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May 2022

TO: Fellowship Members
CC: DCCs, RCs, SCs

Letter to all members of NSW Scout Fellowship

Greetings everyone,

Ahead of our imminent AGM this coming Sunday, I need to alert you to some important issues needing timely action by all 25 Fellowships across the state. These matters arise from our concerns about risk – both personal and reputational – arising from our roles in supporting youth activities. They can be seen as one element of a broader Scouting risk assessment.

Some Fellowships make good use of their own websites to promote their activities, and some Regions link into their Fellowships through their internet home pages and annual reviews. But for the majority of Fellowships, the only clue as to why they exist is what we have written in the closing appendix of the [Guide to Scout Fellowship in NSW](#). For most Fellowships this précis is considered to be too broad and needs fleshing out to be useful in the risk management context. While not needing to be a composition, the summary must state precisely what the Fellowship does. Considered to be one of the better examples, the entry for Blue Mountains Scout Fellowship (alongside) sets a minimum standard for other Fellowships to follow.

Blue Mountains Scout Fellowship Greater Western Sydney Region

Peter Tamsett
0402 045 093

Blending service and social activities, members of the Blue Mountains Scout Fellowship have a wealth of Scouting experience across all sections of the movement, providing assistance at Group, District and Region levels.

They support District and Regional activities such as swimming carnivals, jamborees of the air and internet, cooking and administration at camps and jamborettes, and Anzac Day observance.

Members live around the Blue Mountains and meet at Glenbrook.

TASK 1

Each Fellowship is to review and add clarification to its entry in the [Guide to Scout Fellowship in NSW](#).

Responsibility: Fellowship Chair

Submit to: Malcolm Wilson

Before: 17 June 2022

Moving to model rules

Originally, each Fellowship had its own constitution and by-laws setting out its role, operations and member responsibilities. With a review of Scout governance and the adoption of a new Branch Constitution, it was decided that separate formation constitutions were no longer appropriate in NSW. Two years ago, the State Scout Fellowship Council (SSFC) adopted a State Policy that applies to all Fellowships (see the Guide) and encouraged each Fellowship to convert its old by-laws to a set of rules formalising its local administration. To assist Fellowships, a set of model rules was included in the Guide. Fellowships that choose not to write their own are assumed, by default, to operate under the model rules.

The SSFC has not exactly been swamped with sets of Fellowship Rules requiring ratification. Perhaps this means that individual Fellowships are happy with the model rules which only require them to insert a few specific details, such as their name, role, meeting arrangements and sign-off.

We now require, as a high priority, a copy of each Fellowship's rules to be finalised and submitted.

TASK 2

Each Fellowship is to finalise its rules for ratification by the SSFC. A template of the model rules can be downloaded from the [Management and Structure page](#) on the Scout Fellowship hub (linked to the [Scouts NSW home page](#)).

Responsibility: Fellowship Chair to consult with members, then draft, sign and submit the Fellowship's agreed rules using the Word template.

Submit to: Malcolm Wilson

Before: 17 June 2022

The role of a Scout Fellowship as identified in its rules should accord with that submitted for publication in the Guide (see Task 1 above).

As Fellowships have now had two years to transition over to the new governance framework it is imperative that there be no delay with the 17 June deadline.

Associate members

Last year, I reminded all associate members not already registered on ScoutLink do so by 1 March this year. I expect that this has now been done, with Working with Children Checks and A2 Adult Helper Application forms submitted for all continuing associates not previously registered. One instance (one that I am aware of) arose where cognitive impairment was an issue, and that Supporter was approved as an honorary member. I am also aware that several Fellowships with associate members saw registration as an opportunity to review their membership lists and cull inactive members who would otherwise have to formally apply.

As with all Leaders and Supporters belonging to Scouts NSW, any associate member who has not complied with the registration requirement (such as not having a current WWCC and police clearance) remains suspended (as from 1 April 2022) until they complete the process. They are to have no direct youth contact during Scouting activities and their Fellowships are not to include them in their numbers.

TASK 3

Each Fellowship is to review its current membership, logging an IT Report Request with the State Scout Service Centre if uncertain about the status of any members. The request should also include whether any of their members are currently not financial.

Responsibility: Fellowship Secretaries – now, and at least annually hereafter.

Child Safe Scouting and Work Health and Safety modules

Associate members are required to complete these two training modules, consistent with all other adult Leaders and Supporters in the movement.

All Fellowship members are also encouraged to complete some Scouting Preliminary e-learning. As a bare minimum the following two modules are recommended – *Understanding the Patrol System* and *Youth Leading, Adult Supporting*, and, from the Scouting Essentials e-learning, the *Achievement Pathways* module.

For assistance with any training-related enquiries, please contact training@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Scout email addresses

All members of Scout Fellowship are expected to set up a Scout email account. It is a decision arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Expect more to be said about non-compliance in the weeks ahead.

Remember

Each Fellowship is entitled to send two voting and any number of non-voting delegates to our 2022 State AGM next Sunday afternoon, 22 May at Granville HQ (2 Arthur Street Granville, near Parramatta Road and James Ruse Drive), starting at 2.00pm. A link has been forwarded for members wishing to attend online. We will be joined by Neville Tomkins in Canberra, and our new(ish) CEO Carolyn Campbell in person. Hopefully we will also have Deputy Chief Commissioner Culture and Resource Support, Bel Francis, online from the Central West as well.

At the meeting we will be holding an election of SSFC Executive Committee office bearers for the next twelve months. Nominations are taken both from the floor and online.

If you have not received the link from your Fellowship direct, please give our secretary Mark Burfield a call on 0425 236 617.

In closing

Let me thank you for being a member of NSW Scout Fellowship. Our numbers have remained fairly constant despite the pandemic and formalisation of associate membership, so we are on the lookout for fresh talent and new ideas in our ranks as we expand our reach in the year ahead.

Cheers

Malcolm Wilson
State Commissioner Fellowship
Chair State Scout Fellowship Council

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