



**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**

**OF THE**

**VENTURER SCOUT REVIEW**

**SCOUTS AUSTRALIA, JUNE 2008**

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## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the cyclic review process of the Youth Program, the National Executive of Scouts Australia convened a Review Team to consider the Venturer Scout Section. The previous Review of this Section was completed in 1997. The Review Team included seven of the Branch Commissioners Venturer Scouts and two youth members.

An extensive literature review was undertaken which identified that the needs of youth in the Venturer Scout age group had changed significantly over the last decade. The Venturer Scout age group is one of maturing adolescents, who are in a developmental period where they must negotiate fundamental psychosocial tasks in their development towards maturity and independence. When compared to their predecessors of the 1990's this age group, which comprise Generation Y, are likely to have higher completion rates of schooling, multiple pathways within school and to work, and wider influences resulting from technology and globalisation.

These youth are likely to be more dependent on their parents and value being fit, getting more education and having friends. Priorities for both boys and girls were having a successful career, saving and investing, and making a great deal of money. Our global society means that the process of development and transition to adulthood is no longer a matter solely of individual choices, peer and family influences, but must include global issues. Scouting is in an excellent position to respond to this recent trend. Venturing enables young people to try out roles and learn skills which are perceived by themselves and by others as being socially meaningful and helpful in the construction of their adult self.

These influences were considered in terms of the Strategic Plan of Scouts Australia, the Review of Adults in Scouting presented in 2006 and international influences within Scouting and other youth groups. It appears that, in western countries, structured youth organisations are having difficulties recruiting significant numbers of new members or retaining youth members within the adolescent age group. Demands associated with increased education, part time employment, increased trading hours and reduced time availability of parents, who are still required to provide transport, are all contributors to this decline.

The decline in membership of the Scout Section has provided fewer prospective members. In the last decade in Australia, there has been a higher proportion of female Venturer Scout members, but overall numbers have dropped from 8000 to 4400. Despite this significant drop in membership and after extensive research including literature reviews, Branch think tanks, liaison with the National Youth Council and online responses, the Review was unable to identify any significant deficiencies within the current Venturer Scout Program.

The Review Team recommended that:

1. the Fundamentals, method, educational objectives, existing age groupings and the name Venturer Scouts as exist be confirmed.
2. some minor changes be made to Policy and Rules to accommodate these recommendations
3. Venturer Scouts be able to be registered in their local Group, but meet as a larger Venturer Scout Unit with members from several Groups, as many Scouts do not link because they must change their Group identity.
4. a Linking Program campaign involving Scout and Rover Sections be coordinated in each Branch to promote membership being retained across Sections.
5. the Award Scheme be slightly amended to:
  - a. create a new Award name – Venturer Award – which is positioned approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way toward the Queen's Scout Award.
  - b. maintain the Queen's Scout level of excellence
  - c. delete the diamond-shaped development Awards badges while retaining the content
  - d. create the Endeavour Award to replace the Major Interest Award

- e. simplify the administration associated with the attainment of Awards including all Award work to the Venturer Award level being approved by the Unit Council
  - f. maintain Awards levels of excellence by ensuring a moderation of completed requirements, and not assessing individual performance.
6. the concept of Associate Venturers continues, to promote flexibility and to enable young people who are not Scouts to access our programs in a suitable and legitimate manner
  7. a national promotion campaign aimed at the general public be developed and distributed, highlighting the Venturer Scout Section, which must be complemented and operationalised at each Branch level.

To support the implementation:

8. the NCATD is requested to make changes to the content of the Wood Badge Training Program, Venturer Scout Section, to accommodate recommendations.
9. publications and resources be amended or written to include the proposed changes as outlined, and
10. a National Implementation Plan to be developed, with each Branch developing its own strategy to complement this.

Other possible initiatives arising from the Review include:

- creating and implementing a National Leadership course that could be made available as part of a national school concept and linked to the Endeavour Award
- promoting the notion of having some 'E-Venturing Units' as one method of operation where members would access Venturer Scouting using electronic means.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 That the Fundamentals, method, educational objectives, existing age groupings and the name Venturer Scouts as exist be confirmed.
- 2 That P and R 8.4 be modified to read:
  - (a) '8.4.1. Each Venturer Scout Unit should preferably have at least ten members. However a Unit with fewer members, due to local circumstances, may (DELETE 'continue to') operate subject to the approval of the District Commissioner. ADD FROM 2. *The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader.*
  - (b) The Unit Council is a body elected by the Venturer Scouts to be responsible for managing the affairs of the Unit, including the expenditure of Unit funds, programming, control of Award Scheme agreed requirements (DELETE 'standards') and internal discipline. The Unit Chairman shall be a Venturer Scout elected by the Unit. The Venturer Scout Leader attends (DELETE 'may attend') in an advisory capacity. SENTENCE DELETED FROM HERE *The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader.'*
- 3 That Branches create and use procedures to promote flexibility in the method of enrolling Venturer Scouts in their local Group, but recognising they meet in a different venue as part of a Venturer Scout Unit comprising of youth from a wider geographical area.
- 4 Branch Commissioners Venturer Scouts as part of the implementation process will coordinate a Linking Program promotion involving Scout and Rover Sections in their Branch to promote effective membership being retained across Sections.
- 5 That changes to the Award Scheme be accepted which include:
  - creating a new Award name – Venturer Award – which is positioned approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the way toward the Queen's Scout Award.
  - maintaining the Queen's Scout level of excellence
  - deleting the diamond-shaped development Awards badges while retaining the content
  - creating the Endeavour Award to replace the Major Interest Award
  - simplifying the administration associated with the attainment of Awards including all Award work to the Venturer Award level being approved by the Unit Council
  - maintaining Awards levels of excellence by ensuring a moderation of completed requirements, and not assessing individual performance.
- 6 That the concept of Associate Venturers continues, to promote flexibility and to enable young people who are not Scouts to access our programs in a suitable and legitimate manner.
- 7 That the NCATD make changes to the content of the Wood Badge Training Program, Venturer Scout Section, to implement recommendations from the Venturer Scout Review.

- 8 In future, national promotional campaigns be aimed at the adolescent and older age Sections of Scouting. Branches prepare and implement a plan regarding marketing of Venturer Scouting.
- 9 That publications and resources be amended or developed to include the proposed changes as outlined within the Review.
- 10 The National Implementation Plan as outlined be endorsed and the need for each Branch to develop its own strategy to complement this, be accepted.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 Terms of Reference**

To ensure increased relevance and participation of adolescents in the Venturer Scout Program, undertake a Review of the Venturer Scout Section of Scouts Australia, which will:

1. Identify the needs and desires of adolescents in contemporary Australian society:
  - a. the current profile of adolescents in Australia
  - b. issues facing adolescents in Australia
  - c. strategies for involving adolescents
  - d. practices adopted by other youth focused organisations
2. Review research findings from other National and Regional Scout Organisations for this age group 14 and a half to 18.
3. Consider findings arising from the 2004 – 2005 Review of Adults in Scouting in Australia as they apply to Venturer Scouting.
4. Consider the Scout Fundamentals and Method as applicable to Venturer Scouting. This needs to include a critical review of the current Venturer Scout Program in terms of:
  - a. membership growth or decline
  - b. Award Scheme outcomes
  - c. satisfaction of adolescent needs and flexibility of delivery
  - d. considerations for Scouts Australia to involve adolescents in the youth program as members, youth helpers and or non members who are involved
  - e. image of Venturing – including self image
5. Conduct a critical review of the operation of the Venturer Scout Section, including
  - a. youth leadership
  - b. adult leadership
  - c. bureaucracy
  - d. administration, and
  - e. organisation.
6. Make recommendations to update the Venturer Scout Program, in the light of the above, especially considering:
  - a. program participation
  - b. youth empowerment and involvement in decision-making at all levels
  - c. flexible groups in Venturer Scouting , and
  - d. linking from the Scout Section and to the Rover Section.
7. Conduct a revision of the Venturer Scout Award Scheme and its operation.
8. Review the content of Venturer Scout Adult Leader Training and the consequences to Adult Leader Training as a result of the review.
9. Make specific recommendations in the form of a written report to the Scouts Australian National Operations Committee and to provide an implementation plan for approval by the National Executive Committee, by November 2008.

#### **3.2 Membership**

Julie Creed (Convenor)  
John Ravenhall  
Peter Blatch (Chairman)  
Paul Parkinson (NCATD)

Elaine Latta (Executive Officer)

*Branch Representatives:*

ACT - Michael McDonell (Max)

NSW – Charles Watson

NT – Vacant

QLD – Sue Brandt

SA – Steve Palmer

TAS – Dot McCullagh

VIC – Greg McDougall

WA – Mavis Ives

Youth Representative- Michael Freeman (ACT)

Youth Representative- Alison Maynard (NSW)

### **3.3 Processes used**

In line with decisions made by Scouts Australia regarding recent Section Reviews, it was agreed that the current Branch Commissioners, Venturer Scouts, from each of the six states and two territories would be invited to form the Review Group as it was these positions that had the prime responsibility for future implementation of the Review.

In line with Scouts Australia's policy on youth involvement in decision making, two youth members - one male and one female were invited to join the Review Group. Each member was from a different Branch and one had recently graduated from Venturer Scouts to join Rovers.

The Chief Commissioner of Australia, National Commissioner Youth Program and National Commissioner, Adult Training and Development were also members. The National Project Commissioner chaired the meetings and an Executive Officer kept minutes and people informed of their responsibilities. All members were volunteers to the Committee. Each Branch Commissioner, Venturer Scouts had established a Think Tank in their Branch with whom they could liaise for specific activities and to test ideas.

An extensive literature review was undertaken by the Chairman and Executive Officer to inform all members. Contact with experts in specific areas was maintained through the Executive Officer.

The National Commissioner, Adult Training and Development (NCATD) arranged for a review of Venturer Scout Leader Training within Australia to occur using the Branch Commissioners, Adult Training and Development within each Branch. This group used the DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) process to investigate and confirm the skills needed by a Venturer Scout Leader at the end of Basic and Advanced training.

Members from the National Adventurous Activity Co-ordination Team (NAACT) considered the vocational education and training requirements as well as those from the key industry groups in the areas of abseiling, bushwalking, canoeing, kayaking and sea kayaking which are currently delivered by the Scouts Australia Institute of Training (SAIT) to ensure Venturer Scouts would be able to access VET pathways in these specialist outdoor areas. It is considered this ability to access VET qualifications through Scouting, particularly when linked to the existing Venturer Scout Award Scheme would put Venturer Scouts at an advantage to non Scouting peers.

To ensure regular communication with all interested members of Scouts Australia, part of the web site [www.scouts.com.au](http://www.scouts.com.au) was devoted to the Venturer Scout Review. This included a general update provided after each meeting and an area where people could leave their ideas and opinions to particular issues. This proved useful and during the six months of its operation, more than 200 people responded and left their ideas relating to great ideas and suggestions for improvement in areas of:



- Organisation, e.g. your Unit; Management, e.g. your Unit Council; Leadership, e.g. does the training of your Leader fit your needs
- Retention, e.g. keeping Unit membership; Linking, e.g. enabling members to move from Scouts to Venturer Scouts and Venturer Scouts to Rovers; Image, e.g. how is Venturing seen in your community
- Program and Award Scheme

The Review Committee also met with the Executive of the National Youth Council Executive in November 2007 to discuss proposals to date. Specific suggestions presented during the meeting included:

- Rovers to be included as trainers for the Unit Management Course and Leadership Course.
- ‘Young people talking to the media’ course – could be part of the training courses offered to Venturer Scouts – perhaps in the Personal Growth area. The Venturer Scouts who undertake the training could then assist in running the next course.
- Are Branch Venturer Councils required in each state?
- The proposed resources in the programming area are considered to assist with recruitment of both Leaders and youth members.
- Awards Standards Committee – There is a need for consistency across Australia – in some cases this committee is seen as making things difficult, with different standards being required for different people. Information is to be written to clarify the role of this committee.

A specific focus related to the extent and opportunities available for Venturer Scouts for youth involvement. The following possibilities were identified:

- NYC members running Youth Forums in each state
- Youth Advisers in specialty areas such as environment, operating locally in each Branch
- Youth Advisory Councils operating in some Branches
- Venturer Scout Youth Forums in most Branches
- involvement through the Jamboree Youth Forum
- MSN groups
- Venturer Scouts helping on Scout courses.

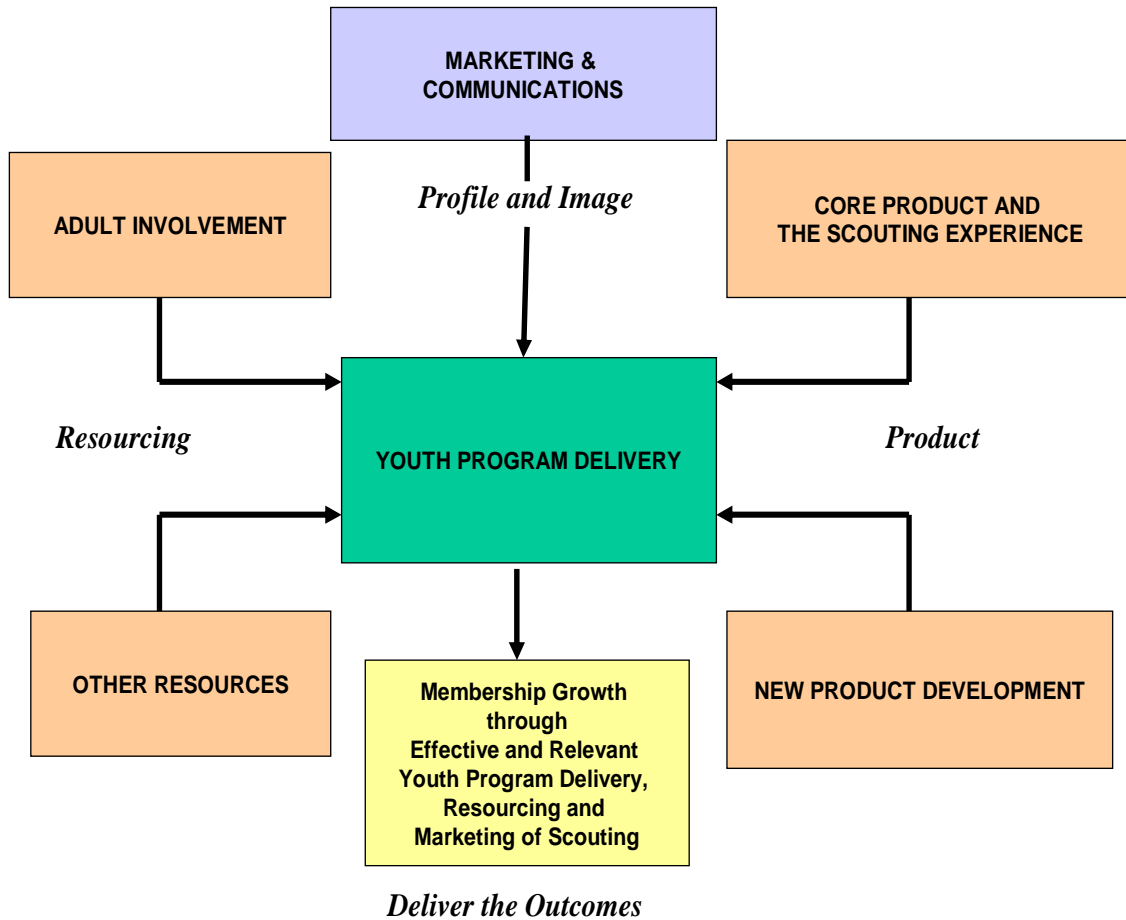
Comments collected from this process have been included in the relevant Sections of this report.

### **3.4 Linkages to the National Strategic and Operational Plan**

In October 2005, a National Planning Workshop was held by Scouts Australia to review activities associated with the previous Strategic Plan and to develop a clearer focus by identifying the Key Strategic Priorities – KSP’s – which needed to be addressed with regard to increasing membership growth. The aim was also to develop plans to be “cascaded” down from National through Branch, Region, District and Group levels in the organisation.

