setting up and sleeping in tents, cooking over gas or a fire and undertaking games. It would not automatically include activities such as abseiling, kloofing, boating or other

dangerous activities and if such activities are included in part of the camp programme, this should be set out in communications about the camp and, if possible, on the consent form.

### **3.3 Withdrawal of Parental Consent**

A parent / legal guardian can withdraw consent for their child to participate in an Activity, should they have concerns in the manner in which the Activity is being implemented, by informing the Activity Leader and removing their child from any further participation in the Activity.

## **4 Activity Permits**

The purpose of Activity Permits is to ensure that, for those activities that require it, the correct planning, oversight and training is in place for the Activity Leader to safely manage the Activity.

### **4.1 General Regulations**

4.1.1. All Activities, except activities which form part of a unit's regular programme held within a unit's home District require an Activity Permit to be approved by the next-in-line Scouter before the Activity can go ahead.

4.1.2. Applications for Activity Permits must be completed by the Activity Leader on the relevant '*Application for a Permit for an Outdoor Activity*', either in hard copy or online format, and submitted to the responsible next-in-line Scouter for approval.

4.1.3. For every Activity requiring an Activity Permit, there must be a designated Contact Person, whose details are recorded on the Activity Permit application. This is usually a warranted Scouter, with the necessary training or Licence for the Activity being undertaken, who acts as the first point of contact with the Activity Leader, should the need arise.

### **4.2 Approval of Activity Permits**

4.2.1. The responsible persons for approving Activity Permits are shown in Table 1: Unit Activity Permits and Table 2: Permits for District, Regional, National and International Events.

4.2.2. The table indicates who is responsible for reviewing and approving the Activity Permit, who is responsible for endorsing the Activity Permit where specialist endorsement is required, and finally who must be informed of the Activity taking place.

4.2.3. The principles for the approval of Activity Permits are;

- The Activity Leader must submit the Activity Permit application to their next-in-line Scouter.
- The responsible next-in-line Scouter will consider the application, where necessary review the Activity Leader's detailed planning for the Activity, and if satisfied that all requirements are met, will approve and sign the Activity Permit.
- For certain, more adventurous activities, further Specialist Endorsement is required. The next-in-line Scouter consults the designated person as indicated in the table, who endorses the Activity Permit if they are satisfied that all safety requirements have been met.
- The Scouter endorsing the Activity Permit must have the relevant training or Licence for the activity being undertaken or must refer the application to somebody who is qualified to endorse the application.
- At this point the Activity Permit is considered approved.
- Finally, as a courtesy, there is a requirement to inform other Scouters before the Activity takes place, as indicated in the table. The next-in-line Scouter is responsible for informing the designated person.

4.2.4 Should the next-in-line Scouter feel that they are not able or lack the experience to assess the planning and potential risks, they should then seek guidance and assistance from a Scouter with the necessary experience to do the assessment, before signing off on the Activity Permit and accepting responsibility.

4.2.5. Where there is no Support Team Member for the Branch assigned to the Unit's District, or there is no Regional Coordinator / Activities Committee for the Activity being undertaken, or such persons are not available, the RTC for the Branch fulfils the role.

4.2.6. It is the responsibility of the Activity Leader to make sure that the Activity Permit has been approved, and endorsed where necessary, before the Activity goes ahead.

4.2.7. Permits may be withdrawn by the person responsible for approving the permit at any time should any of the prevailing conditions merit this. This includes the current and predicted weather conditions during the Activity, state of routes and rivers etc.

4.2.7. A checklist to assist with the assessment and approval of permits is attached hereto as Appendix 1.

4.2.8. All Rover Activities should be reviewed and approved by the RS or where there is no RS, the Crew Council assumes this responsibility. Where a Rover activity is considered "high risk" (in that a specialist endorsement would be required for a permit submitted by another branch for such an activity), the relevant Regional Coordinator or Activity Committee must be advised of the activity who will provide directions with regards the carrying out of the activity if it is to proceed as an official SCOUTS South Africa activity.

### **4.3 Notification in respect of activities not requiring Activity Permits**

- 4.3.1. As a courtesy the SGL and the DC should be advised of all regular activities taking place away from a units regular meeting place but during their regular meeting time.
- 4.3.2. Similarly, the SGL and DC should be advised of all regular activities taking place away from a units regular meeting place during times other than their regular meeting time if such activities are in the public eye.

