

ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The State Activity Notification Procedure has four key objectives:

- 1.1** Communication of activity information to parents.
- 1.2** Provision of a reliable and effective mechanism for rescue/assistance, if required.
- 1.3** Supply of timely and adequate information to:
 - a) Scout authorities,
 - b) Police and other rescue authorities.
- 1.4** Support for Activity Leaders, including access to local information and reminders of policies, procedures and other requirements.

2. PRINCIPLES

In the preparation of these procedures the following principles have been used:

2.1 Simplicity

- 2.1.1 The forms are easy to fill in and understand.
- 2.1.2 The procedures are not time consuming.
- 2.1.3 The same procedure and stationery applies to all activities.

2.2 Contact and Information for Parents

- 2.2.1 Parents must be informed of all relevant details about an activity.
- 2.2.2 Parents have a legitimate concern for their children's welfare. Parents require a contact person. Direct contact between parents and Police/media is undesirable.

2.3 Supervising Leader

- 2.3.1 A Leader holding a current Certificate of Appointment and Certificate of Adult Leadership must be responsible for each activity. This "Supervising Leader" should have, or arrange for, persons having the required skills and qualifications, and should ensure the activity is conducted in accordance with State policy. In the case of activities where an Adult Leader will not be present, an Adult Supervising Leader must still be nominated.
- 2.3.2 Notification of an activity to the parents and Home Leader is the responsibility of the Activity Leader.

2.4 Activity Leader

- 2.4.1 The person in Charge of the Activity i.e. Patrol Leader.

2.5 Home Leader

- 2.5.1 There is a need for a "Home Leader" contact for parents. This Home Leader will forward Activity Notification forms to the appropriate destinations, will be a parents' contact point and, if necessary, will raise the alarm. The Home Leader will normally be the Group Leader or "Leader-in-Charge".

2.6 Local Activity Coordinator (LAC)

- 2.6.1 Regions will nominate "Local Activity Coordinators" who will be responsible for receipt of Activity Notification forms from the Home

Leaders of visiting groups. LACs will therefore have group and activity information available near the location of the activity, if required.

2.6.2 LACs will cover specific geographic areas or activity types. The number of LACs and their respective location boundaries will be at the discretion of the Region Commissioner.

2.6.3 The LAC will fulfil a further important role by being a “local contact” for authorities, and a source of advice to the Activity Leader.

2.7 Identification of Appropriate Activity Location or LAC

2.7.1 Available on the NSW website and through the State and Region Offices

2.7.2 Every Commissioner receives an updated list twice yearly, giving address details of all Commissioners and Region LACs in NSW.

2.8 District Commissioners

2.8.1 In locations where no LAC is nominated, the District Commissioner or another nominated Leader will fulfil the functions of the LAC.

3. FORMS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Forms

3.1.1 The Activity Notification Form consists of three parts :

- Parents Advice (Part I)
- Activity & Rescue Information (Part II)
- Overdue Parties Procedures (Part III)

3.1.2 These forms are available on supply of disk to State Office, or as hardcopy originals which can be photocopied, from Region or State Office, or from the Website www.nsw.scouts.com.au

3.1.3 Activity Notification forms must be used for all outdoor overnight activities and all air/alpine/rock-related/water or other potentially dangerous activities. They may also be used for other types of activities at the discretion of the Activity Leader or District Commissioner.

3.1.4 For activities outside the State, Form T1 “Application for Approval to Camp or Travel Interstate” must be used instead of Parts I and II. Parent permission should still be sought using Part I.

3.1.5 The forms are to be completed by the Activity Leader as indicated below.

3.2 Procedures

3.2.1 The **Parents’ Advice** form applies to all activities indicated in para 3.1.3, including the name and contact number of the Home Leader, shall be completed and provided to parents by the Activity Leader. Three completed copies are to be provided to the Home Leader.

The upper section of the form becomes a parent reference document and the lower section, signed and returned by the parents, is mandatory for youth member participation and for medical authority.

3.2.2 The **Activity & Rescue Information** form applies to outdoor overnight/alpine/rock-related/water or potentially dangerous activities, or where overnight accommodation is in more than one place.

Three completed copies as applicable are to be provided to the Home Leader, and one copy lodged with an appropriate authority in the general vicinity of the activity eg Police, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Home Leader keeps one copy each of the Activity & Rescue Information form and forwards copies to each of :

- the LAC or nominated Leader in the location where the activity is to take place,
- the “home” District Commissioner or nominated Leader.

3.2.3 The **Overdue Parties Procedures** is a checklist of action to be taken where a party is overdue beyond agreed time limits or rescue is needed.