Current KSP’s are: Adult Involvement; Youth Program Delivery; Marketing and Communications; Other Resources; Core Product and The Scouting Experience; and New Product Development. The relationships of these are illustrated in the following diagram.

Key Strategic Priorities of the 2005-2008 Plan



Specific considerations were developed for each key strategy/priority around those suggested action plans that impacted directly on the Venturer Scout Section.

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY	ACTION PLAN	VENTURER SCOUT CONSIDERATION
<p><b>1. EFFECTIVE &amp; RELEVANT YOUTH PROGRAM CONTENT &amp; DELIVERY</b></p>	<p>Sectional Reviews should include consultation with non-Scouting personnel, both parents and young people</p> <p>Encourage Leaders to be more flexible with the delivery of their programs, e.g. meet all day Saturday once a month rather than one night a week.</p> <p>Further promote the availability of packaged programs</p>	<p>This point is noted, however it is felt that wider research is not warranted at this time, given information gathered for the AIS Review is still current.</p> <p>It is important to meet regularly. Leaders need to gain knowledge to assist them to become more flexible: Examples include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on a flexible Venturer Scout Unit in Enews</li> <li>• Provide ‘fun activities’ at District level for Venturer Scout Leader Training</li> </ul> <p>Many packaged program resources currently available.</p> <p>It was agreed to obtain four excellent programs from each state and put on a website.</p> <p>Programming resource should be aimed at Venturer Scouts and Unit Council</p>

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	Run annual “National Schools” and give youth members the opportunity of participating in flying, skiing, drama and so on. To tap into opportunities for youth members to gain qualifications and job opportunities.	Support Branches to ensure this occurs
<b>2. ADULT INVOLVEMENT</b>	Scouting be reinforced as a leading community contributor  Research the current background of Leaders and areas of recruitment to identify possible markets for new leaders	Recognition through Awards for Uniform/non-uniform personnel. Community awards Publicity Parents Former members Community group of supporters  Liaise with high profile people in the community, e.g. school principal, teachers
<b>3. MARKETING &amp; COMMUNICATIONS</b>	Ensure the values base of Scouting is clearly defined and acknowledged by the public  To attract partnerships and the global awareness of the Scouting Movement, promote the “Scouts of the World” award (National, Branch)  Instigate a process where every Leader can be communicated with directly including email or texting (National, Branch)  Ensure websites are current and vibrant (all levels)	Areas to be promoted for Venturer Scouting include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the Fundamentals of Venturer Scouts.</li> <li>• Self governing in Units.</li> <li>• Leadership skills</li> <li>• Management</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Schools taking on more adventurous activities</li> <li>• Current system is fairly efficient</li> <li>• Support Branches with this</li> <li>• Ensure each Unit has a reliable email contact</li> <li>• Consider using Volunteers</li> <li>• Promote ‘Scouts of the World’</li> <li>• Support National and Branch</li> <li>• Promote at Training</li> <li>• Encourage Districts etc to take it on</li> <li>• Re-iterate the importance of website communication to the Venturer Scout age group, and the importance of up to date information.</li> <li>• Branch Venturer Scout teams have an assigned webmaster.</li> </ul>
	Establish in each Branch mechanisms that recognise outstanding youth and adult achievements and promote these externally  Be seen to be the provider of first	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Venturer Scout committee at a Branch level to recognise young people and maybe a Leader.</li> <li>• Maybe one awardee per region</li> <li>• Awardees should then be nominated for community awards for which they are suited.</li> <li>• Committee to chase awards</li> </ul> Support notion

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	time experiences for young people in specialty areas – e.g. flying, caving, abseiling. (National, Branch)	Could link directly to concept of National Schools
<b>4. OTHER RESOURCES</b>	Be recognised/involved in youth affairs  Share assets (physical, personnel, facilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skill Venturer Scouts to respond to specific media issues and be spokespeople for 2008</li> <li>• Training young people for speaking</li> <li>• Train young people to participate in community youth affairs groups</li> </ul> Happening in Vic, WA, NSW District/Regions database of examiners
<b>5. CORE PRODUCT AND THE SCOUTING EXPERIENCE</b>	Increase levels of non-uniformed participation, especially parents and carers	Accepted as a means of support for the Group Leader and the Venturer Scout Leader
<b>6. NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT</b>	Certification for Non-uniform people and Associates	Should be marketed at Branch/Regional level

**Note: In the Report reference is made to Regions and Districts. In some smaller Branches responsibilities delegated to Districts will be undertaken at the Region or Branch level.**

## 4 RESEARCH

### 4.1 Identify the needs and desires of adolescents in contemporary Australian society (TOR1)

An extensive empirical study was undertaken of the needs and desires of young people of Venturer Scout age, currently living in Australia. This study considered areas of developmental needs, current numbers of youth of the Venturer Scout age, their aspirations and recent influences that are affecting this age group.

This is the Section of Scouting which caters for the maturing adolescent. Adolescence is the transitional stage of human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. Teenagers (ages 13-19) are usually regarded as being adolescents. The age group of Venturer Scouts – 14 ½ to 17 ½ is within this range. The Venturer Scout age group occupies a large period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It can be a difficult time for the adolescents themselves as well as their families. It was of interest to note the significant changes that have occurred since the last Review of this Section, conducted in the mid 1990's. This includes higher completion rates of schooling, multiple pathways within school and to work, wider influences resulting from technology and the impact of 'glocalisation'. Glocalisation is a combination of the words 'globalisation' and 'localisation' and refers to being able to think globally but relate this to the local situation.

#### 4.1.1 Developmental issues

It is important to review the developmental issues facing the Venturer Scout age group. This developmental period is characterised by rapid change in the following areas:

- physical – puberty (physical growth, development of secondary sexual characteristics and reproductive capability)
- psychological – development of autonomy, independent identity and value system
- cognitive – moving from concrete to abstract thought
- emotional – moodiness; shifting from self-centredness to empathy in relationships
- social – peer group influences, formation of intimate relationships, decisions about future vocation

The Venturer Scout age group comprises maturing adolescents, where young people must negotiate fundamental psychosocial tasks and physiological development as they progress towards maturity and independence. The nature of these tasks, and the importance placed upon their achievement, can vary greatly. The focus for young people of Venturer Scout age are around the central questions of "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?"

Major developmental tasks of adolescence are seen as:

- achieving independence from parents and other adults
- expanding the role of the peer group
- development of a realistic, stable, positive self identity
- using new intellectual powers
- formulation of their own moral/value system
- negotiating peer and intimate relationships
- formation of a sexual identity
- experimentation and risk-taking
- development of a realistic body image
- acquisition of skills for future economic independence.

Other significant facts include:

- In 2005, 1.9 million Australians were 12-18 years old, which accounted for 9.6% of the Australian population, which was down from 12.7% in 1971. (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Census 2006).

- Australia has a large and growing number of young people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). Approximately 24% of the NSW population is from a NESB (ABS, Census 2001).
- The proportion of children in the population has been gradually declining as the population ages, but the number of children has been increasing slowly over the last decade.
- Trends in family formation and dissolution mean that children today are growing up in a wider variety of family types than 30 years ago. Even so, in 2003, 7 out of 10 children lived in intact families with their natural parents. About 2 in 10 children live in a lone parent family and around 1 in 10 in step or blended families.
- About 8 out of 10 young people complete Year 12, with half of these going on to higher education.
- The proportion of two-parent families where both parents were employed increased from 51% to 59% in the decade to 2003, making this the most common employment arrangement for two-parent families.

A snapshot conducted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2006) suggests that most Australian adolescents are 'travelling' well. The vast majority of young people are actively engaged in study and/or work, and most are focusing on being fit, furthering their education and having many friends. The report suggested that these pursuits are likely to stand them in good stead for the future – with most setting their sights on achieving a successful career and financial security, and having a partner and children. In the meantime, most adolescents appear to get on well with their families, with parents and their adolescent children deriving much satisfaction from their relationships with each other.

The most commonly predicted priorities for both boys and girls were having a successful career, saving and investing, and making a great deal of money. While few adolescents currently attached importance to family formation, most expected that these matters would be important to them at age 35.

### **Retention at school**

Within Australia there has been a strong government push for increasing numbers of youth of Venturer Scout age to remain at school. Over the last few decades, an increasing proportion of adolescents have completed secondary education. In the 1970s, about one-third of students who entered secondary school completed Year 12. The notion of schooling was widened to include business colleges and vocational training. By the late 1990s three-quarters of those who entered secondary school had completed Year 12. In 2001, 52% of adolescents aged 15-18 were studying and not in paid work, 26% were studying and in paid work, 12% were in paid work only, and 7% were neither studying nor in paid work.

As a result it is not surprising that new organisational structures such as 'Middle Schooling' and 'Senior Schooling' have been established. Such initiatives are aimed at addressing the developmental characteristics of young people in appropriate educational ways. Such restructuring of schooling is aimed at promoting greater student engagement and reducing truancy, minimizing disruptive behaviour and improving low academic achievement. Student engagement has emerged as the key to realising the full potential of each student.

The best outcome for an engaging learning experience is one where the student feels that the learning is both enjoyable and will profit them in the future. (Walter, 2006) This occurs when students identify the need for active learning, high expectations and self-directed learning where students are ultimately in charge. These characteristics must therefore be created within the Venturer Scout program.

Another government issue related to the retention of students has been the establishment of different pathways for students involved in their senior years at school. Many state education authorities have recognised the importance of vocational education and training (VET) and provide opportunities for students to undertake VET as part of the school learning pathway.

There could be significant opportunities presented to Venturer Scouts if the Award Scheme could be linked directly to VET activities. Currently the *Certificate II in Business* and *Certificate II in Leadership Support*, while being based on the Award Scheme, require completion of extensive additional paperwork. It would be desirable for this to be included as an integral part of the Award scheme process for those people seeking VET qualifications.

In 2003, MCEETYA - the states and Commonwealth Ministers' Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs recognised that there are opportunities for young people to gain non formal education through alternatives to schooling. Given the Scout Movement through its mission, considers itself a non formal education movement, it was quick to address this issue. Following deputations, schooling authorities in Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory have recognised our Venturer Scout program. Specifically:

- the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority (TQA) agreed to include details of VET qualifications gained through the Scout Association on students' Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) and that students can gain recognition of their Queen's Scout Award toward the completion requirements for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)
- the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia approved the recognition of the Queen's Scout Award towards the completion requirements for the awarding of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). This includes students studying in the Northern Territory.

### **Youth of a global community**

Much of the literature emphasises that young people are developing in a world where changes in communication, technology, economics, culture, politics, the environment, education, and demographics are creating challenges, vulnerabilities and opportunities never previously experienced. This current generation is more culturally diverse than its predecessors, largely due to the astounding speed of communications and travel.

It is essential that a young person must think in broad terms and consider the community context and how this is affected by a changing national context, which in turn is influenced by the changing global context. The existence of a global society means that the process of development and transition to adulthood is no longer a matter solely of individual choices, peer and family influences, but must include global issues. It is essential these issues are addressed in Venturer Scout programming. Programs such as Scouts of the World provide meaningful opportunities in this global area. The linking of this program with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals creates an unprecedented opportunity to partner with professional organisations to ensure young people in the most vulnerable settings benefit from this initiative to reduce extreme poverty and threats to health and social wellbeing.

Neill, (2000) considers that adolescent identity development has traditionally involved culturally-guided rites of passage. However, in modern Western society, there is a lack of such experiences and the prevalence of problem-behaviours and psychological distress in adolescence is symptomatic of students who are ill-prepared for the rigours of adulthood in the 21st century. He considers adventure-based education such as Scouting is an innovative approach to teaching a secure sense of self, developing personal responsibility and acquiring coping and communication skills. He considers there is a need to facilitate access to such opportunities for all adolescents.

Researchers believe that the development of the adolescent is assisted by an increased involvement in responsible, task-oriented activities outside the home, which bring him or her into contact with adults other than parents, who can offer a mentoring role. This can also mean contact with other young people in a setting which is influenced by adult expectations and values. The challenge thus becomes to provide opportunities which combine the pleasures of interacting with a peer group while participating in meaningful activities in environments

organized by appropriate adult mentors. These points summarise the ethos Venturer Scouting in Australia.

#### **4.1.2 Issues facing adolescents in Australia**

Current issues impacting greatly on young people as provided by members of our National Youth Council (2007) include:

- unemployment rates
- low socio-economic communities
- peer pressure
- culture of binge drinking
- family breakdowns
- expectations by peers
- lack of future direction
- self doubt in terms of becoming 'adult'
- parents' expectations
- the social gap between 'adults' and 'children'
- social groups and socioeconomic groups
- trying to work out when to act like a kid and when to act like an adult
- global events, e.g. war
- global warming
- media pressures and images
- facing the unknown – not sure what to think about terrorism
- school, homework – pressure to get through school and do well
- concern over picking the right career
- commitments, e.g. work, friends, school

#### **Body image**

- media can be blamed for over sensationalization of this
- contrasting pressures – love who you are but don't get too fat
- trying to find a level where we are not too fat and not too skinny
- ideal body shapes have changed over the last two generations
- cost of gyms – Scouting could promote a healthy outdoor lifestyle for a minimal cost
- idea that a celebrity image of being beautiful and having a perfect body will make you happy, which it doesn't always.

#### **Internet threats**

- not many care about the threats on the Internet; if their friends are there they have to be too
- want to be in the cool group
- lack of personal space and privacy and low self esteem
- increased vulnerability leads to kids taking advantage of My Space and similar things to combat self esteem issues.

#### **Street wise**

- everyone interprets stranger danger and street safe differently as we are all different.
- need young people educating young people about street sense.

#### **The National Youth Council recommended:**

- having older Sections sit down and talk with younger Sections about the issues they faced and how they got through it
- incorporate the discussion into badge work as an option in several Sections, e.g. in the Venturer Scout Section have it as a debate topic as well as in Lifestyle
- don't talk about this too often or it will become boring and the information won't sink in



- maybe develop a special community awareness badge available for youth from Scouts to Rover Sections.

#### 4.2 Review research findings from Scouts Australia, and other National and Regional Scout Organisations TOR2

##### 4.2.1 Findings from Scouts Australia

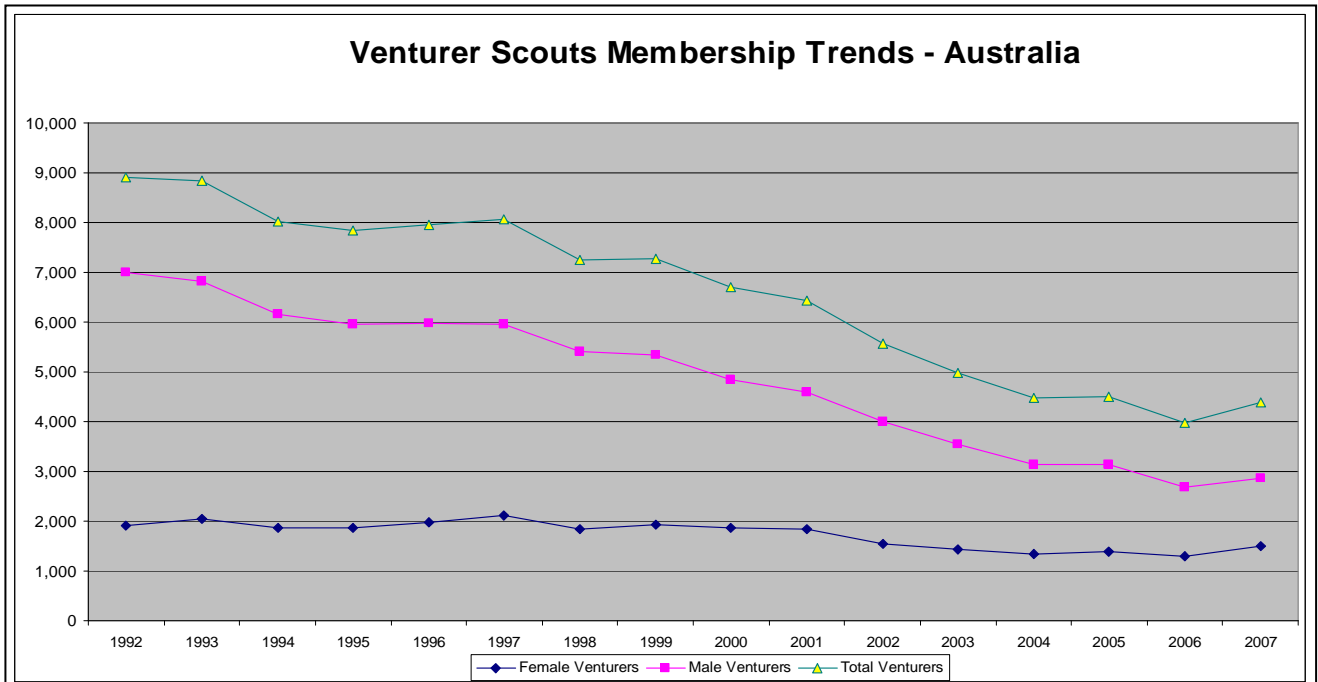
B-P was of the opinion that young people seek fun, adventure and challenge. As with most other aspects of life, the operating context has changed much in the 100 years since B-P founded the Movement. The overall educational needs of young people which the Movement can meet have changed little in nature, but the context in which the young people define fun, adventure and challenge has changed dramatically, especially in the industrialised countries.