**TABLE 1: APPROVAL OF UNIT ACTIVITY PERMITS**

	<b>Activity Permit</b>	<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>	<b>Specialist Endorsement</b>	<b>For Information</b>
Outdoor Activities	Unit Outings or Activities (Meerkat Dens, Cub Packs, Scout Troops)	SGL		DC
	Patrol Outings or Activities	TS		SGL and DC
Camping	Group / Family Camp or Troop Camp	SGL - Who is responsible to assess the planning, programme, risk mitigation and safety of the activity.	If more than 3 nights duration, Support Team Member Scout Programme assigned to the Group to ensure Scout Camping requirements are met.	DC
	Cub Camp or Pack Holiday	SGL - Who is responsible to assess the planning, programme, risk mitigation and safety of the activity.	Support Team Member Cub Programme assigned to the Group to ensure Cub Camping requirements are met.	DC
	Scout led Camps	TS - Who is responsible to assess the planning, programme, risk mitigation and safety of the activity.	Support Team Member Scout Programme assigned to the Group, if camp is for advancement purposes.	SGL and DC
Hiking	Meerkat Hikes	SGL - Only short-day hikes with a parent/guardian are allowed.		DC
	Cub Hikes	SGL - Only day hikes are allowed.		DC
	Troop Hikes (including overnight hikes and expeditions)	SGL - Who is responsible to assess the planning, route selection, risk mitigation and safety of the activity.	Support Team Member Scout Programme assigned to the Group if the hike is for advancement purposes. Must also assess safety of activity against any regional mountain hiking guidelines and consult with Regional Coordinator if any.	DC
	Scout led Hikes (including overnight hikes and expeditions)	TS - Who is responsible to assess the planning, route selection, risk mitigation and safety of the activity.		SGL DC

	<b>Activity Permit</b>	<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>	<b>Specialist Endorsement</b>	<b>For Information</b>
Water Activities	Swimming (The only water activity permitted for Meerkats is swimming in a swimming pool)	SGL	Regional Coordinator Water Activities who must satisfy themselves that the Activity Leader has a valid Water Awareness Licence.	DC
	Unit Boating Activities (Cub Packs and Scout Troops)	SGL or in the case of Rover Crews, RS or if no RS, the SGL or DC for Independent Crews.	Regional Coordinator Water Activities, or member of the Water Activities Committee (WAC) who must satisfy themselves that all safety requirements have been met and the Activity Leader has a valid Activity Licence for the Activity and class of water.	DC
	Patrol Boating Activities	TS, if they hold the appropriate Activity Licence for the Activity and type of water. If not, then another qualified adult leader.		SGL DC
Air Activities	Unit Air Activities (Cub Packs and Scout Troops)	SGL	Regional Coordinator Air Activities or Member of the Air Activities Committee(AAC) must satisfy themselves that all safety requirements have been met and the Activity Leader holds the necessary valid Activity Licence for the Activity.	DC
	Patrol Air Activities	TS, if they hold the appropriate Activity Licence for the Activity and type of water. If not, then another qualified adult leader.		SGL DC

**For certain Springbok Advancements, the permit is required to be endorsed by the relevant STM / RTC Scout Programme before the activity takes place.**

**All Group, Unit or Patrol Activities outside the Home District, require additional people to be informed;**

1. For activities taking place outside the Home District but within the Region, the Host DC should be informed of the activity. The person approving the permit, will communicate the details of the activity with the Host DC. As a courtesy to all those involved, do not leave the permit application and approval to the last minute. It is recommended that permits for activities outside the Home District be approved and communicated at least 7 days before the activity takes place.
2. For activities taking place outside the Region, the Home DC will ensure that both the Home RC and Host RC are informed of the activity. It is recommended that permits for such activities outside the Region, be approved and communicated at least 14 days before the activity takes place.