3.3 Timing of Notification

3.3.1 Whenever possible, the notification procedure should be completed two weeks prior to the commencement of the activity. Where available, notification may be completed by facsimile or other similar manner as agreed by the LAC.

3.3.2 In some cases, bookings or permits will not be processed without receipt by local authorities of the Rescue Information form.

3.3.3 Failure to lodge an activity notification form exposes leaders and youth members to unnecessary risks, may create problems for rescue authorities, and bring Scouts Australia into disrepute with authorities and other outdoor users.

3.4 Prior to Activity

3.4.1 The Activity Leader may contact the destination LAC or District Commissioner for advice about local conditions, resources etc.

3.4.2 The LAC or District Commissioner may contact the Activity Leader and recommend that the activity be postponed or cancelled if circumstances warranting such actions arise. If there is disagreement, the LAC or District Commissioner should contact the “home” District Commissioner, who can recommend cancelling the activity.

3.5 Return from Activity

3.5.1 The Activity Leader notifies the Home Leader immediately on safe return, or as soon as possible if the return may be delayed, or if problems arise.

3.5.2 The Home Leader is responsible for notifying parents if delayed return is expected, and is responsible for raising the alarm if the party is overdue. It is imperative that the Home Leader remains the sole contact person for parents.

3.6 Delayed Return

3.6.1 When the party is overdue beyond agreed time limits or rescue is needed, the Home Leader is responsible for contacting :

- a) parents, and keeping them informed of progress,
- b) Police or authorities in the vicinity of the activity,
- c) LAC or nominated Scout ‘local contact’ in the activity location.

3.6.2 It is important that parents do not contact Police or rescue authorities separately, as they are rarely fully aware of party size or planned route. The Police, who will generally prefer to liaise only with authorised Scout personnel, usually coordinate rescue efforts.

4. SUMMARY OF ROLES

4.1 The Supervising Leader

- a) organises activity and is responsible for it,

- b) complies with State policies,
- c) ensures qualified leadership of the activity,
- d) liaises with LAC for local conditions and advice,
- e) completes Activity Notification Forms Parts I, II and III,
- f) provides Forms to parents for permission, and to Home Leader,
- g) lodges Part II Form with local authority, and advises them on safe return,
- h) conducts activity,
- i) contacts Home Leader on safe return or if problems arise,
- j) raises alarm if urgent assistance or rescue needed.

4.2 The Home Leader

- a) receives Activity Notification Forms from Activity Leader,
- b) sends notification to LAC or destination District Commissioner,
- c) sends notification to home District Commissioner,
- d) endeavours to be available during the activity, especially in the period when the party is expected to return home,
- e) is the primary contact for parents,
- f) raises the alarm if advised or if party overdue,
- g) liaises with LAC, Police or rescue authority as required,
- h) keeps parents and Scout Authorities advised of progress.

4.3 The Local Activity Coordinator

- a) establishes and maintains contact with local authorities,
- b) is familiar with local activity sites and local conditions,
- c) receives Activity Notification Forms from Home Leader,
- d) liaises with Activity Leader or home District Commissioner,
- e) may recommend cancellation of activity if conditions unsuitable,
- f) liaises with Police or rescue authority if emergency arises.

4.4 Home District Commissioner

- a) is informed about activities proposed by local groups,
- b) may be contacted by LAC if activity conditions appear unsuitable,
- c) may recommend cancellation of the activity if circumstances warrant,
- d) may require notification for other activities as indicated in Section 3.1.3.

4.5 Parents

- a) receive Part II information and permission form from Activity Leader,
- b) return signed permission prior to activity date,
- c) liaises with Activity Leader prior to activity,
- d) liaises with Home Leader during activity or if return is delayed.

4.6 Regions

- a) ensure LACs are nominated for specific activity types and activity areas,
- b) ensure relevant information - names, addresses, contact numbers - are kept up to date and notified to State Office.

5. ACTIVITY LEADER'S CHECKLIST

- Decide activity, venue, date
- Promote within Section, determine numbers
- Arrange Home Leader, ensure available
- Plan activity, prepare equipment
- Complete and issue Part I form to parents
- Consult with LAC if necessary
- All parent permission forms to accompany Leader
- Notify authorities safe return coming out
- Ensure qualified Leader/s available
- Consult Region Coordinator if required
- Arrange special permits, bookings eg NPWS
- Plan for contingencies, escape routes
- Complete and issue Part II and Part III forms
- Arrange transport to and from activity
- Lodge Part II form with authorities going in
- Notify Home Leader of safe return