##### Youth -Venturer Scouts

Based on the 2007 census, there were 4,376 Venturer Scouts - 2875 (65.7%) males and 1501 (34.3%) females. There has been a general decline in this Section over the last thirteen years with membership being 45% of that in 1994 (8017 members). Unfortunately this decline has been consistent with an overall membership decline over that time across all Sections of 45.3%.

##### Membership Numbers, 1994-2007

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Female V</b>	1,869	1,874	1,985	2,110	1,834	1,930	1,860	1,838	1,555	1,421	1,337	1,379	1,365	1501
<b>Male Ven</b>	6,148	5,963	5,971	5,950	5,405	5,347	4,850	4,585	4,004	3,546	3,142	3,129	2,851	2875
<b>Total Ven</b>	8,017	7,837	7,956	8,060	7,239	7,277	6,710	6,423	5,559	4,967	4,479	4,508	4,216	4376



##### Gender balance

In 1992, about 20% of the membership was female. Now this composition is 33%. Clearly the proportion of female members has increased, however this is not to the expected 50% one could expect if seeking community representation. Reasons for the female representation not decreasing to the same extent as males could be explained by:

- specific recruitment campaigns aimed at increasing female membership
- practices whereby girls tend to join in small numbers rather than individually

### Youth - Youth Helpers

Youth helpers may be male or female aged from 14 ½ to 18 years working with younger Sections, who, while being of Venturer Scout age, need not be members of the Venturer Scout Section. These young people regularly assist Leaders run programs but must not be left alone in control of youth. No specific details exist as to the numbers of Venturer Scouts who are Youth Helpers. However currently there are 28 youth helpers identified in the 2007 National Census who are not Venturer Scouts. It would appear that this number has declined significantly in the last twelve months.

#### Numbers by Branch of Youth Helpers who are not youth in other Sections

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
<b>2006</b>	15	16	36	1	0	0	1	1	70
<b>2007</b>	9	17	0	1	0	0	1	0	28

The Review Committee note the current requirements for Youth Helpers:

- they be enthusiastic and be able to relate to young people
- they be aged at least 14 ½ to assist in the Joey Scout and Cub Scout Sections and 16 years to assist in the Scout Section
- they be under the age of 18 or be a member of a Rover Crew
- Rovers may assist as Youth Helpers in any Section
- the only Youth Helpers able to work in the Venturer Scout Section must be Rovers.

Further, the Review Team endorsed the position that, despite being limited in numbers, Youth Helpers provide a valuable direct support role to Leaders. This alternative pathway in Scouting should continue to remain for young people as an option to membership of a Venturer Scout Unit.

### Venturer Scout Leaders

At the 2007 census there are 853 adults working with 4376 youth in 620 Units throughout Australia. This is a youth to adult ratio of 5.1. On average there are seven youth operating in each Unit.

Based on the data it would seem that:

- about 60% of Leaders joined Venturer Scouting as their child was in the Unit and they required a Leader
- about 40% transferred from another role in to Scouting
- some join as it provides easy access to specialised activities.

About 40% of those people recruited as Leaders had previously been in Scouting or Guiding as a youth.

#### AGE OF LEADERS

State/ Territory	Under 30 years			30-39 years			40-49 years			50-59 years			60 years and over		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
<b>SA</b>	10	6	16	6	6	12	15	8	23	9	4	13	3	1	4
<b>TAS</b>	2	2	4	4	2	6	6	2	8	8	3	11	2	0	2
<b>ACT</b>	1	2	3	4	1	5	6	0	6	11	2	13			
<b>QLD</b>	15	17	32	25	15	40	54	22	76	18	6	24	2	0	2
<b>NSW</b>															
<b>WA</b>	3	0	3	7	7	14	11	5	16	19	4	22	3	1	4
<b>VIC</b>	42	22	64	54	13	67	79	36	115	59	17	76	17	6	23

**LEVEL OF TRAINING**

State/ Territory	Only has signed up and not yet completed Basic Training			Completed Basic training but no Wood Badge			Wood Badge in any Section			TOTAL
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
SA	11	7	18	14	7	21	18	11	29	68
TAS	3	3	6	20	6	26	7	2	9	41
ACT	5	1	6	13	3	16	5	1	6	28
QLD										
NSW										
WA	12	8	20	16	6	22	15	3	18	60
VIC	78	41	119	80	19	99	93	34	127	345

**TOTAL YEARS OF SERVICE IN VENTURER SCOUTING**

State/ Territory	0 to 3 years	4 to 6 years	7 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Total
SA	18	16	14	8	5	7	68
TAS	12	8	5	3	3	1	32
ACT	5	5	6	8	3	0	27
QLD							
NSW							
WA	32	13	9	3	2	1	60
VIC	223	46	20	26	9	21	345

**TOTAL YEARS OF SERVICE TO SCOUTING**

State/ Territory	0 to 3 years	4 to 6 years	7 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Total
SA	9	7	10	14	11	16	67
TAS	7	8	3	5	5	4	32
ACT	5	5	6	8	3	0	27
QLD	84	16	22	21	20	11	174
NSW							
WA	15	11	12	10	6	6	60
VIC	71	31	51	71	53	68	345

**LEVEL AT WHICH THESE ADULTS WORK TO SUPPORT VENTURER SCOUTING**

State/ Territory	UNIT			DISTRICT OR REGION			BRANCH		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
SA	34	22	56	7	3	10	2	0	2
TAS	22	8	30	2	1	3	0	1	1
ACT	20	5	25	0	0	0	3	0	3
QLD	107	56	163	5	3	8	1	2	3
NSW									
WA	39	16	55	3	1	4	0	1	1
VIC	230	84	314	20	10	30	1	0	1

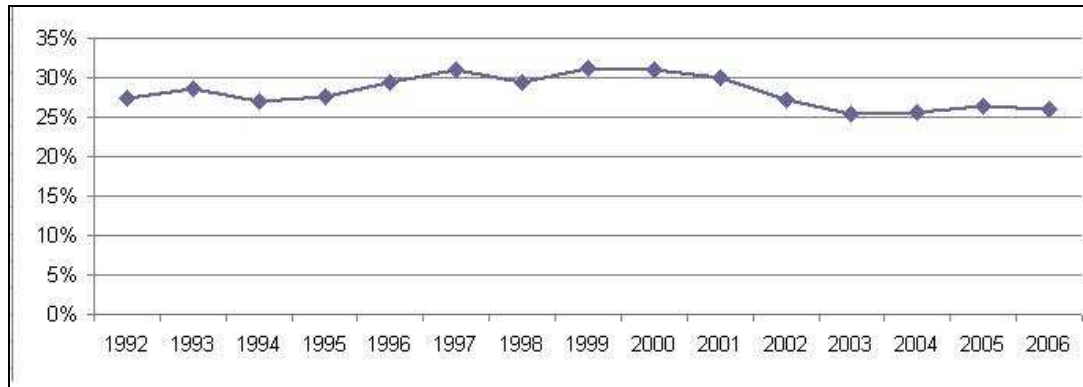
**Number of Venturer Scout Units by Branch**

Queensland	90
New South Wales	193
Victoria	180
ACT	20

<b>South Australia</b>	69
<b>Tasmania</b>	18
<b>Western Australia</b>	51
<b>Northern Territory</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	621

**Retention from Scout Section**

Between 25 and 30% of Scouts continue into Venturer Scouts as indicated in the figures below. This transition time is critical for a young person as they are seriously considering issues such as part time work, studies to assist them with their career and balancing Scouting with other sporting and recreational pursuits in their fast diminishing available free time.



**Recruitment from the street**

It would appear that very few young people join Scouting in the Venturer Scout age group. This can be explained by the additional challenges young people need to face at this time of their life and lack of community awareness about Scouting being for older youth. However recent marketing strategies aimed at older youth may see an improvement in numbers joining Venturer Scout Section.

**Involvement of Venturer Scouts at Jamborees and Ventures**

**Participation at Jamborees**

Venturer Scouts attend Jamborees to assist with activity bases and Kaleidoscope. Kaleidoscope is the program offered by Venturer Scouts to Scouts who attend a Jamboree. Specific Guidelines exist regarding the operation of this program by Venturer Scouts. These Guidelines were reviewed and it was reaffirmed that involvement of any Venturer Scouts participating at a Jamboree needs to be in accord with National policy. Key points are:

- The Venturer Scout rules and management structure should be adhered to and enforced and not changed once set, especially with regard to age ranges.
- Venturer Scouts should live together in State based units, directly supported by an appropriate number of home Venturer Scout Leaders specifically assigned to their care.
- Consideration of Venturer Scout evening activities, Venturer Scout Council and curfews is required. This to be communicated to the Venturer Scouts.
- If there is a small number of Venturer Scouts attending from one Branch with no Leader attending, these Venturer Scouts are to be placed under the care of a Leader from another state, with the agreement of the Contingent Leader, prior to the event.

**Attendance of Venturer Scouts at Jamboree**

It was found that more Venturer Scouts are interested in going to Jamborees than to Ventures. This could be explained by:

- Scout Leaders encouraging the Venturer Scouts to attend the Jamboree
- Group Leaders promoting the Jamboree, as they are more familiar with this than a Venture
- Group Committees focusing fund raising on Jamborees, rather than Ventures.

Jamboree	WA	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	NT	SA	ACT
2001	12	162	30	10	120		?	15
2004	12	117	28	9	100		?	24
2007	3	136	18	5	300+	1		19

#### Attendance of Venturer Scouts at Venture

Venture	WA	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	NT	SA	ACT
2000	35	425	90	60	450	3	112	70
2003	31	159	50	24	120	3	27	49
2006	37	285	50	23	215	7	69	66

#### Numbers of Venturer Scouts who attain Queen's Scout Award over last ten years by Branch

	WA	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	NT	SA	ACT	Total
1997	16	188	56	15	161		26		
1998	9	149	40	12	154		18		
1999	28	112	60	10	155		23		
2000	10	69	56	5	115		23		
2001	15	79	32	14	97		15		
2002	12	59	48	7	93		11		
2003	19	64	30	7	86		8		
2004	8	59	34	3	77		18		
2005	7	32	35	3	74		7		
2006	10	34	9	3	53	0	14	5	121
2007	5	41	16	5	58	0	11	11	188
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1123</b>		<b>174</b>		

Concern was expressed at the significant decline in the percentage of Venturer Scouts who attained their Queen's Scout Award after 1999. An examination of current practice suggests this could be linked to the new administrative requirements which were introduced with the implementation of the 1997 Review recommendations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in some locations a bureaucratic and cumbersome process was implemented requiring youth to seek approval from their own Unit Council, District Venturer Unit Council and in some instances examiners, regarding their Award proposal. Difficulties were also reported regarding the back dating of proposals, the time required for the approval process and the differing standards expected within the same District. These unintentional issues which arose based on peoples interpretation of the 1997 Review recommendations have been clarified as part of this Review.

#### 4.2.2 Findings from other National Youth Groups in Australia

The Review Team considered the operations of many other national youth organisations which provided for young people of a similar age.

There are many youth organisations in Australia that cater for young people of Venturer Scout age. In encouraging these, the then Commonwealth Minister, David Kemp, indicated that 'to become fully rounded adults, our young people need the opportunity to develop personal qualities and skills, such as leadership, teamwork, self confidence, and a sense of their place in the community. Youth development projects provide an environment specifically focused on giving young people a chance at participating in a range of challenging activities. In many cases, these projects also give young people an opportunity to make a contribution to their community through some form of voluntary community service. These projects celebrate young people's achievements, through community recognition and progress to higher levels of skill or challenge.' (Kemp, D: 2001).

Youth organisations which provide programs for the age group of Venturer Scouts in Australia can be categorised into the following broad groupings:

- Volunteer youth organisations – the majority of organisations which fall into this group have extensive histories as significant youth organisations, for example, Girl Guides, YMCA, YWCA, Surf Lifesaving. Currently, many of these organisations are facing problems with sustaining their membership levels. However, overall they continue to have contact with a large number of young people.
- Church-based youth groups – Churches (or Christian organisations) continue to comprise a large grouping within the voluntary youth sector. Their structure and activities can range from small group meetings in local communities to large national youth events including camps and rock concerts.
- Culturally-based youth activities – Many youth activities and programs take place within a cultural context and have a strong theme around maintaining and promoting a specific cultural identity. Examples are Young Italian Youth group, Samoan Youth Club, and specific indigenous Australian groups.
- Government-funded youth programs – Governments (Commonwealth, State/Territory and local) fund a wide range of youth programs administered by a range of different government departments such as Defence, Justice, Health, and Youth Affairs. The focus and format of these programs varies greatly and most are focused on a relatively narrow ‘issue’. Examples include Rural Youth, skills development, crime prevention, and support for teen parents. Only a few programs are specifically targeted youth development programs focusing on a wider set of issues. The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme is an exception to this specific focus.
- Youth initiated and maintained – There is a range of various types of programs in the community which have been initiated by young people and are often solely administered by them. Local youth councils are a dominant form of these programs, but other examples include peer support, youth health, sport and music promotion.

#### **Practices adopted by other youth focused groups**

In examining successful practices within youth development programs in Australia, Gilding (2002) identified the three essential criteria for youth development organisations as those that have an intentional focus on:

- personal/individual development, including teamwork and leadership skills
- skill development through activities that are structured and sequential in their learning outcomes
- strengthened connection with community through relationships, participation and contribution to the community.

An examination of our Venturer Scout program would suggest the successful integration of these.

In 2002, Ausyouth researched and published a framework of principles Good Practice in Youth Development to encourage a shared and principled approach to youth development across Australia. It identified 14 important principles of organisations- namely:

1. Strengths based, positive youth development as the foundation for policy and program development.
2. Participation of young people in all levels of planning and decision making.
3. An inclusive ethos.
4. An experiential model of learning that builds on capabilities and skills while maximising opportunities for fun and recognising age and developmental phases.
5. Respecting community voice and identity.
6. Encouraging communities to value and engage young people.
7. Partnerships.
8. Quality outcomes.
9. Encouraging and respecting choice.
10. Recognising the contribution of all stakeholders.
11. Promotion that is ethical, honest and non-patronising.

12. Providing opportunities for service to the community that are meaningful for both young people and the community.
13. Maximising formal and community recognition of learning outcomes.
14. Strengthening the interconnectedness of social networks.

From modelling programs on this framework, it is considered that enhanced opportunities for young people will be provide in areas of:

- active, empowered citizenship
- enhanced self identity and self efficacy
- commitment to voluntary action and the responsibilities of choice
- enhanced self esteem, self reliance and self confidence
- acknowledgment and acceptance of differing views and ways of doing things
- effective membership and leadership of team and group
- enhanced skill development
- participation in different and challenging activities and experiences, and
- connection and contribution to the community.