**TABLE 2: APPROVAL OF ACTIVITY PERMITS FOR DISTRICT, REGIONAL, NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

<b>Activity Permit</b>	<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>	<b>Specialist Endorsement</b>	<b>For Information</b>
District Activities	DC (if not the Activity Leader) or the relevant RTC Meerkat, Cub, Scout or Rover Programme as applicable if DC is activity leader.	Depending on the activity the relevant Regional Coordinator if required	RTC Meerkat, Cub, Scout or Rover Programme RC
Regional Activities	RC (if not the Activity Leader) or the relevant Chair National Meerkat, Cub, Scout or Rover Programme as applicable if RC is activity leader.	Depending on the activity the relevant Regional Coordinator if required	Chair National Meerkat, Cub, Scout or Rover Programme
National Activities & Events (i.e. Pow Wow, Sanjamb, Rover Moots, etc)	Chair National Meerkat, Cub, Scout or Rover Programme as applicable (if not the Activity Leader) or CC if National Chair is activity leader.	Depending on the activity the relevant National Coordinator if required	RC of Host Region CC
<b>International Activities &amp; Events</b>			
International Jamboree Contingents, or smaller groups participating in activities abroad	Chair National Scout or Rover Programme as applicable		Chair International Committee CC
Group or Units travelling or participating in activities abroad	Home RC, or RTC Scout or Rover Programme		Chair International Committee CC

## **5 Activities at Regular Meeting Place(s)**

- 5.1. All Den, Pack or Troop meetings and activities at the units' regular meeting place require the presence of the holder of a valid Warrant and where necessary a Licence appropriate to the Activity being undertaken, or the approval from the DC to continue in any unforeseen circumstances when a warrant holder is not available.
- 5.2. The Warranted Scouter needs to ensure that all Youth present are either Youth Members or, if they are Recruits or visitors, that they have submitted the necessary consent forms as detailed 3.1.5 above.
- 5.3. All Patrol Activities, where a Warranted Scouter is not present, and that are not part of a Troop Meeting or Troop Activity, must be led by a suitably qualified Scout and require the prior consent of the Troop Scouter.
- 5.4. Where Groups make use of boathouses or other facilities, which are at a separate location from the venue for regular meetings and activities, then the location of those other facilities must be included in the definition of Regular Meeting Place on the Group's Registration Form.
- 5.5. Water activities at a Sea Scout Group's boathouse or 'home waters' which has been specified as indicated in clause 5.4 above, do not require an Activity Permit provided that the appropriate Activity Licence holder is present during the Activity.
- 5.6. The Scout Group Leader, a senior Scouter, or a designated member of the Group Parent's Committee, should conduct a risk assessment for their Regular Meeting Place at least every 3 years, or after any significant alterations have taken place. A '*Recommended Meeting Venue Risk Assessment*' is provided in Appendix 2.

## **6 Activities away from Regular Meeting Place**

- 6.1 All Den, Pack or Troop meetings and activities require the presence of:
  - The holder of a valid Warrant and where necessary a Licence appropriate to the Activity being undertaken;
  - In the case of Scout advancements, the presence of the Scout planning and running the activity in question.
- 6.2. All Patrol Activities, where a Warranted Scouter is not present, and that are not part of a Troop Meeting or Troop Activity, must be led by a suitably qualified Scout and require the prior consent of the Troop Scouter.
- 6.3. Unless stated elsewhere in this Policy, any Unit Activities held away from the regular meeting place, require the Activity Leader to apply for and be issued with an Activity Permit in terms of Section 4 of this policy.

6.4. The Activity Leader must determine and implement the appropriate ratio of adults to Youth participants for the Activity. This will vary according to the age and experience of the Youth, the duration and type of Activity and the location.

6.5. As a guideline for normal outdoor Activities (hikes over easy terrain, visits and outings, standing camps etc.) the following is recommended;

<b>Unit Activity</b>	<b>Recommended Ratio</b>
Meerkats	1 adult for every 2 Meerkats
Cubs	1 adult for every 6 Cubs
Scouts	1 adult for 8 to 12 Scouts (depending on the number and experience of the Patrol Leaders in attendance)

6.6. All Scouters, regular Parent Helpers or any other parents attending the activity who have agreed to help, can be included in the number of adults to achieve the recommended ratios.

## **7 General Activity Safety Provisions**

### **7.1 First Aid and Safety**

7.1.1. Activity Leaders are responsible, during the Activity planning, to assess at least:

- the type of Activity,
- its location (especially in relation to Emergency facilities and services),
- the potential risks,
- the numbers involved, their age and experience;

to determine the appropriate number of and the qualifications of First Aiders or Medical Personnel, equipment (first aid kits etc.) and the appropriate emergency plan required for the Activity.

