

Asset Security

On 04 December 2022 a member of the public who had gained access to a Scout campsite took up residence in one of the buildings, declared themselves the new camp warden (among other things) and threatened the well-being of the actual camp warden: “Here’s the deal, you or me.” Due to the quick thinking of the camp warden, based on career experience, they retreated to a safe place and called the police who subsequently removed the individual from the campsite. About a week later the same individual approached a Scout Leader from the same region and requested the keys to the same campsite. The keys were not provided but if they had been who knows what might have happened.

This circumstances surrounding this incident highlights the need for members to remain vigilant, especially when interacting with members of the public who may not be known to the organisation. It also asks the question: “How would you respond in a similar situation.”

Pertinent facts regarding the incident include:

- The individual requested access to the campsite three days prior to the incident via the Region Office on the pretence that they were interested in making a booking
- The Region Office took a copy of the individual’s driving license and provided them with the keys
- The keys were not returned
- The camp warden discovered the individual on a routine visit to the campsite
- The individual had accessed numerous buildings and moved a range of items to one specific building
- The key provided access to all locked areas
- Upon being confronted the Camp Warden and his son retreated to the main gate and called the police
- The Camp Warden notified the Region Commissioner and post incident submitted an incident report



A post incident review undertaken by the Region identified opportunities to minimise the potential for such a situation recurring, including:

- Building access measures
- Introduce a key register
- Casual bookings to be vetted by the camp warden
- \$200 deposit for all hirings and access requests
- Review emergency arrangements and formalise into an Emergency Plan

As Scouts we need to be mindful of the environment we live in, acknowledging that not all people/groups we interact with stand by the values of the Scout Law and Promise. Within Scouts NSW we have in excess of 600 properties. The circumstances of 04 December could potentially have occurred at any one of these location. So “How would you respond in a similar situation” or rather, now that you know that this type of threat is real, what measures have you got in place to make sure that such an incident will not eventuate at your site?

Do you have an Emergency Plan? Have you identified the threats to your site, considered how they may be prevented and in the event they do occur how they will be responded to. We have a Duty of Care to everyone who uses our facilities. Now is the time to review whether we are prepared and able to discharge this duty.