The Review Team considers that at the macro level, the Scout Association's policies, organisation and activities provided through the Venturer Scout program is addressing those 14 aspects of the framework. The reality of this, however, is best tested at the local Unit level by observing and asking young people, their parents and Leaders.

Specific findings included:

- there seemed to be a decline in numbers of young people joining structured youth groups such as Boys Brigade, Guides and Girls Friendly Society where they were required to make a regular commitment of time
- in other groups where young people could 'drop in' and participate if they required, e.g. church social groups, there seemed to be an increase in numbers
- there appeared to be no great difference in membership trends between co educational organisations and those that were gender specific
- those structured program leading to a specific outcome (such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme) seemed popular, where young people were not required to make a regular commitment to an organisation, but could participate based around their own timelines
- the cost of participating in Venturer Scouting did not seem unduly high when compared to other like organisations or sporting clubs. Most organisations had the requirements of membership fees, insurance and weekly subscriptions, while many also require a uniform.

#### **4.2.3 Findings from other National and Regional Scout Organisations**

##### **Asia Pacific Region**

From the Asia Pacific Region Scout perspective, it is difficult to compare Australian Scouting with other countries apart from New Zealand and Hong Kong as Scouting in the other Asia Pacific countries is directly linked to schooling and youth attend the Scout program as part of their compulsory school studies. In New Zealand, there is a similar decline in numbers of young people joining Scouting particularly in this age grouping.

##### **Scouts UK**

*(The following information is provided by Hayden McComas, a Fairfax Scholar, 2007, of Scouts Australia, based on his overseas study findings.)*

Scouts UK have adjusted the 'Explorer Scout' Program for 14-18 yr olds to make it totally flexible for both the Youth Member and the Movement. Every UK Scout who is 14-18 yrs must by definition be an Explorer Scout – however an Explorer Scout is not obliged to be a part of a specific Explorer Unit. This means that there may be Explorer Scouts who by choice are not linked to a Unit.

At the same time an Explorer Scout may choose to be a 'Young Leader' (YL) – which is an Explorer Scout who is a part of the Leadership Team in a Beaver Colony; Cub Scout Pack or Scout Troop. For example, this formula allows a 16 yr old youth off the street to join a Cub Scout Pack and become a YL and this may be their only role in Scouting. All Explorer Scouts regardless of whether they are linked to an Explorer Unit or whether they are a YL are free to undertake the Queen's Scout Award.

The YL's are managed within a Scout County by a Young Leader Commissioner – whose only role it is to manage, assist and guide the YL's regardless of Group or Section or role. The 'Young Leader Commissioner' does not have any other responsibilities in Scouting and does not manage an Explorer Scout Unit proper; rather the YL Commissioner manages all YL's in a loosely connected manner dealing with training, placement and any issues or challenges that arise for either the YL or the Section to which they are attached. The program is also supported by a range of materials for Adults who work with YL's.

The Young Leader initiative has seen 25% of all Explorer Scouts in the UK take on duties as a YL in a more junior Section and is now responsible for seeing large numbers of former Explorer Scouts translate directly into Adult Leadership roles on turning 18 yrs. This in turn has seen Scouts UK begin to decrease the Leader age demographic. Group Scout Leaders (equivalent of Australian Group Leaders) and District Commissioners are particularly enthusiastic about this concept.

### **Boy Scouts of America**

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) issues two kinds of charters – one to its BSA local councils which is similar to the operation of Scouts Australia, and the other to community organisations. It is this latter approach that is of interest to the Review Team. Community organizations such as churches, schools, service clubs and businesses use the Scout program, under their own leadership as a service to their children, youth and families. The chartered organization must agree to adhere to BSA's principles and values and when a new unit is established the BSA ensure a quality Scouting program through selecting the leaders, providing a meeting place and promoting a good program. The chartered organisation must appoint a representative who is given a policy role in the BSA. The BSA also agrees to provide outdoor experiences for the young people. The BSA offer supporting services and a support representative, liability insurance and mandatory police checks, camp and service centre staff.

This method of operating is one that has been considered within Scouts Australia. It is wider than the parameters provided by the Review and is likely to be more appropriate for young people in the younger Sections.

### **International findings from 'like' National Scout Organisations**

From an international perspective the position of Scouts Australia is similar to many other developed National Scout Organisations (New Zealand, UK, Ireland, Canada and some Nordic countries, France) which are losing youth membership numbers at an alarming rate. When Baden-Powell founded Scouting he founded a youth movement for adolescents, and yet it is predominantly in this age group that we are experiencing the highest losses. Like Australia, many NSOs are experiencing a drop in the average age of their members, caused by youth members leaving Scouting at an increasingly earlier age.

The concern in Europe is that Scouting could cease to be a youth organisation and become an organisation catering predominantly for children. This would cause serious damage to the image of Scouting, European government funding, and in itself could hasten the exodus of adolescent members. In the UK and Ireland the adolescent Sections of the associations account for less than 30% of the membership whereas the pre-adolescent Sections account for over 60% of membership numbers. This is not reflected in Australia where the adolescent Sections some 20983 youth (Scouts and Venturer Scouts) account for 49% of the total membership aged 8 to 18 years.



In 1995, the World Scout Research and Development Committee commissioned an independent research report which considered the educational impact of Scouting. It was based on three case studies involving Scouts aged 13-17 in the UK, France and Belgium. It is considered that Scouting in these countries would be similar to the game of Scouting in Australia. The research involved in-depth interviews over a period of a year with the young people, their adult Leaders and parents. While the nature and scope of this research does not make it possible to provide empirical proof of Scoutings effects on young people, there are a number of indicators suggesting that Scouting has had a beneficial impact.

The research indicated that for the older adolescents, activities need to be more than just fun. It is not enough just to be learning new skills and participating in group activities, but young people need to be provided with opportunities to try out meaningful roles. Learning to take responsibility for different aspects of the group's functioning is also important. It is considered these opportunities are provided for Venturer Scouts through assuming different roles both through community-oriented activities and other service projects. The Scouting experience has the potential for providing at least two important elements promoting healthy adolescent development:

- positive adult role models who both exemplify certain values and accomplishments and encourage the development of a positive self image and set of values among the Unit members
- the opportunity of participating in activities which allow the young people to try out roles and learn skills which are perceived by themselves and by others as being socially meaningful and helpful in the construction of their adult self.

The research highlighted the importance of relationships between people at three levels:

- youth to youth
- youth to adult
- adult to adult.

It found that critical aspects relating to the manner by which people interacted with each other, resulted in people remaining or leaving the Movement.

#### 4.3 Consideration of the Recommendations of the AIS Review (TOR 3)

In 2006, Scouts Australia completed an extensive review of its use of Adults in Scouting. A formal report was completed and many of the findings had relevance to this Review. A summary of some of these issues identified by the Review members as being relevant to the Venturer Scout Section are presented beside each Recommendation.

Recommendation	Issues for Review
<p><b>2. All Adult Members require support</b> All Adults in Scouting must have support. Plans must be developed at all levels (Group, District, Region, Branch, National) to identify and engage those who are available to support and mentor others.</p>	<p>All VSL should be supported by a District Leader - Venturer Scouts (DL-VS) or equivalent</p> <p>Support includes mentoring, advice, back stop, short term reliever, possible assistance with program materials</p> <p>Need to ensure all DL-VS's have a Wood Badge</p> <p>Ensure Leaders have access to training</p>
<p><b>3. Every Group must have an effective Group Leader, Council and Committee</b> It is recognised the Group is the fundamental Unit in Scouting. It is emphasised that as the Group Leader is the leader of the Group, every Group must have</p>	<p>It is recognised that not all Groups would have a Venturer Scout Unit. Some youth may belong to a District Unit.</p> <p>Units in local Groups are the accepted way of operating.</p> <p>However it is recognised these are not viable</p>

<p>a Group Leader. Similarly, every District/Region requires a District/Region Commissioner. Likewise, every formation at all levels must have an effective Leader and a fully staffed Council and Committee.</p>	<p>for all Groups.</p> <p>Where youths are a member of a combined Unit, it is necessary for those members to remain registered in their home Group.</p> <p>Reflecting what the Unit can also do for the Group.</p>
<p><b>4. A National Adult Recruitment Program be instigated</b> As a matter of urgency, there is need to promote a nationally constructed image of Adults and Scouting. A national recruitment campaign must be developed and implemented which focuses on adults with a particular focus on recruiting young adults.</p>	<p>This program has been in operation for three years for all Adult Leaders.</p>
<p><b>5. Effective and efficient communication occur</b> The Communications Strategy must embrace all means of communication to ensure that members receive timely and pertinent information.</p>	<p>Need to have facility to communicate directly with VSL.</p> <p>Some Branches mail information to each Venturer Scout.</p> <p>Website – Venturer page on national website.</p> <p>Also need paper copy</p>
<p><b>6. Audit to reduce outdated practices occur</b> To ensure Scouting in Australia remains vibrant, modern, un-bureaucratic, and responsive to societal trends, a systemic review of its operational and administrative practices must occur within the next 18 months at all levels of operation. This review should then become part of the cycle of a formation.</p>	<p>Process for approval of Award Scheme.</p> <p>All members brought a list of procedures which they have recently audited.</p> <p>Consider the use of parents as volunteers</p>
<p><b>7. Membership database is required</b> To ensure Scouts Australia is aware of the extent of its membership, standard data templates must be created as well as a mechanism for efficiently transferring personal and statistical data between the Branches and National levels. A nationally agreed protocol for the release of membership information is also required as part of this data system. Legal advice must be sought to ensure privacy and child protection provisions are complied with nationally and in all Branches.</p>	<p>Need to ensure currency of information</p>
<p><b>8. National website is enhanced</b> To support adult members, extend the National web site and develop an intranet site to provide a library of resources and activities.</p>	<p>National VS page be added to website</p>
<p><b>9. Scouting be reinforced as a Leading Community Contributor</b> Scouting must be recognised as a strong</p>	<p>Need to consider the Scouting programming impact of national event days, e.g. Harmony</p>

<p>community contributor on youth issues. By maintaining a high profile and contributing to topical issues, Scouting is identified as a key stakeholder. At all levels (local, state and national) Scouting must be identified as a key stakeholder in youth issues.</p>	<p>Day.</p> <p>Need to highlight best practice particularly regarding grants.</p> <p>Need to consider the use of Waterwise and links to VS Award Scheme.</p> <p>Need to liaise with BCCs re papers on branding going to Operations at the end of the month.</p>
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**4.4 The Scout Fundamentals and Method as applicable to Venturer Scouting (TOR4)**

The Review Team considered the materials as provided in Policy and Rules, 2005- Rule 8 Venturer Scout Section. Section 7.2 details the Fundamentals as related to the Venturer Scout Section. The Review Team was reminded that objectives must confirm with the requirements of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement and were last modified in the late 1990’s in line with the recommendations of the ‘Scouts Australia Age Range Task Force’. It endorsed the younger age limit accepted by the Age Review Task Force and agreed by NEC in late 1999, of 17.5 as the time at which members could progress to Rovers.

The team noted the educational objectives are linked from Joey Scouts through to Rovers as a progression and endorsed those currently in use. The Review Team considered the strong emphasis on operating in a ‘democratic and self-directing environment, aimed at developing interpersonal skills, self-confidence, self-esteem and citizenship qualities’ emphasizes the unique component of Venturer Scouting.

There was some discussion regarding the possible removal of the word ‘Scout’ from Venturer Scout – initially the group was undecided. It researched that the word “Scout” was added as a result of the last Review (1997), as it was considered this would be an effective tool for part of the national marketing strategy. In doing this, the Taskforce at that time recognised and encouraged the use of the shorthand term ‘Venturers’, however stipulated that all publications and training materials used the full term Venturer Scouts. As such, the Review Team supported the maintenance of the current situation whereby the young people call themselves Venturers or Venturer Scouts, however Venturer Scouts will continue to be the official terminology.

**4.5 Organisation and Operations of Venturer Scouting at National, Branch, Region/District and Unit levels (TOR5)**

This considers the operation of the Venturer Scout program at the different levels within Scouts Australia. As mentioned previously, Venturer Scouting is the fourth component of a five part youth program, operating for young people aged from 14 to 18 years. The operation of the Venturer Scout Section follows the line structure from Unit in a Group to District to Region and to Branch.

**National level**

At the National level there are no formal structures specifically for Venturer Scouts. However Venturer Scouts form an integral part of the National Youth Council which exists to provide advice and feedback to the National Operations Committee on a range of issues which affect young people in Scouting. On average about eight to ten members of the National Youth Council are Venturer Scouts.

Once every three years a National Venture is held where all members are invited to attend the ten day outdoor gathering. As part of the program, for one day a National Youth Forum of Venturer Scouts is held where delegates from each Branch are encouraged to share their views on specific issues.

One meeting of Branch Commissioners for Venturer Scouts is convened each year by the National Commissioner, Youth Program where issues of new program initiatives, evaluations and review occur. These annual Program Committee meetings are vital to the ongoing development of Venturer Scouting in Australia.

### **Branch level**

At the Branch level different models of operation exist based on their diverse operations. The 'traditional' structure, based on times of greater membership multi levels for communicating, reporting and monitoring, comprised:

- Branch/State/Territory
- Regions – metro and rural
- Districts, or Zones comprising two or more Districts, and
- Units.

Youth involvement is encouraged at all levels, but application of this is greatest in practice at the local Unit level. "Traditional" arrangements are:

### **Branch Venturer Scout Council (BVSC)**

The Branch Venturer Scout Council comprises:

- all Assistant Region Commissioners for Venturer Scouts - ARC(VS)
- Branch Youth Venturer Scout Council (BYVSC)
- the Branch Commissioner for Venturer Scouts - BC(VS)
- the Assistant Branch Commissioner for Venturer Scouts - ABC(VS)
- the Branch Activity Leader for Venturer Scouts - BAL(VS)
- representatives of Ranger Guides, and Rovers are invited to attend.

BVSC Meetings:

- The BVSC meets monthly and also for a weekend workshop mid year.

### **Role of the Branch Venturer Scout Council**

- To advise Chief Commissioner on policy for Venturer Scout Section
- To set and control standards for the Venturer Scout Section on a statewide basis and to monitor activity specialists.
- To encourage new ideas and initiatives.
- To monitor the Venturer Scout section organisation.
- To provide technical backup for Regions.
- To provide avenues for consultation with Venturer Scouts.
- To monitor and encourage Leader Training and Development.

### **Branch Youth Venturer Scout Council**

This Council consists of nominated Venturer Scouts from each Region, chaired by a youth representative. The role of the BYVSC is to advise the BC(VS) on the needs of the Venturer Scout Section as seen by the youth members, and be part of the decision making processes which affect the Venturer Scout youth training program. The term of office is for one year only, with official meetings held at Branch Headquarters. Members may also be asked to represent the Venturer Scout Section at Scouting and Venturer Scout events.

### **Region Venturer Scout Council**

#### **Role of the Region Venturer Scout Council (RVSC)**

The RVSC comprises the ARC(VS) and the D/ZLVs in the Region - other members of the Section may attend with the concurrence of the Council. The role of the RVSC is to:

- Advise the Region Commissioner of Venturer Scout Section Policy
- Ensure the Award Scheme and Scouting standards are uniform across the Region and meet the requirements of the BVSC
- Review and encourage active D/ZVSCs, and to provide a forum for Venturer Scouts to have an input into the Venturer Scout Section

- Ensure good communications from Branch to Units is achieved, including a current *INTERCHANGE* mailing list
- Provide informal training for non Venturer Scout Section Leaders when the need arises or is required
- Provide liaison with the Scout and Rover Sections
- Provide a resource, support and training for D/ZLVs to discuss issues
- Organise at least one Leadership Course per year
- Ensure adequate Initiative & Unit Management Courses are run in the Region

### **District/Zone Venturer Scout Council**

All Units must belong to a D/ZVSC and this Council should comprise of at least 4 Units even if it means crossing District or Region boundaries (i.e. to form a Zone). It is preferable that a D/ZVSC is limited to a membership of 10 Units.