7.1.2. The recommended minimum number and qualifications of the designated First Aider for the Activity are;

<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>Designated First Aider</b>
Meerkat or Cub Activity	An adult, or Scout with the equivalent of a Level 1 First Aid qualification.
Patrol Activity	A Scout, who holds at least the First Aid Scoutcraft badge.
Troop Activity	A senior Scout (14 years or older) who holds at least the First Aid Interest Badge, or an adult with the equivalent of a Level 1 First Aid qualification.

7.1.3. Where possible, and particularly for Expeditions, Hikes and other Activities in remote locations, a second designated First Aider is recommended.

7.1.4. The name, contact number, location and directions to the nearest 24-hour hospital emergency room must be readily available during the Activity. The contact number for Emergency Services must also be prominently displayed at all SCOUTS South Africa properties and Activity venues.

- 7.1.5. The Activity emergency plan should also include how to transport an injured person to the nearest emergency medical facility, when transport provided by emergency medical services is not required or may not be available.
- 7.1.6. During an expedition or hike the same information, as well as options for transport to the emergency medical facility from various point along the route, shall be in the possession of at least the Activity Leader and one other responsible member of the group.

## **7.2 Emergency Procedures**

- 7.2.1. In the event of an emergency, a missing Member during an Activity, or in the case of a serious accident, incident or the loss of life, the Activity Leader must immediately (or at the earliest possible opportunity) notify the designated Emergency Contact Scouter named in the Activity Permit, who shall immediately inform the relevant RTC and Regional Commissioner of the situation.
- 7.2.2. The Activity Leader may contact the appropriate emergency / rescue services directly if the situation is life threatening. Thereafter, they should notify the designated Emergency Contact Scouter, who will contact the relevant people as per 7.2.1. above.
- 7.2.3. The RTC / Regional Commissioner will review the actions taken already and determine whether any further intervention is required. They will also ensure that the Member's parent / legal guardian is contacted and notified and may delegate this task to the most appropriate Scouter.
- 7.2.4. The Regional Commissioner is responsible for handling any communication with the media and should contact the National Office PR Manager for assistance in this regard.
- 7.2.5. Where Regions have their own published Emergency Procedures, the provisions of these documents should also be followed.

## **7.3 Insurance**

- 7.3.1. SSA holds public liability insurance as do many groups who hold building combined and certain other short-term insurances. This is an insurance that covers loss or damage suffered by third parties (not member to member) caused by the negligence of a registered SSA member.
- 7.3.2. In compliance with the insurance policy, all adults forming part of an event organising team, must be registered members of SSA. For running specialised bases at events, adults may be affiliated members.
- 7.3.3. SSA has no personal injury insurance due largely to the limited amounts and contingencies for which minors can be insured and the high cost of such insurance.

## 8 Adventurous Activities

### 8.1 Introduction

While all Activities must adhere to the general principles contained in this Policy, the following Activities have additional safety and permit requirements which must be considered. These are contained in the following Practice Notes;

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Applicable Practice Notes</b>
Camping	Practice Note: Camping (including Patrol, Scout, Cub and Family Camping requirements)
Hiking	Practice Note: Hiking (including Scout, Cub and Meerkat hiking requirements)
Pioneering	Practice Note: Pioneering Safety Practice Note: Aerial Runway Code
Water Activities	Practice Note: Water Activities (including swimming, rafting and boating requirements)
Air Activities	Practice Note: Air Activities
Transport	Practice Note: Transporting People & Equipment Safely

### 8.2 Activity Licences

8.2.1. Certain activities require that the Activity Leader hold a valid Licence (previously known as a Charge) for the activity being held. This document confirms that the Activity Leader has the necessary training and skills to take charge of and be responsible for the specified activity.

8.2.2. Licences include the following;

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Licence Required</b>
Outings and visits to airfields.	Air Safety Awareness
Flying related activities, including gliding, hot air ballooning, microlights, motorized aircraft etc.	Air Skills License
Any overnight Cub Camp or Pack Holiday.	Cub Camping License
Swimming and rafting activities in swimming pools, dams and non-flowing water.	Water Awareness
Canoeing or kayaking on dams and rivers and rafting on flowing water.	Water License – Canoeing
All rowing related activities on dams, rivers and coastal waters.	Water License – Oars
All sailing activities, including windsurfing, kiteboarding on dams, rivers and coastal waters.	Water License – Sailing
All activities involving power boats, including water skiing and para-sailing on dams, rivers and coastal waters.	Water License – Power Boating

8.2.3. Water Licences are issued for different types of water bodies, defined as either Flat Water, White Water, Special Inland Water, or Coastal Water. The Practice Note: Water Activities contains the detail of these requirements.