### **Role of the District/Zone Venturer Scout Council**

- Monitor the progress of Unit Standards sub committees of Unit Councils. Units are to provide a regular summary of Activity Award Proposals.
- Organise at least one Initiative Course each year.
- Organise at least one Unit Management Course each year.
- Be involved with Leadership Courses run by the Region.
- Provide a high level of local training support for Units, through courses such as First Aid; Mapping and Basic Skills.
- Provide high level of local training for Leaders including assistance in adult Leader training and development.
- Facilitate social activities (sports, BBQ etc) to assist local Unit interaction.

The above are modifications, reinforcements or additions to current guidelines for DVSC & DLVS. D/ZVSC membership remains the same with Leader and Youth representation.

### **Unit level**

There are a number of alternative methods of operation of Venturer Scout Units. These accommodate the need for young people to be part of a viable program but still have links with their home Group. Our consultation process has demonstrated a young person's loyalty to their home Group is very strong. These models include the following options:

- Every Group having their own Venturer Scout Unit and young people can progress through each Section within their own Group. This is the ideal and unfortunately, due to the decrease in numbers of Scouts progressing to Venturer Scouts, not likely to occur in many locations.
- A Venturer Unit in a local Group providing Venturing to a number of young people from neighbouring Groups. Such an arrangement should be formalized so that the providing Group is not financially overburdened. If a scarf is worn, the scarf of the Parent Group could be retained by the Venturer Scout or perhaps a specific Unit scarf could be worn.
- A District Unit catering for those Groups without a Unit. Again this should be formalized and members could retain Group identity by wearing the Group scarf and thus overcoming the loyalty hurdle. The disadvantages/problems faced by the District Unit include failure to attract members because of loyalty to the Scout's Group and lack of financial support. These problems can be overcome by developing an agreed 'contract' between Groups and Districts, e.g. allowing the Venturer Scout to retain wearing the Parent Group's scarf and name tape and maintaining contact with the Venturer Scout through specific invitations to attend Group activities and some financial support being made available from the Parent Group.
- A new Group being registered in a District but containing only the Venturer Scout Unit. The Group Committee being formed from parents and friends of the youth members. This is in effect a District Unit, but accommodates the registration difficulties in some Branches.
- Having the young person participate in Venturer Scouting through joining Lone Scouting. This is arranged at the Branch level for young people from any Section

who, for particular reasons, are not able to participate in a regular Scout Group. However, to be successful the Unit Council and Leaders must have the means for, and be ultra positive in communicating with each other by telephone, email and a Unit news sheet. Experience has shown that Lones Unit Venturer Scouts participate enthusiastically in Group (where possible), Region, Branch and National activities and certainly achieve the QSA in line with other active Units members. Where Award approval outside the Lones Unit is required, for convenience, this is sought from the Venturer Scout body responsible for such in the Region in which the Lone Venturer resides.

- A new model of service was explored by the Committee to accommodate the needs of some young people who are having difficulties due to time constraints and part time work commitments. The concept of 'e-Venturing' Units was considered. This would cater for individuals who are committed to Scouting principles but are unable to meet the regular responsibilities of weekly meetings. Activities would be done in a flexible manner in their home at a convenient time, based on internet, email and use of the telephone. A Leader would be required to support members of this Unit and, wherever possible, activities involving other Venturer Units would be encouraged.

The key note in the successful operation of the Venturer Scout Unit is flexibility. None of these options should be seen as a permanent solution for Venturer Scouting, as each of these solutions will effectively cap the number of Venturer Scouts in a District. Almost all Venturer Scout Units will reach a plateau, at which point they no longer grow, and a District that can support a half a dozen Scout Troops will always be able to support a half a dozen Venturer Scout Units. Unfortunately, if there are shared or District Venturer Scout Units, the number of potential Venturer Scouts will be dramatically reduced.

The real and most effective way to achieve the best number of Venturer Scouts in a Region is to recruit and train effective Venturer Scout Leaders for each Scout Group. Regardless of the variation used, it is essential to ensure there are clear procedures and a written agreement to ensure that the Unit receives the support and supervision required and there are open lines of communication between all parties.

**Successful aspects of Venturer Scouting at the Unit level included:**

- the principle of the operation as a Unit and Council
- the opportunity to share skills as members of the Unit
- the strong identity of the Unit however this needed to be balanced against leaving one's home Group to join a Unit
- the flexible delivery of Venturer Scouting
- the Unit provides the opportunity for continuing participation and the development of social/skills as distinct from the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme which was an award scheme
- opportunities for youth to be part of District/Region Council
- having one officer of the Unit Council the official contact person for sharing information and communicating with other Units
- having Venturer Scout Councils, chaired by youth members at all levels to foster communication, especially with relevant external community based organisations

**Areas for improvement were identified as:**

- linking Units with Scout Troops at the local level
- links being created between Units
- sharing program and new ideas on the Web
- ensuring the right Leaders are recruited and appointed
- lack of District Leaders available to provide support.

**4.6 The Venturer Scout Program (TOR 6)**

The Review Team reinforced the importance of small groups. It confirmed that Venturer Scouts working in small groups continues to be an important and critical aspect of the Section's program and must continue. The Unit Management structure is reinforced as an

executive group of the whole Unit, with the responsibility for determining the program and activities of the Unit. The advisory role of a Venturer Scout Leader needs to continue to be emphasised.

Effective practices within the Venturer Scout Program which should continue were identified as including:

- Venturer Scouting provides opportunities for young people to continue to develop and grow
- role of Unit Council confirmed, with small and large ad hoc teams working with mentors on specific projects
- Unit Leadership and Unit Management courses are working, although need some updating
- youth leadership opportunities are provided through contribution to Award Scheme and Unit Council
- role of District Venturer Council (however may need to remove Award component)
- Branch and local forums/councils provide avenues for participation
- Branch Venturer Councils work differently – they are responsive to their local and state needs
- opportunities for youth to assist at major events provide a range of leadership opportunities, e.g. Cuborees, Agoonorees,
  - National Youth Forum, which occurs at the Venture
  - National Youth Council provides opportunities for Venturer Scout participation
  - Venturer Scout participation in Region Forums is effective

**Areas for improvement worthy of consideration include:**

- youth members who are appointed to Committees etc. need support which should be provided via mentoring
- Venturer Scout spokespersons should be appointed to speak on specific youth issues. They need formal training, especially for 2008 – Victoria and ACT are examples
- nominate Venturer Scouts for local awards (as outlined in the Strategic Plan)

The importance of providing leadership opportunities are highlighted in the Venturer Scout program. Valued aspects relating to this as nominated through the internet collected research included responses such as:

- the structure allows Venturer Scouts to be leaders among themselves and to assist with younger Sections
- members may attain a VET recognised Certificate II in Leadership Support
- the system teaches Venturer Scouts about leadership and how they can implement it in their local community
- Venturer Award Scheme gives opportunity for young people to achieve something individually even if not supported by leaders
- Branch leadership courses and camps are appreciated
- Units that ensure that at least one adult Leader and one youth member attends each meeting of their District Venturer Council are most effective
- the Section is led by the youth themselves, not adults telling them what to do. They 'grow up' a lot in the jump from Scouts to Venturer Scouts and are no longer treated like children
- Venturing program is voted by the youth, so they have to learn how to do what's best for the Unit, rather than just who is the most popular
- the Section builds forethought and judgement
- the adults, while retaining the right of 'veto', know when to make the call (hardly ever) and when to let the youth learn from experience

Many people commented positively on:

- watching the leadership abilities within the youths come out

- young people being able to expand their thoughts and use their abilities
- bringing the best out in the Section Leaders
- Venturer magazines are important to keep up the flow of events and items to build into the Unit agenda
- Branch and National leadership seem to be trying to make a difference
- Venturer Leaders provide active follow-up between Venturer Scout meetings with members of the Unit Council
- the considerate, rapid and encouraging replies from Branch Commissioners whenever I have a reason to approach them
- commitment to the opportunities offered by the Venturer Scout Section
- when a situation arises and someone in the Unit has the initiative to undertake the leadership role and take charge of that situation
- individual Venturer Scouts learn how to become leaders themselves and this helps them in the present and in the future.

**Areas for improvement were identified as:**

- more flexibility with the Queen's Scout Award to allow Venturer Scouts to be greater leaders and have more opportunities to be leaders
- more resources for the Leaders
- more specialist volunteers needed to run programs. The Unit says let's do this and then find it cancelled, or booked out. This adds pressure to Leaders and Venturer Scouts who try to plan
- Activity teams need to work more closely with the Venturer Scout Section to increase youth participation
- access at regional level to graded hikes. Creating interesting expeditions locally or just finding a reasonable venue for Venturer skills can be a challenge
- Leadership teams at the coal face need to be younger and more in touch with what the youth in the Venturer Section are about
- Venturer Leaders should attend Group Council meetings so they feel involved with Group leadership, not just Unit leadership
- need for Leaders to empower the Venturer Scouts and give them the skills to run the Unit and its activities themselves
- need for all to play an active role in ensuring progression of most (if not all) Venturer Scouts to Rovers which should be seen as the norm
- advertise, encourage and recruitment to be stepped up to encourage Scouts who don't want to go to Venturer Scouts
- Venturer Leaders assisted by Group Leader should promote recruitment and advancement
- change the image of Venturing by offering better activities and guidance to youth

**VET and Venturing**

Currently youth of Venturer Scout age are eligible to access vocational education and training (VET) programs and courses through registered training organisations. Scouts Australia ,through the Scouts Australia Institute of Training, is a registered training organisation and can provide courses at the Certificate II and III levels in Business, Leadership and some aspects of Sport and Recreation and Outdoor Recreation that may be of interest and use to our members as well as youth who are not Scouts.

Given a large part of the Venturer Scout program uses outdoor activities, the implications of linking VET Adventurous Activities training to the Venturer Scout Award Scheme were considered highly desirable. This issue was investigated and considered most attractive for our Venturer Scouts. It was also considered this could attract other youth of Venturer Scout age to Scouting. A scan indicated that currently the Venturer Scout award levels are above those required at the Certificate II level in aspects of recreation.

Mapping competencies of VET to the contents of the current award scheme indicate that:



- A Venturer Scout who completes the Venturing Skills Badge, Initiative, Environment, Expedition 1 (as a bushwalking expedition), First Aid and Outdoor 1 will have completed seven units of competence from the SRO03 training package. A statement of attainment could be issued for:
  - SRO BWG 001A Demonstrate bushwalking skills in tracked and easy untracked areas
  - SRO NAV 001B Navigate in tracked or easy untracked areas
  - SRO ODR 001A Apply basic outdoor recreation logistics
  - SRO ODR 002A Plan outdoor recreation activities
  - SRO OPS 001B Implement minimal environmental impact practices
  - SRO OPS 002B Plan for minimal environmental impact
  - SRX FAD 001A Provide First Aid

The Venturer Scout could be registered with Level 1 Introductory Bushwalk Skills (tracked and easy untracked areas) for a period of three years.

- By attending a Level 1 Abseil, Canoe, Kayak or Sea Kayak course a Venturer Scout could gain partial or full completion of Outdoor 1, Pursuits 1 or the Major Interest Award (to become the Endeavour Award). Having completed one of these courses (Level 1 Abseil, Canoe, Kayak or Sea Kayak) a Venturer Scout could be registered with Level 1 Introductory Skills in the specific area for a period of three years.
- A Venturer Scout who completes Expedition 2 (as a bushwalking expedition) will have completed the following five units of competence from the SRO03 training package. A statement of attainment could be issued for:
  - PUA OPE 002A Operate communications systems and equipment
  - SRO BWG 002A Demonstrate bushwalking skills in difficult and trackless areas
  - SRO BWG 004A Demonstrate river crossings skills
  - SRO NAV 002B Navigate in difficult and trackless areas
  - SRO OPS 006B Use and maintain a temporary or overnight site

The Venturer Scout could be registered with Level 2 Bushwalk Skills (difficult and trackless areas) for a period of three years.

- By attending a Level 2 Abseil, Canoe, Kayak or Sea Kayak course the Venturer Scout could complete either partially or fully the Outdoor 2, Pursuits 2 or the Major Interest Award (to become the Endeavour Award). Having completed one of these courses (Level 2 Abseil, Canoe, Kayak or Sea Kayak) a Venturer Scout could be registered with Level 2 Skills in the specific area for a period of three years.
- A Venturer Scout who wishes to develop a higher level of technical skill as part of Outdoor 2, Pursuits 2 or the Major Interest Award (to become the Endeavour Award), may undertake Level 3 and 4 technical skills training. To do this a Venturer Scout would need to participate in Adult Leader Adventurous Activity common core courses as a prerequisite.

After attending a Level 3 or 4 (as relevant) Abseil, Bushwalk, Canoe, Kayak or Sea Kayak course, which may be linked to the completion of Outdoor 2, Pursuits 2, or the Major Interest Award (to become the Endeavour Award), a Venturer Scout could be registered with Level 3 Advanced Skills or a Level 4 Specialist Skills in the specific area for a period of three years.

While this is obvious for the outdoor activities, it can similarly be demonstrated through the Business Services and Leadership components where planning and organisation can be linked to units of competence such as

- BSBCM202A Organise and complete daily work activities
- BSBCM203A Communicate in the workplace

- BSBCM204A Work effectively with others
- BSBCM209A Provide information to clients
- BSBCM210A Implement improved work practices
- BSBCM211A Participate in workplace safety procedures
- BSB FLM 312A Contribute to team effectiveness
- BSBCM218A Apply simple first aid

Having considered this information, it was agreed to give Venturer Scouts the option and flexibility to also complete a VET component as part of the Award Scheme. It is planned that this option will be developed when reworking each of the components of the Award Scheme.

### **Linking**

An effective linking process is crucial to successful recruitment into the Venturer Scout and Rover Sections. Given the significant numbers of young people that do not link to the next Section - Scouts to Venturer Scouts and Venturer Scouts to Rovers, it was considered there was a significant need to review the linking process. This was one of the issues considered through the web based responses from the wider community. This area considered the Scout graduating to Venturer Scouts and Venturer Scouts progressing to Rovers.

Linking needs to be supported by improved communication and understanding between Scout Leaders, Venturer Scout Leaders and Rover Advisers. Emphasis needs to be placed on greater use of effective role modelling of peers between Sections.

The Venturer Scout Link Badge and the Rover Link Badge processes were reviewed and considered appropriate. It is noted, however, that small numbers of Scouts link to Venturer Scouts and even fewer Venturer Scouts link to Rovers.

The National Youth Council considered this issue particularly with respect to linking to Rovers. They considered:

- lack of time and/or money due to studying/working/having families.
- limited Rover activities Venturer Scouts can join in on to learn what Rovers are all about.
- more intersection activities especially between Scouts, Venturer Scouts and Rovers to increase the Rover image in the younger Sections and teach them about what we do.
- a lack of knowledge about the Squiring system leads many Venturer Scouts to believe it is 'Legal Bullying'.
- Rovers appear to consume excessive alcohol which turns many away from joining Rovers. Further Rovers are not doing enough to change and correct this image, especially at shared events.
- Rover Crews should actively be seeking the Venturer Scouts.
- immediate recognition by Rovers is paramount. The following extract highlights this.... 'And the one thing that made it a natural progression in my eyes was on my last night as a Venturer, they escorted me from the unit and invested me straight away, no fuss - it made me feel like a part of the crew straight away - no limbo between units and crews!!!'
- more Rover involvement in Venturer Scouts and younger Sections
- 'Try-Rovering' proposal is considered very valuable
- more advertising to the age group, i.e. in universities

Based on information received through the internet responses and local consultations, the best components identified with the process was that the linking process:

- must be integral part of the overall Scout program
- was supported through the link badge activities
- should be exciting and this occurs by using creative activities
- creative/fun/non-threatening activities need to be reinforced and shared with others

- more joint activities with the younger Section - Scouts and older Rovers need to be promoted
- is supported by many publications and campaigns including ‘Try Rovering/Try Venturing’ (an initiative to increase the percentage of youth members progressing to the next Section but which does not take the place of the Link Badge but allows members to experience the next Section without the pressures of progressing to that Section. It establishes a reason to join the following Section.

Difficulties associated with Linking include:

- that the linking program may be seen as a threat to the Scout Leader who could view this as losing a valuable Scout Troop member
- having to leave the Group which the young person identifies with to join a Unit or Crew
- some Crews don’t want younger Venturer Scouts in Crew as they are under drinking age
- the ‘squiring process’ as the introduction to Rovers in some cases takes too long and many youth drop out from frustration.

**4.7 Award Scheme and its implementation (TOR 7)**

The Review Team considered the importance of the Award Scheme as providing the structured framework for the Unit Program. It accepted that only a small number of members attain the Queen’s Scout Award. On this basis it is proposed to create from the existing two tiered system, one that is three tiered by creating a midpoint that most youth can achieve by active participation in the Venturer Scout program.

It was considered important that the level of achievement of the Queen’s Scout Award not be diminished. Existing time allocations were supported.

In reviewing comments about the current Award Scheme the Review Team noted:

- content provides flexibility and great diversity
- has flexibility to be selected by youth within agreed parameters
- good internal recognition within Scouting
- great program driver – good synergy
- provide recognition via badges at logical times
- components achievable by most Venturer Scouts
- provides avenues for new ‘life skills’ and learning
- provides social development through negotiations with Unit Council
- provides individual recognition and reward
- recognises Queen’s Scout Award is important for some young people and should be maintained at its current standard
- too much emphasis of creating ‘rules’ for Award
- Queen’s Scout likened to sainthood by some Leaders
- take focus from Queen’s Scout Award and put back to Venturer Scouts
- Diamond Award presented too late as never earned until the Queen’s Scout is awarded

South Australia (2007) conducted a short survey on why more young people don’t complete the Award Scheme. Reasons given by Venturer Scouts for non-completion of the Award Scheme included:

Takes too much time and people don’t have the commitment	5
Can’t be bothered/too much effort	5
Conflicts with higher priorities, e.g. studies	3
Don’t know	1
Too hard and too complex	1

After completing a scan of existing practices across and within Branches, it was considered there are enormous differences in operation regarding the setting of requirements, the appointment and approval of examiners and the moderation of the requirements.

The Review Team endorsed the following procedures associated with aspects of the Award Scheme. These included:

- youth member sets the level for the challenge
- peer review of this level occurs by Unit Council
- personal best is to be attained
- backdating of Award Work up to six months is acceptable
- each Unit should have the opportunity to be represented at the level above the Unit, be that District/Region
- the moderation of standards at local, Branch and national levels.

Concern was expressed regarding the wide diversity associated with Award requirements including:

- confusion regarding the use of the word 'standard' as being one fixed level which must be achieved by each youth
- the different approaches of the existing Award Standards Committee
- the role of District Venturer Scout Councils (DVSCs) being only as supervising awards
- defining an acceptable level for recognition of school work.

### **Composition of Award Scheme components**

The Review Team considered the composition of each badge in detail. Outdoor Activity must be a physical outdoor activity, therefore there is a need to add the word 'physical' to Outdoor 2.

### **Venturing Skills Award**

The content and placement of this award is considered effective. Discussion occurred regarding the Unit Management Course. It was suggested that this course should be done after the first six months of Venturer Scouting. There is a need to investigate if part of this may be able to be delivered online. It was considered that as many new Venturer Scouts do not understand the operation of the Venturer Scout Council, that the d) component of the Venturer Skills Award be reworded to include:

*'Be able to explain the role and function of a Unit Council'* and attend a Unit Council meeting for approval of the Venturing Skills Award.

It was considered if the heading Bushwalking should be replaced with Overnight Outdoor Expedition to accommodate the needs of young people who did not wish to or were unable to participate in bushwalking. It was agreed that hiking is such an important basic Scouting skill the term should be maintained. However it was recognised there would be some circumstances where young people were unable to participate in hiking and an alternative activity would be required.

For sequencing in printing, First aid to be component a) and Bushwalking (or Overnight Outdoor Expedition) to be b).

- Leadership courses, when rewritten, should clearly define why the young person needs to do particular activities despite having previous experience with these.

### **Anchor Badge**

It was agreed the new requirements for this badge should be rewritten to be the same as the Certificate II requirements for canoeing, kayaking or sea-kayaking, including the core elements of risk, navigation, outdoors, safety and first aid.

### **Deaf Sign Language Emblem**

There is a need to ensure that those receiving this badge are fluent in Deaf Sign language.

**First Aid badge** OK

**Landcare Badge** This is acceptable and important given the current importance of the environment. OK

**Language emblem** OK

**Surf Life Saving badge** Title Surf Life Saving to be changed to Bronze Medallion

**Their Service Our Heritage** OK

**World Conservation** OK

**Youth Helper Badge** Recommendation that Youth Helper must be aged 16 to 18 years (amend from 15 ½ years).

**Rover Link Badge** Recognition of current competencies should be included for this.

**Scouts of the World Award** Need to include this as an additional Specialist badge.

#### **4.8 Adult Leader Training (TOR 8)**

Training issues generated during the consultation included:

- focus needs to be on training Leaders to help and support youth, not counsel
- District Leaders should be available to provide on going regular support
- Leaders need to be trained better in techniques to motivate the age group
- more training and emphasis needs to focus on developing and implementing leadership and giving members opportunities to practice their leadership
- increase the number of Leaders trained in active listening and group dynamics

The job description for a Venturer Scout Leader was revised. During the consultation process a common theme was the need for current leaders to be supported actively by a District Leader. It was considered that this position can be reinforced to District Leader – Venturer Scouts through sentiments such as ...‘Now that Unit Councils and Venturer Scout Leaders have more autonomy and responsibility for the Award Scheme, the District Leader – Venturer Scouts needs to make an increased commitment to the training of Venturer Scout Leaders. Also, now that the District Leader - Venturer Scouts and District Venturer Council have been freed up from administration of much of the Award Scheme, they have more time to provide support to local Units and Unit Councils’.

Another suggestion was for a Help desk to be established at National/local level which is available for immediate assistance to Venturer Scout Leaders when needed.

Duty statements of Leaders have been revised and appear as Attachment 7.2.

The adult training needs of new and existing Venturer Scout Leaders was considered using the DACUM process – ‘**Developing a Curriculum**’. Victoria, NSW and Queensland undertook to research the skills, knowledge and understanding required, while the remaining Branches reviewed the materials. Information from this process was provided and considered by both the National Training Committee and also members of the Review Team and is reported in Section 5

## 5. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES AND RECOMENDATIONS

### The Fundamentals

The Review considered:

- the educational outcomes including objectives
- the method of the Section and confirmed the development of Venturer Scouts being through participation in a peer grouping called a Unit, and other small ad-hoc groups (which could be within or outside the Unit). This provides for exercising complete leadership and management skills. The importance of the 'program providing opportunities for: the development of relationship skills; values; initiative; abilities and international understanding through increasing responsibility for the management of the Unit; discussion and participation in a wide range of physically challenging outdoor activities; community service; and an award scheme appropriate to the age' was reiterated.
- membership details were confirmed including age ranges whereby Venturer Scouts must have attained their fourteenth birthday and would normally progress to the Rover Section around seventeen years and six months depending on their individual readiness, socially and intellectually.
- organisation and leadership where the importance of flexibility and local initiatives which support the growth of Venturer Scouting was emphasised. For example while supporting that each Unit should preferably have at least ten members, it is emphasised that the important aspect is that Venturer Scouting is occurring in as many communities as possible and that a Unit with fewer members should be created or supported to continue, subject to local arrangements.
- the importance of the Unit Council as the body elected by the Venturer Scouts to be responsible for managing the affairs of the Unit, including the expenditure of Unit funds, programming, control of Award Scheme requirements and internal discipline.
- there are a few young people of Venturer Scouting age who are Youth Helpers and not actively involved in Unit activities. The proposed concept of 'e-Venturing' would enable these young people to participate in the Venturer Scout Award Scheme if they so desire.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1:**

**That the Fundamentals, method, educational objectives, existing age groupings and the name Venturer Scouts as exist be confirmed.**

It is noted some slight technical changes were suggested for the next printing of Policy and Rules. Within the Section Organisation and Leadership, it was considered the last sentence of Point 2 'The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader' should be added to end of Point 1 and the words 'continue to' be deleted from the second sentence in Point 1. In Point 2 delete the word 'standards' and replace with 'agreed requirements', and delete the words 'may attend' and replace with the word 'attends'.

In summary, the Team confirmed the current Fundamentals as relevant and suggested changes to P and R clarify the role and intent of Venturer Scout Leaders.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2:**

**P and R 8.4 should be modified to read:**

- 1 **Each Venturer Scout Unit should preferably have at least ten members. However a Unit with fewer members, due to local circumstances, may (DELETE 'continue to') operate subject to the approval of the District Commissioner. ADD FROM 2. *The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader.***

- 2 **The Unit Council is a body elected by the Venturer Scouts to be responsible for managing the affairs of the Unit, including the expenditure of Unit funds, programming, control of Award Scheme agreed requirements (DELETE 'standards') and internal discipline. The Unit Chairman shall be a Venturer Scout elected by the Unit. The Venturer Scout Leader attends (DELETE 'may attend') in an advisory capacity. SENTENCE DELETED FROM HERE. *The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader.***

### **Organisation**

Generally it was considered that the organisation of Venturer Scouting at all levels was suited to the current needs of young people and of the Scouting movement.

There was some confusion regarding the role of the Unit Council with regard to the level of achievement required for Award work. This issue is dealt with as part of the Awards component of this Report.

One common and emerging issue identified was Scouts having to leave their Group and transfer to another to maintain their membership as a Venturer Scout. It is recognised that there is a need to maintain a viable number of youth who can regularly attend meetings and that this unfortunately cannot occur at each Group. A growing issue identified as a reason for leaving Scouting, and not linking, is having to leave their Group to which they have built great loyalty. It is strongly considered that youth could retain membership in their local Group but be registered as part of the Venturer Scout Unit attached to another Group or formation. This will require each Branch to create a process which will enable youth to be registered in one Group but be part of another.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3:**

**That Branches create and use procedures to promote flexibility in the method of enrolling Venturer Scouts in their local Group, but recognising they meet in a different venue as part of a Venturer Scout Unit comprising of youth from a wider geographical area.**

### **Linking Process**

The linking programs both from the Scout Section and to the Rover Section must be seen as important parts of Scouting and promoted as such. There is great variety within Branches regarding the success of this. Useful strategies found successful include:

- the Branch to forward a letter to the parents of Scouts who are of Linking age to inform them of the benefits to be gained from moving to Venturer Scouts
- the Venturer Scout Leader could be encouraged to attend the Scout Troop meeting once a month so that Scouts become familiar with the Leader prior to Linking commencing
- Venturer Scout Leaders to be encouraged to actively promote Linking between Scouts and Venturer Scouts, and Venturer Scouts to Rovers
- where appropriate, Crews seriously consider the length of time the squire process takes as this is identified as a deterrent
- Crews reviewing the strategies they use to recruit Venturer Scouts to ensure these do not overemphasise the use of alcohol, but consider that those involved in linking will be below the legal drinking age, and also those who may not wish to drink.
- BCVS should share this information at a Branch level with the BC Rovers.

The contents of the Link Badge were reviewed and found to be suitable. There is a need however to emphasise *Venturer Scouts who have completed the camping requirements should be considered for recognition of prior learning.*

Generally it was considered the existing procedures are adequate. Many effective Branch resources are available regarding this, including the Try Venturing Badge, Kaleidoscope compulsory activity at each Jamboree, and Toolkit available from Victoria, and the ACT booklet. A useful strategy used by the National Program Committee is the promotion and sharing of effective methods and resources. Good ideas collected by Branch Commissioners will continue to be shared.

It is considered that the mechanics to support the linking process are appropriate but that difficulties occur with implementation at the local level. It is considered that as part of the implementation process in each Branch, each Branch Commissioner Venturer Scouts will coordinate a Linking Program review including Scout and Rover Sections to ensure effective membership is retained across Sections. Essential components of this include:

- the reinforcement of the Group Council
- promoting positive Linking practices
- promoting the 'Try Venturing' campaign.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:**

**Branch Commissioners Venturer Scouts as part of the implementation process will coordinate a Linking Program promotion involving Scout and Rover Sections in their Branch to promote effective membership being retained across Sections.**

**AWARD SCHEME**

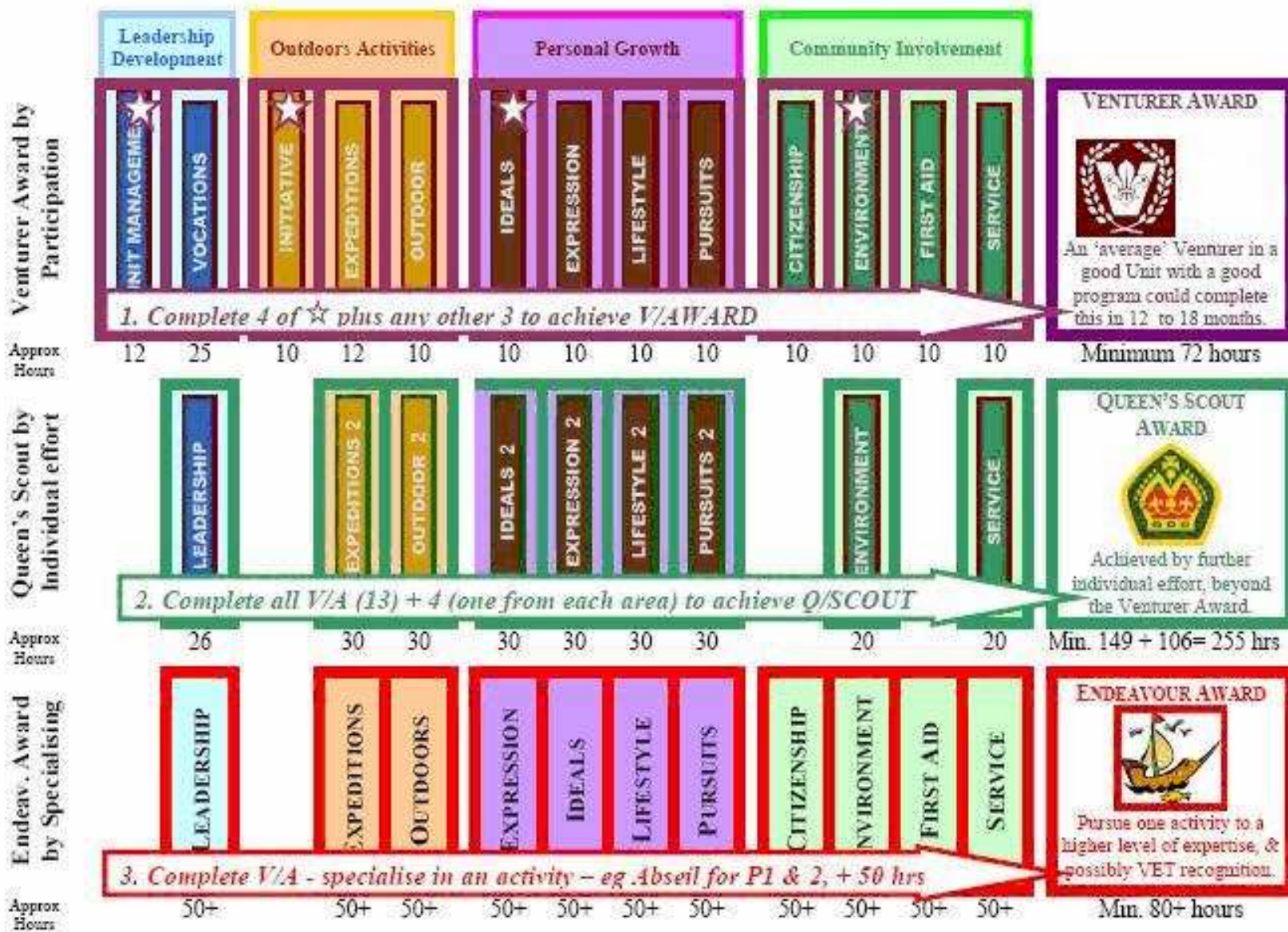
Extensive work has occurred regarding the current design of the Award Scheme. A three tiered design has been created. Although it is considered these changes will not significantly alter the content of the Award Scheme, it is expected that that they will have a positive and significant cultural impact on Units across Australia.