8.2.4. The possession of an Activity Licence is an indication of the achievement of basic training requirements and having been assessed as being competent in a particular field. Notwithstanding that a person may hold a licence, the person approving a permit will always retain a discretion to reject a permit if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the activity cannot be carried out in a safe manner.

8.2.5. Notwithstanding that an activity would generally require the presence of a licence holder, the relevant approving authority may approve an activity where no licence holder will be present if in their opinion either:

- The activity is of such low risk that a licence holder is not required; OR
- The activity will be under the supervision of an individual who, although they may not hold a valid licence, has other experience that renders them sufficiently competent to manage the activity.

### **8.3 Validity of Activity Licences**

8.3.1 With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 all Activity Licences will only be valid for 5 years from date of issue.

8.3.2 Activity Licences may be renewed by the RTC for the branch concerned, or by the RC, either on application from the license holder or on the recommendation of the relevant Regional Activities Council, who may make such a request without an application from the license holder.

## **9 Reporting Injuries and Incidents**

### **9.1 Introduction**

Scouting is an outdoor leadership and activity-based organisation, and there will be instances where Members are involved in accidents and sometimes suffer an injury while participating in such Activities.

The reporting of injuries serves two purposes:

- It provides a brief medical history to allow for the optimal treatment of an injured person by trained professionals going forward;
- It provides a brief history of the treatment whilst the injured person was under the care of SSA members to assist with any potential litigation arising from the injury.

Accordingly, it is desirable that the record be kept as accurately as possible and be properly stored after the incident.

## 9.2 An Incident Log

9.2.1. It is recommended (but not required) that an Incident Log is maintained during the Activity. It is recommended that this should be kept in the First Aid Kit and the following shall be recorded in the Log;

- Any injuries which were treated by the designated First Aider.
- Any medication which was issued to any Member.
- Details of any potentially dangerous incidents which did not result in any injuries.

9.2.2. An example of the Incident Log is attached as Appendix 3.

9.2.3. The Incident Log should be retained by Activity Leader, preferably on a platform such as Scouts Digital and the next-in-line Scouter informed of any entries recorded during the Activity.

9.2.4. Activity Leaders or the designated First Aider are permitted to make Schedule 0 Medication available to Members, to take themselves. However, the proper dosages must be adhered to, and if problems persist the parents need to be informed and further medical help sought. Refer Appendix 4 for the '*Guidelines on Schedule 0 Medication*'.

## 9.3 Notifiable Incident Reports

9.3.1 Where an injury is serious enough that:

- it requires treatment by Medical Personnel; OR
- the Member is treated by a First Aider but is unable to continue with the remainder of the programme for the Activity; OR
- there is a reasonable suspicion that the injury might have long-term consequences; OR
- there is a reasonable suspicion that litigation might result out of the injury;

it is a Notifiable Incident. An 'Incident Report Form' must be completed, giving details of the accident or incident and the injuries.

9.3.2. Any accidents involving a motor vehicle are a Notifiable Incident, regardless of the injuries sustained.

9.3.3. An example of the '*Incident Report Form*', as at the date of publication of this Policy is attached as Appendix 5 to this Policy. The form states the information that needs to be collected/collated after an incident.

9.3.4. The '*Incident Report Form*' must be completed and submitted to the next-in-line Scouter by the Activity Leader as soon as is reasonably possible, together with the relevant consent form in the case of injuries involving Youth Members. Should circumstances result in a delay in completing this requirement, it is recommended that the next-in-line Scouter notify the RC telephonically of the incident and the report to follow.

- 9.3.5. Once the *'Incident Report Form'* has been signed by the next-in-line Scouter a copy must be sent by them to the Regional Office, with a copy to the RC, who will;
- Ensure that a copy of the report is placed on record and held at the Regional Office.
  - Inform the National Office who will notify the SSA insurers and decide on any further action required.