The original intention of our Award Scheme was to create a broad range of activities and challenges for young people in order to achieve the agreed learning outcomes of the Section, in a fun and rewarding way, done predominantly at the Unit level. This must remain an essential component of the Award Scheme. However, after many reviews and refinements to the Venturer Scout program, it is considered that the Award Scheme has moved beyond the capacities of local Units, and in most instances is now pursued by individuals outside of the Venturer Scout Unit program.

The changes proposed here through the three tiers are intended to reset the Award Scheme as a tool for enabling the Unit Council to develop and drive a comprehensive, broad and modern program which can be delivered at the Unit level.

It is considered these changes will provide immediate recognition and greater options for young people. Clarification of time requirements and links to VET are seen as significant positive features of the proposal.





The Review Team propose a reworked Award Scheme consisting of three major components:

**Venturer Award**

- This is about  $\frac{1}{3}$  along the way toward Queen's Scout Award
- Consists of completing seven areas - four compulsory areas - Unit Management Course, Initiatives, Ideals and Service and three from Vocations, Expeditions, Outdoor, Expressions, Pursuits, Lifestyle, Environment, Citizenship or First Aid
- Should be attained by the majority of Venturer Scouts through general participation after 12-18 months of Venturer Scouting
- In developing this new Award it should be the goal for most members and achievable by all who regularly participate in Unit activities within an 18 month period
- The Review Team also considered creating another Award at the  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way toward the Queen's Scout Award mark, but agreed that this was not required.

**Endeavour Award** – this replaces the previous Major Interest Award Badge. It recognises that some young people may wish to specialise in a particular interest/vocation area, rather than participate in the Queen's Scout Award.

- Some Venturer Scouts may choose to complete this in addition to the Queen's Scout Award
- Must be earned while in the Unit
- Can only be awarded after the Venturer Award is earned
- The standard for this Award would be equivalent to that nationally recognised by the community working in that specialty area, to be attained by a 17 year old.

**Queen's Scout Award**

- Consists of completing the remaining six activity areas of the Venturer Award level
- Complete one activity badge from each of the four areas from the Queen's Scout level.

**Other comments include:**

- all Award requirements are to be aimed at the Venturer Scout doing their personal best
- the final approval for the Venturer Award, the Queen's Scout Award and Endeavour Award must include the signatures of the Unit Chairman or Councillor, and trained Venturer Scout Leader
- linking equivalent Scout skills to VET skills wherever possible within the Award Scheme
- the opportunity to link to VET skills (Cert II and Cert III) be promoted but be optional
- maintaining the existing four main areas with a change of name from adventurous activities to outdoor activities. In doing this there is a need to define the scope clearly to differentiate between regular sports and outdoor activities
- that Pursuits can be either completed indoors (e.g. chess; stamp collecting) or outdoors
- the Unit Council, in consultation with the Venturer Scout Leader, trained at least to the Basic level in Venturer Scouting, may recognise prior experience gained within the previous six months, provided this has been achieved while a Venturer Scout
- time lines need to be clarified, e.g. if it is stated that 10 hours is required over 2 months and if the activity has been completed in 10 hours over one weekend, the required 10 hours has been done. This should not be confused with activities which may be required to be completed in different circumstances on different days, sites etc

The Review Team proposes the Award approval process being simplified so that, at the Venturer Award level:

- Unit Council, working with the trained Venturer Scout Leader, trained at least to the Basic level, approves all aspects of the Venturer Award level

- Venturer Scout takes proposal as objectives, written or oral, to Unit Council. This need not be a formal meeting
- Unit Council considers and approves the proposal or renegotiates with the Venturer Scout if necessary
- if proposal is of a very specialised type, a resource person may assist the Unit Council
- information on specialist resource person is shared at the District/Region/Branch level
- Venturer Scout completes activity
- Venturer Scout reports to Unit Council for approval
- Unit Council approves the completed activity or provides reasons for resubmitting work
- Unit Chairman or Unit Councillor approves the issuing of badge and signs Record Book.

At the Endeavour Award level:

- Examiners are required in all Endeavour Award areas.
- Examiners are endorsed by the District Leader - Venturer Scouts or equivalent.
- A list of endorsed Examiners is maintained and shared at the District/Region/Branch level.
- Proposal for the Award activity is developed by the Venturer Scout, in consultation with the Examiner.
- This proposal is considered by the Unit Council at a formal or informal meeting.
- Unit Council considers and approves the proposal or renegotiates with the Venturer Scout if necessary
- Approval is noted by the Unit Council as per the proposal.
- After the Award component is completed the Unit Council, working with the trained Venturer Scout Leader and Examiner, will determine if the applicant has completed the requirements for the Award activity
- Unit Council signs the completed activity in the Record Book or provides reasons for resubmitting work
- Unit Chairman or Unit Councillor approves the issuing of badge and signs Record Book.

At Queen's Scout level:

- Examiners are required for adventurous activities (as defined in P&R) and specialist areas only.
- Examiners are endorsed by the District Leader - Venturer Scouts or equivalent.
- A list of endorsed examiners is maintained and shared at the District/Region/Branch level.
- Proposal for the Award activity is developed by the Venturer Scout, in consultation with the Examiner where one is required.
- This proposal is considered by the Unit Council at a formal or informal meeting.
- Unit Council considers and approves the proposal or renegotiates with the Venturer Scout if necessary.
- Approval is noted by the Unit Council as per the proposal.
- After the Award component is completed the Unit Council, working with the trained Venturer Scout Leader and Examiner, where one is required, will determine if the applicant has completed the requirements for the Award activity.
- Unit Council signs the completed activity in the Record Book or provides reasons for resubmitting work.
- Unit Chairman or Unit Councillor approves the issuing of badge and signs Record Book.

Moderation at the Endeavour Award and Queen's Scout levels must occur within Branches and nationally. Moderation is the process of ensuring that the Award agreed requirements are consistently applied within Districts, across the Branch and throughout Australia.

- At the National level this is done through the Branch Commissioner Venturer Scouts and National Commissioner Youth Program at the Program meetings and informally.
- At the Branch level, each Branch Commissioner Venturer Scouts develop and institute a process whereby:
  - every four months all approved activities at these two levels are considered for rigor and consistency to the general principles of the Award level
  - Venturer Scouts may be involved in the process if required
  - moderation is done using a 'desk top technique' where consideration of proposal and if required, documented outcomes, occurs to ensure ongoing integrity and maintenance of consistent levels, rather than identifying individuals and matching each individual's achievements
  - the results of moderation are shared widely with District Leaders – Venturer Scouts, Venturer Scout Leaders and with Units. Where concerns exist, these issues are raised specifically with the District Leader – Venturer Scouts, Venturer Scout Leader, Unit Council and other Unit members.

The previous practice of having a District Venturer Scout Council (DVSC) responsible for supervising Award Scheme agreed requirements is no longer required and this responsibility transfers to the District Leader – Venturer Scouts. Further, the principle of having an Award Standards Committee which meets regularly is not endorsed as it:

- is considered unnecessary and duplicates the work of the Unit Council
- requires individuals to present proposals outside their Unit
- requires unnecessary administrative processes.

The Review Team confirmed the importance of the role of the District/Region/Branch Venturer Scout Council as:

- To promote Venturer Scouting in the District.
- Co-ordination of Venturer Scout activities in the District.
- Review and promote Unit programs within the District.
- Give support and assistance to all Units.
- Pass on all information received relating to the Venturer Scout Section.
- Encourage high standards within Units and monitor recruiting of youth members.
- Apply meeting procedures with an agenda and minutes.
- Provide a training activity which could be used in the Unit program.
- Develop a strategy to hasten and establish links with relevant external community based organisations.
- Give consideration to including an external community representative with relevant skills as a member of the Council, e.g. Boys Brigade; Church Youth Group etc.

The Review Team emphasises that the responsibility for the supervision of Award Scheme agreed requirements rests with the District Leader – Venturer Scouts, working with Venturer Scout Leaders and Unit Councils. While some issues may be discussed by the DVSC, this is no longer a responsibility.

There is no longer a requirement for Venturer Scouts or the Unit representative/s to present Queen's Scout Award Scheme proposals for approval at the DVSC.

Regarding Badge designs, it was agreed that:

- the Venturer Award badge is to revert to the previous 1995 version
- the Endeavour Award badge is to be a modified version based on the Major Interest badge
- to retain tapes but not the Diamond format. The Endeavour Award tapes to have red stitching.

- the Queen's Scout level tapes to maintain the existing green border.

Furthermore, the Review Team acknowledged:

- that the wording 'Queen's Scout' may not be appropriate in future but will continue to be used at present
- that Leaders need to consider those youth with special needs and make the relevant accommodations for them
- Venturer Scouts should be encouraged to use information technology (IT) where appropriate in each of the above
- where the Unit Council and Venturer Scout Leader feel that it is appropriate, prior approval is not required for twelve of the thirteen components at the Venturer Award level – Expeditions is the exception to this.

### **Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme**

As the previous Award Scheme has only been repackaged Venturer Scouts continue to have the flexibility to also achieve this as a result of Scouting.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

**That changes to the Award Scheme be accepted which include:**

- **creating a new Award name – Venturer Award – which is positioned approximately 1/3 of the way toward the Queen's Scout Award.**
- **maintaining the Queen's Scout level of excellence**
- **deleting the diamond-shaped development Awards badges while retaining the content**
- **creating the Endeavour Award to replace the Major Interest Award**
- **simplifying the administration associated with the attainment of Awards including all Award work to the Venturer Award level being approved by the Unit Council**
- **maintaining Awards levels of excellence by ensuring a moderation of completed requirements, and not assessing individual performance.**

### **ASSOCIATE VENTURERS**

One aspect arising from the last Venturer Scout Review related to the creation of 'Associate Venturers'. These are young people who may access the Venturer Scout program without being required to accept the Promise and Law. Generally this aspect from the previous review was not implemented. Victoria has produced a great deal of information regarding Associates.

It is considered 'Associates' provide opportunities for prospective members to participate in Venturer Scout Unit activities (including Venturing Skills training) until such time as they are prepared to become an invested Venturer Scout. It was felt that individual Units would consider if they were prepared to accept Associates, and any restrictions to be imposed on participation in activities should be the responsibility of the Unit Council (for Unit activities) and the District Venturer Scout Council (for District activities). It was further considered that 'Associates' would not normally be permitted to participate in Branch or National activities, and that each Branch should formulate their own guidelines for the implementation.

The current Review identified that there are many opportunities within Venturing that could be made available to other youth who need not necessarily be Scouts. This not only includes aspects of the Award scheme but also components of VET training. Some informal approaches have been made from other youth groups and schools to access some of our programs and related accredited courses. It is considered while supporting Associate

Venturers as part of individual Units, this is also an appropriate mechanism for the Association at a Branch and National level to offer Scouting activities to non Scouts.

This mechanism is the means internally for the Association to keep track of the number of young people it is assisting whether it may as part of Unit or wider VET and specific training activities. Given the unique situation that Scouting is in as a registered training organisation with the ability to offer accredited courses in the different specialist activity areas it is likely to offer services to many young people of Venturer Scout age who may not wish to become Scouts. It is critical that these numbers can be clearly identified and incorporated into our statistics to be used for informing others and future funding submissions to government. Clearly data regarding these Associates would be collected and reported within national statistics, but they would not be used for membership reporting to the World Bureau.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:**

**That the concept of Associate Venturers continues, to promote flexibility and to enable young people who are not Scouts to access our programs in a suitable and legitimate manner.**

**ADULT TRAINING PROGRAM**

In line with the process used in all National Reviews, an extensive review of the contents of the training program relating to Venturer Scouts was undertaken. This was undertaken through the National Training Council and involved all BCATDs and used the DACUM process. The results were compared to the current training scheme which was also mapped against the existing materials published by the World Scout Bureau.

It was noted that many aspects of the adult training program had been reviewed. Changes to content over the last six years included:

- inclusion of new requirements relating to Code of Conduct
- additions regarding reporting regarding child protection and personal safety
- additions regarding workplace health and safety and risk management
- creation of additional electives for personal development
- repackaging of material at the Branch level to support more flexible delivery options.

Concerns of a general nature included:

- the need for training programs to be more suited to the needs of members
- cancellation of courses, particularly for this Section where some Branches only run a small number annually
- the reported growing tendency for there to be academic discussions rather than the practical applications of activities occurring.
- with the re-packaging of materials little time was left for outdoor activities that may take longer times than scheduled. (This issue will continue to be monitored and is not unique to this Section.)
- an ineffective Personal Leader Adviser (PLA) system occurring with some Leaders not being allocated a PLA
- not enough support at the local level for the new Venturer Scout Leader
- all Leaders being reminded to undertake additional training annually
- Leaders not completing Basic training within a certain time frame
- training courses still to be run, even if numbers are small
- there is a need for Leaders to understand the needs of current youth and the changing composition of Australian youth.

Regarding Venturer Scouting, it was considered generally that the current content of the training scheme was meeting the specific needs of Leaders at the Basic and Advanced levels. It was considered that:

- current materials were suited, however materials regarding the needs of young people aged 14 to 18 needed to be updated
- information such as writing references for Leaders was not a priority
- greater options are needed in the specialist outdoor activities so Leaders should be encouraged to access the specialist outdoor modules
- Venturer Scouts who desire should be encouraged to participate in these specialty outdoor training (VET) programs.

Specific training issues were raised, however most of these were isolated to individual Branches. These included:

- concern regarding the amount of time spent on Award Scheme
- no current Venturer Scout Leaders delivering the training in some Branches
- length of time trainers still working in Section after they had left Section
- taking outdoor activities at Basic and moving to Advanced
- focus in one Branch on too much outdoor activities at Basic level in Bushwalking
- the need to present new Leaders with a number of options regarding suitable outdoor activities

**RECOMMENDATION 7:**

**That the NCATD make changes to the content of the Wood Badge Training Program, Venturer Scout Section to accommodate recommendations from the Venturer Scout Review.**

**PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN**

During the Review, mention was made a number of times regarding the lack of a unique identify of the Venturer Scout Section. Many considered that this Section is unknown or lost between the Scout and Rover Sections. It is considered a national promotional campaign highlighting the senior Sections of Scouting be developed. This should include Section-related media material, posters, brochures and merchandise. Suggested name for the campaign is 'Try Venturing'.

As a pre-2009 Venture activity, Venturer Scout Units throughout Australia are to be invited to develop a Venturer Scout promotion. A 30 second to 1 minute You Tube presentation can be uploaded onto to the Scout website.

Furthermore, Branches are encouraged to prepare a plan to market Venturer Scouting and inclusion of the Venturer Scout program to young people in the Scout Section and the wider community, promoting its education system, vocational training, and community-based training programs.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:**

**In future, national promotional campaigns be aimed at the adolescent and older age Sections of Scouting. Branches prepare and implement a plan regarding marketing of Venturer Scouting.**

**PUBLICATIONS**

There is a plethora of resources available in this area, however many Leaders are unaware of how to access these. There is a need to consolidate these and make as many as possible readily available.

The Review Team reviewed all publications relating to Venturer Scouting. It was agreed that wherever possible materials should be readily accessible and the web was considered one appropriate method.

It was considered that wherever possible:  
The use of technology should be included within all publications

In reviewing future publications, it was considered there would be four main components of the Venturer Scout Publications-

1. *Venturer Scout Record Book* which detail all award requirements
2. *One Publication* (to include previous maroon books) written for both youth and adult Leaders which incorporates:
  - *The Venturer Scout Unit*
  - *The Venturer Scout Award Scheme*
  - *The Unit Council*
  - *Unit Programming*
  - *Expeditions and Campcraft*
  - *Guidelines For The Venturer Scout Leader*
3. *Resource Folder:*  
Workshop manual – divided into Award Scheme activities and levels - which includes:
  - packaged programs, e.g.:
    - Ideals
    - Expeditions
  - other activities
  - Health activities
  - List of all ideas
  - Toolkit
  - Going Into Venturing
  - Handouts on ‘Tips for Promoting Venturer Scouts’
4. *Venturer Scout Portfolio* – outlining minimum requirements and including templates

Specific details regarding current publications are outlined below.