## 10 Retention and Storage of Documents

- 10.1. Due to the nature of the information contained in the *'Application for Youth Membership'* and *'Parent Consent and Indemnity'* forms, the storage of these creates a potential POPIA burden on Groups. However, in the event of any incident taking place, there remains the need to legally protect the Activity Leader, either youth or adult from any claims arising from the incident.
- 10.2. Each *'Application for Youth Membership'* form must be retained and stored for 3 years after a Youth Member turns 18 years of age, even if they leave SCOUTS South Africa. It is recommended that Groups use the National MMS, currently *'Scouts.Digital'*, to upload and store these documents digitally.
- 10.3. In the event of an accident or injury taking place during an activity which results in a Notifiable Incident, the original *'Activity Permit'* and the *'Parent Consent and Indemnity Form'* should be submitted along with the incident report to the Regional and National offices for proper storage.
- 10.4. All other *'Activity Permits'* and the related *'Parent Consent and Indemnity Forms'* which are not stored in *'Scouts.Digital'* can be destroyed after 12 months of the Activity taking place.

## DEFINITIONS

Approved Form	The appropriate form published on the SSA website at the date of completion of the form.
Activity	Any Activity or Event organised by a Member of SCOUTS South Africa in which other Members are participating or are attending.
Activity Leader	The term "Activity Leader" is used throughout. It is the Member of SCOUTS South Africa to whom the Activity Permit for the Activity or Event was issued. For the purpose of this Policy an "Event Leader" is covered by the term "Activity Leader".
Activity Licence	The document that licenses a Member to take charge of a specified Activity.
Contact person	The person designated in an Activity permit, who shall not be participating in the Activity, to be primary point of contact with the Activity Leader.
Event	All Regional Activities of 100 or more participants, National or International Activities.

Home District or Region	The district where the Group is registered or the Region within which the District falls.
Incident	Any event in which a Member sustains an injury or becomes ill so that they cannot continue to participate in the programme, temporarily or for the remainder of the programme, or require First Aid treatment or medication.
Incident Log	A Log completed by the Activity Leader to record any minor injuries, medication issued to Youth or potentially dangerous incidents, without serious injuries
Medical Personnel	Adults currently registered with the Health Professions Control Council and able to render medical assistance.
Members	Adults or Youth who have been invested as Members of SSA with approved Applications for Adult Membership AAM) or Application for Membership Youth forms
MMS (Membership Management System)	The National membership database, currently Scouts.Digital, which is used to maintain membership records.
Patrol Activity	An Activity being carried out by a single (standing or temporary) Patrol, led by a Patrol Leader who may be appointed by the TS just for the Activity.
Regular Activities	<p>These are activities that a parent might reasonably assume would be undertaken as part of the day-to-day meetings of a Scouting branch. For example, training, mapping, cooking on open fires or on gas, pioneering, Patrol meetings, Court of Honour meetings, badge testing sessions and the playing of boisterous games.</p> <p>What constitutes a "regular activity" will obviously vary from unit to unit. For example, pioneering a table would be seen to be a "regular activity" for a Scout Troop, but not for a Meerkat Den. Boating is a regular activity for Sea Scout units, but not for most Land Scout units.</p>
Regular Meeting Place(s)	This is the place or places (halls, rooms, facilities) where the Den, Pack, Troop or Crew meets on a regular basis, as defined in the Groups Registration Form.
Website	The official website of SCOUTS South Africa
Youth Member	A Meerkat, Cub or Scout

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Appendices

The following supporting documents are included with this Policy

- Appendix 1: Activity Permit Approval Checklist
- Appendix 2: Recommended Meeting Venue Risk Assessment
- Appendix 3: Incident Log
- Appendix 4: Guidelines on Schedule 0 Medication
- Appendix 5: Incident Report Form

## **Practice Notes**

The following Practice Notes on certain adventurous activities, when they are enacted, provide additional safety requirements and guidelines which must be also be considered. They should be read in conjunction with the general provisions of this Policy.

- Practice Note: Camping
- Practice Note: Hiking
- Practice Note: Pioneering Safety (use current Pioneering Safety guidelines, until enacted)
- Practice Note: Aerial Runway Code (use current Pioneering Safety guidelines, until enacted)
- Practice Note: Water Activities
- Practice Note: Air Activities
- Practice Note: Transporting People & Equipment Safely
- Practice Note: Management of Events (still to be enacted)

## **Amendment Submission Contact Details**

While every attempt is made to ensure that the contents of this policy are correct and consistent at the time of publication, the changing nature of SCOUTS South Africa and the communities that we serve is acknowledged, and as living documents this Policy should and will require correction and amendment from time to time.

Any proposals for amendment of the contents of this policy should be submitted in line with the process described in the standing Organisation Rules in effect at the time of submission of the proposed amendment.

The proposed amendments for this document should be submitted to:

SCOUTS South Africa  
National Office  
PO Box 2434  
Clareinch  
7740  
[info@scouts.org.za](mailto:info@scouts.org.za)

## APPENDIX 1: ACTIVITY PERMIT APPROVAL CHECKLIST

The attached checklist is provided to assist Scout Group Leaders, and / or Scouters to consider the key safety aspects when approving Activity Permits, and when a permit is required or not. If you have answered 'yes' to most of the questions, or any of the key questions as indicated on this checklist, then a permit is required.

	Yes	No
<p><b>Nature of the Activity</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can the activity be considered outside the normal 'regular activities' that are provided at your unit meetings, and could be reasonably completed in a 2 to 4-hour session?</li> <li>2. Can the activity be considered outside the scope of the normal unit activities? For example, boating is a regular activity for Sea Scout Groups, but may not be for normal Land Scout Groups?</li> <li>3. Does the activity require any specialist skills or safety precautions, i.e. abseiling, major pioneering etc?</li> <li>4. Is the activity classified as one where the Activity Leader is required to hold a valid Licence (Charge Certificate) for the activity being held, i.e. certain air or water activities? <i>(In this case a permit is always required).</i></li> </ol>		
<p><b>Youth Led Activities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the activity going to be led by a Youth Member without any supervision from a Warranted Scouter?</li> <li>2. Is the Activity Leader completing a Scout advancement requirement? <i>(In both cases a permit is always required).</i></li> </ol>		
<p><b>Skills and Abilities of the Participants</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this the first time that more than 25% of Youth Members participating will be doing this activity?</li> </ol>		
<p><b>Location</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the activity outside the home District? <i>(In this case a permit is always required).</i></li> <li>2. Is the activity away from your regular meeting place, private residence of one of the Group's members, or local park or Scout campsite within reasonable distance from your meeting place?</li> <li>3. Do the participants require transport to get to the activity venue – i.e. they are unable to safely walk there?</li> <li>4. Does the time of day of the activity make the venue more risky? For example, a public open space in daylight versus night time.</li> </ol>		
<p><b>First Aid &amp; Safety Considerations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The activity venue has no first aid facilities, or qualified first aiders readily available. For example, public facilities / activities generally have a first aid kit and trained staff available.</li> <li>2. Is the activity location remote and far from medical care? In the event of an emergency, would a patient have to be transported to a 'pick up' point to be transported to a medical care facility?</li> </ol>		

Note: Where an Activity Permit is required a 'Parent Consent and Indemnity Form - Events and Activities', is always required. In certain circumstances it may be prudent to get a 'Parent Consent Form' even if an Activity Permit is not required, to ensure informed consent is given.

## APPENDIX 2: RECOMMENDED MEETING VENUE RISK ASSESSMENT

The attached checklist is provided to assist Scout Group Leaders in the identification of potential hazards and safety risks, which needs to be addressed if deemed material.

### Meeting Venue Risk Assessment Checklist

GROUP NAME:			
ADDRESS:			
DATE OF INSPECTION:			
INSPECTED BY:			
<b>Grounds and Entrances</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Is the building address or identification clearly visible?			
Is the property adequately fenced to prevent people just walking in from the street or children running out into the road?			
Are driveways and entrances safe and away from meeting activity areas?			
Is there a designated safe parking area where parents can drop off and collect children before and after meetings, which doesn't impact on the activities being provided?			
<b>Facility Exterior</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Is the building address or identification clearly visible?			
Are exterior lights in working order?			
Are the exits onto public streets free from visibility obstructions?			
Are all building sides accessible to emergency equipment?			
Does the building appear to be in good repair?			
Does the building's roof appear to be in good repair?			
Are exterior walls free from cracks or other damages?			
Are windows free from cracks or broken panes?			

Are paved surfaces inspected and repaired (i.e., lifts, cracks, etc.)?			
Are stairs, landings and handrails in good repair and fastened securely? (inspect the bottom of each step)			
Are storage facilities periodically inspected, clean and tidy and free of obstructions?			
<b>Facility Interior</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Electrical Systems:</b>			
Are all electrical panels secured?			
Have all electrical circuits been identified?			
Are all electrical switches and receptacles in good repair?			
Have Ground Fault Interrupter's been tested and checked?			
<b>Private Protection:</b>			
Is building equipped with an automatic sprinkler system? If so, continue.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the main sprinkler control valve accessible?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are all valves supplying water or air to the system open?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is system operation monitored by an alarm company?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is valve operation monitored by an alarm company?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the sprinkler system tested on a quarterly basis and documented?</li> </ul>			
Is the building equipped with a fire detection system? If so, continue.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the system protect the entire building?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the system provide an alarm signal in the building?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the system tested on a monthly basis and documented?</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the main alarm panel in normal operating condition?</li> </ul>			

Are portable fire extinguishers provided?			
Are all extinguishers inspected on an annual basis and documented?			
Do all extinguishers have a current inspection tag?			
Does the building have an alarm system?			
Has the alarm and reacting been tested?			
<b>Emergency Evacuation:</b>			
Are all exits and travel paths identified with illuminated "EXIT" signs?			
Are travel paths leading to exits free of obstructions?			
Are exits unlocked and operational?			
Are working emergency lights provided in the building?			
Are emergency lights tested periodically and documented?			
Are evacuation diagrams posted throughout the building?			
<b>First Aid:</b>			
Is there an easily accessible First Aid Kit in an emergency?			
Are the contents appropriate and checked regularly?			
Is the location of the First Aid Kit visible, or is there signage indicating where it can be found, or do all leaders know where it is stored?			
Are the emergency services contact numbers displayed?			
<b>Notifications:</b>			
Is a copy of the standard SCOUTS SA indemnification and liability waiver clearly visible at the entrance to the property and / or buildings?			
Are the contact numbers for the emergency services clearly displayed at the property?			

### APPENDIX 3: INCIDENT LOG

The Activity Leader is responsible for ensuring that an Incident Log is maintained during the Activity. It is recommended that this should be kept in the First Aid Kit. The following is an example of the minimum information of what should be recorded.

 <b>SCOUTS</b> South Africa	<h2>ACTIVITY INCIDENT LOG</h2>
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Group:			Activity:	
Activity Leader:			Designated First Aider:	
Date	Time	Name of Member	Nature of Injuries	Treatment or Medication Provided

Details of any potentially dangerous incidents which occurred but did not result in any injuries:

## **APPENDIX 4: GUIDELINES ON SCHEDULE 0 MEDICATION**

SCOUTS South Africa National Office has received several queries concerning Schedule 0 medication, like for example paracetamol which can be found in Panado. Can this type of medication be given to children and youths during a camp, activity, event and / or meeting by an adult leader?

As per the Medicines and Related Substances Act (as amended last in 2002), Schedule 0 medication can be purchased by any person over the age of 14.

Therefore, any Scout over 14 may request and be given a Schedule 0 medication. For Cubs and Scouts under the age of 14, the Scouter may offer them Schedule 0 medication if required.

To determine whether the medication is listed as Schedule 0, check the label which will read 'Schedule 0 Medication'. Medication sold without a prescription in supermarkets and pharmacies is generally Schedule 0 medication.

If possible, the parent / legal guardian should be contacted to obtain consent, but if this is not possible, then the Scouter may proceed based on the consent contained with the signed consent form for the activity.

Please note:

- Schedule 1 and higher medications can only be sold by a pharmacist to a specific person, so these should not be carried in a communal First Aid kit.
- Aspirin containing medications should not be given to children under the age of 16.

## APPENDIX 5: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

An example of the Incident Report Form, which can be downloaded from the SSA website.



### Accident / Incident Report Form

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

Name of Injured Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the injured person a: Youth Member  Adult Member  Non-Member

Was the Youth Member's parents / legal guardian informed: Yes  No

By Whom: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of injuries sustained: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Details of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Did the injury require a physician / hospital visit:** Yes  No

Name of physician / hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician / hospital phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Case / accident reference number (if available): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Details of any Witnesses of the Accident / Incident**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

No medical attention required and/or desired by the injured party (delete if not applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Injured Party

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Form Completed By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Activity Leader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Next-in-Line Scouter:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Scouter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: Has a copy of the *Activity Permit* and a copy of the '*Parent Consent and Indemnity Form*' in the case of a Youth Member, been submitted along with this Accident / Incident Report Form? Yes  No