	<b>Needed</b>	<b>Format</b>
<b>VENTURER SCOUT RECORD BOOK</b>	Yes	As is, but places for VET assessor’s signature may be needed. Colour tabs to be used. Encourage use of lever arch folder as a journal to contain all evidence and memories. Book needs to be reworked – Environment can be used as an example Information re Scouts of the World Signature for Awards Standard Committee to be removed from this (p20)
<b>THE VENTURER SCOUT UNIT</b>	Yes	To be one book Role of Venturer Scout Leaders to be included
<b>THE VENTURER SCT AWARD SCHEME</b>	Yes	
<b>THE UNIT COUNCIL</b>	Yes	
<b>UNIT PROGRAMMING</b>	Yes	
<b>EXPEDITIONS &amp; CAMPCRAFT</b>	Yes	



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<b><i>GUIDELINES FOR THE VS LEADER</i></b>	Yes	Consider if there is a need for information re requirements of the Cert II course
<b>UNIT TREASURERS BOOK</b>	No	Templates to be incorporated in above
<b>UNIT SECRETARYS BOOK</b>	No	
<b>UNIT LOG BOOK</b>	No	Template to main book
<b>UNIT COUNCIL RECORD BOOK</b>	Yes	Separate
<b>UNIT M/MENT COURSE</b>	Yes	Separate
<b>BECOMING A VENTURER SCOUT</b>	Yes	Separate
<b>VENTURER SCOUT PROMISE &amp; LAW CARD</b>	No	Add Reflection to the Award Book
<b>LEADERSHIP COURSE CERT (20'S)</b>	No	
<b>UNIT MGMT COURSE CERT (20'S)</b>	No	
<b>INITIATIVE COURSE CERT 20PK</b>	No	
<b>VENTURING SKILLS AWARD CERT</b>	No	
<b>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AW CERT</b>	No	
<b>ADVENTUROUS ACT AWARD CERT</b>	No	
<b>L/SHIP DEV'T COURSE CERT (20S)</b>	No	
<b>QUEEN'S SCOUT CERTIFICATE</b>	Yes	
<b>QUEEN'S SCOUT CITATION</b>	Yes	Template to be developed
<b>CERTIFICATE FOR VENTURER AWARD</b>	Yes	To be developed
<b>CERTIFICATE FOR ENDEAVOUR AWARD</b>	Yes	To be developed
<b>NATIONAL CHART OF ALL BADGES</b>	New	To be developed
<b>UNIT PROGRESS CHART</b>	New	To be available electronically for Leaders to download from the Scout website rather than have this commercially published.
<b>INDIVIDUAL VENTURER SCOUT RECORD SHEET</b>	New	To be developed and available electronically

Specific changes to existing publications and resources include:

<b>Unit Management Course</b>	New prototype as per Qld 2007 to be endorsed as the new National publication. This is to be accessible on-line at the discretion of the BCs Venturer Scouts
<b>Leadership</b>	It is considered that Leadership content is satisfactory. The Venturer Scout Leader should ensure that the Venturer Scout be mentored through the practical leadership process. In 2006 the age to do the Leadership Course changed – there is now no minimum age to do this course
<b>Vocations</b>	Vocations 1: change 'prepare' to present' Delete any specific reference to a job agency and make more generic.

<b>Initiative</b>	The content appears to be satisfactory. Course Leaders, however, need to be provided with a discrete resource schedule (separate to the Guidelines).
<b>Expeditions</b>	No changes recommended. It was agreed to keep the minimum number at 5.
<b>Outdoor</b>	Need to provide examples for people with special needs.
<b>Ideals</b>	No changes to content. More resources needed for this area
<b>Expressions</b>	Expressions 1 Take NOTE out-Expressions 2 – no changes
<b>Pursuits</b>	Pursuits 1 - include Handy person Pursuits 2 – Add ‘Participate in training for a licence – 30-50 hours as an example.’
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘addictive’ to ‘illicit’</li> <li>• ‘3 months in a recognised’ to ‘one season or six months in organised individual.’</li> <li>• ‘Jogging’ to ‘running’</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	Environment 1 – 10 hours by participation. Add- Discuss the Scout Environment Charter Environment 2 – 20 hours through an active leadership role
<b>Citizenship</b>	Citizenship <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delete (repeat of what is done in younger Sections).</li> <li>2. Replace with – Group Discussion on</li> <li>3. Multi Cultural/Indigenous/Disabilities (Inclusivity) and how it relates to the Unit/Scouting/community.</li> <li>4. Prepare and deliver a five minute talk on some aspect of Australia’s heritage</li> <li>4. Change ‘letters’ to ‘letters/emails’</li> </ol>
<b>Service</b>	No changes recommended
<b>First aid</b>	Health industries basic first aid course – 14-16 hours be adopted as requirement.

**RECOMMENDATION 9:**

**That publications and resources be amended or developed to include the proposed changes as outlined within the Review.**

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (TOR9)**

### **6.1 PRINCIPLES**

The Review Team proposes the following Implementation Plan to occur at a national level. It is further proposed that each Branch develop an implementation plan complementing the national strategy.

It is not considered there are any significant changes to the program - only fine tuning so the new changes to the Award Scheme should be implemented from as early as the new reprinted publications are available.

- The program to be launched to youth members at the opening of National Venture in January, 2009.
- All current Venturer Scout Leaders and District team members are to complete a Review Implementation Program prior to 01/09/2009.
- All Branch Commissioners Venturer Scouts are to ensure that this happens and document the process that will be used in the Branch to ensure all relevant Leaders are aware of the Review outcomes.
- The National Publications Committee is to ensure that the necessary key resources are available for distribution to Branches by November 2008.
- The National Commissioner for Adult Leader Training and Development is to ensure that changes to the training program for the Venturer Scout Section are available for Branch implementation by January, 2009.
- Each Branch Commissioner Adult Training and Development is to ensure that the new material is introduced into the training program to complement the Branch timelines and document this timeline and the process as part of the Branch Implementation.
- Each Chief Commissioner of each Branch provides a copy of their Branch Implementation Program to the November 2008 meeting of the National Operations Committee.
- The evaluation tool regarding the effectiveness of the implementation be completed in each Branch and be provided to National Operations by June 2010.
- The completion date for youth members for the current Award Scheme is December, 2009.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 10:**

**The National Implementation Plan as outlined be endorsed and the need for each Branch to develop their own strategy to complement this, be accepted.**

## 6.2 TIMELINES AND COSTINGS

### VENTURER SCOUT REVIEW - IMPLEMENTATION

The Review Committee recommends that	ACTIONS	COSTINGS National	COSTINGS Branch	TIMELINES
1. That the Fundamentals, method, educational objectives, existing age groupings and the name Venturer Scouts as exist be confirmed.	Update next available publications as part of ongoing printing requirements	Some additional set up but considered within existing budget	Nil	As soon as reprints required. no write offs required.
2. That P and R 8.4 be modified.....	Update next available publications as part of ongoing printing requirements	Considered within existing budget	Nil	As soon as reprints required. no write offs required
3. Branches create and use procedures to promote flexibility in the method of enrolling Venturer Scouts in their local Group, but recognising they meet in a different venue as part of a Venturer Scout Unit comprising of youth from a wider geographical area.	Branches to review existing procedures and then determine what may be required to collect and record data. May require change to census data tool	Nil	Branch to determine	Census collection 2009
4. Branch Commissioners Venturer Scouts as part of the implementation process will coordinate a Linking Program promotion involving Scout and Rover Sections in their Branch to promote effective membership is retained across Sections.	BCs to convene linking task teams to promote the linking processes	Pamphlet costs	Committee costs	Convened by Feb, 2009

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<p>5. That changes to the Award Scheme be accepted which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating a new Award name – Venturer Award – which is positioned approximately 1/3 of the way toward the Queen’s Scout Award.</li> <li>• maintaining the Queen’s Scout level of excellence</li> <li>• deleting the diamond-shaped development Awards badges while retaining the content</li> <li>• creating the Endeavour Award to replace the Major Interest Award</li> <li>• simplifying the administration associated with the attainment of Awards including all Award work to the Venturer Award level being approved by the Unit Council</li> <li>• maintaining Awards levels of excellence by ensuring a moderation of completed requirements, and not assessing individual performance.</li> </ul>	<p>Printing and publishing requirements New VA Badge designed, created Amend Major interest badge (Cost to write off those)</p>	<p>Some additional set up but considered within existing budget- Badges self funding in long term</p>	<p>Write off badge Induction costs</p>	<p>From Nov 2008 and completed by September, 2009</p>
<p>6. That the concept of Associate Venturers continues, to promote flexibility and to enable young people who are not Scouts to access our programs in a suitable and legitimate manner.</p>	<p>Include in publications</p>	<p>Minimal</p>		<p>Continues</p>
<p>7. That the NCATD make changes to the content of the Wood Badge Training Program, Venturer Scout Section to implement recommendations from the Venturer Scout Review.</p>	<p>NCATD to implement</p>	<p>Within budget</p>		<p>Nov, 2008</p>

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8. In future, national promotional campaigns be aimed at the adolescent and older age Sections of Scouting. Branches prepare and implement a plan regarding marketing of Venturer Scouting.	To develop this	XXXXXXXXXX		
9. That publications and resources be amended and developed to include the proposed changes as outlined within the Review.	Publications to arrange			Essential Nov, 08 Others – ongoing
10.The National Implementation Plan as outlined be endorsed and the need for each Branch to develop its own strategy to complement this, be accepted	As per plan			

## 7. APPENDICES

### Attachment 7.1 Extract from P and R, 2005

#### ***R8 VENTURER SCOUT SECTION***

##### **R8.1 EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

The Venturer Scout Section provides opportunities to participate in a wide range of educational activities in a self-directing environment aimed at developing inter-personal skills, confidence, self-esteem and citizenship qualities.

##### **OBJECTIVES**

- *To develop fitness and an understanding of personal and community health issues.*
- *To provide challenging and appealing activities, which provide opportunities to develop personal abilities to the fullest potential.*
- *To develop personal interests, resourcefulness and creative ability.*
- *To develop knowledge of democracy and justice.*
- *To develop a sense of self identity.*
- *To promote a better understanding of the world's human and physical resources.*
- *To develop the opportunity to express and respond to individual spiritual needs.*
- *To develop values and ideals and express them through personal and group relationships.*
- *To promote an understanding of and involvement in the community at a local, national and international level.*
- *To provide an opportunity for companionship, sense of belonging and promotion of self-esteem.*
- *To provide opportunities to develop and exercise vocational and leadership skills.*
- *To further the knowledge and practice of the history and ideals of the Scout Movement.*

##### **R8.2 METHOD**

The development of Venturer Scouts is through participation in a peer grouping called a Unit, and small ad-hoc groups. This provides for exercising complete

leadership and management skills.

The program provides opportunities for: the development of relationship skills; values; initiative; abilities and international understanding through increasing responsibility for the management of the Unit; discussion and participation in a wide range of physically challenging outdoor activities; community service; and an award scheme appropriate to the age.

### **R8.3 MEMBERSHIP**

1. Young people become Venturer Scouts by an investiture ceremony during which the Scout Promise is made or reaffirmed.
2. Before their investiture as Venturer Scouts, young people must know and understand the meaning of the Promise and Law in keeping with their age.
3. A Scout who has earned the Venturer Scout Link Badge may be invested without further training.
4. Venturer Scouts must have had their fourteenth birthday and normally progress to the Rover Section around seventeen years and six months depending on their individual readiness, socially and intellectually.
5. Venturer Scouts are able to commence their progression to Rovers at any time after their seventeenth birthday.

### **R8.4 ORGANISATION AND LEADERSHIP**

1. Each Venturer Scout Unit should preferably have at least ten members. However a Unit with fewer members, due to local circumstances, may continue to operate subject to the approval of the District Commissioner.
2. The Unit Council is a body elected by the Venturer Scouts to be responsible for managing the affairs of the Unit, including the expenditure of Unit funds, programming, control of Award Scheme standards and internal discipline. The Unit Chairman shall be a Venturer Scout elected by the Unit.
3. The Venturer Scout Leader may attend in an advisory capacity. The Venturer Scout Leader takes charge of the Unit, with the help of at least one Assistant Venturer Scout Leader, subject to the general supervision of the Group Leader.
4. Preferably where there are girls in the Unit there should be a female leader, and preferably where there are boys in the Unit there should be a male leader.
5. In seeking parent/guardian approval for attendance at overnight activities, advice must be provided on leadership attendance and sleeping arrangements.



**Appendix 7.2 Duty Statements of Venturer Scout Leaders and District Leader Venturer Scouts**

**The Role of the Venturer Scout Leader**

**1. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS:**

The Venturer Scout Leader has the responsibility for the overall management of the Venturer Scout Unit and has an obligation to ensure the delegation of some components of this in order to ensure the appropriate development and skilling of their Assistant Leaders.

- 1.1 Be responsible for the planning and running of exciting, challenging weekly and weekend programs which develop, retain and attract members
- 1.2 Supervise and provide the instruction, support and testing of Venturer Scouts in skills appropriate to the program of the Venturer Scout Section.
- 1.3 Enhance the physical, intellectual, social, spiritual and emotional growth and personal development of all Venturer Scouts by ensuring their participation in interesting programs.
- 1.4 Establish and maintain the operation of the Office Bearer system of youth leadership in the Venturer Scout Section to ensure the effective functioning of the Unit Council.
- 1.5 Promote the Venturer Scout Section's activities within the Group and into the local community.
- 1.6 Plan the progression of members both from the Scout Section and into the Rover Section through the Group Council by developing an understanding of the operation of these adjacent Sections.
- 1.7 Establish and maintain friendly relationships with parents, involving them, where appropriate, in the activities. Explain the principles and the reasons behind the Venturer Scout program.
- 1.8 Provide leadership in your Group Council, District Venturer Council and Venturer Scout Section program planning by regular attendance and contribution of new ideas as a model to your Assistant Leaders
- 1.9 Allocate specific responsibilities to all members of your team of Assistant Leaders and Youth Helpers
- 1.10 Ensure appropriate supervision and safety of Venturer Scout Sectional activities
- 1.11 Contribute to the planning, management and conduct of District/Region, Branch and National activities.

**2. REPORTS TO:** Group Leader

**3. RESPONSIBLE:**

- 3.1 For the management of the Venturer Scout Section, its youth members and to undertake Leader training, to the Group Leader.
- 3.2 To provide leadership in their training and development as Leaders, to Assistant Section Leaders.
- 3.3 For program delivery and standards, to the Group Leader, District Leader - Venturer Scouts and to the Venturer Scouts

**4. PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- 4.1 Enthusiasm and a strong commitment to Scouting Principles and Program.
- 4.2 Ability to communicate with and share leadership with other Leaders and adults
- 4.3 Set a high standard of behaviour through personal example to youth & adult members.

- 4.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the role and responsibilities of a Section Leader and a commitment to performing that role as a member of the Group and the District teams.
- 4.5 Be able to motivate, communicate and work effectively with your section youth members
- 4.6 A commitment to complete Basic Training within 6 months.
- 4.7 A commitment to complete Wood Badge Training within 2 years of appointment as Section Leader.

It is desirable that all Section Leaders have a basic knowledge of the educational objectives and program of each Youth Section.

### **Role of the District Leader - Venturer Scouts**

#### **Primary responsibilities**

- Visit or contact all Venturer Scout Units in the District at least once each month.
- Empower, support and train the Venturer Scout Section Leaders in the District: have a resource kit (grab bag) of ideas, skills, games to give during each contact.
- Ensure, through shared leadership, that the District Venturer Council Meeting is effective, valuable and attracts Leaders and Venturer Scouts.
- Be available to be a mentor/buddy/PLA or recommend one, for each new Venturer Scout Adult Leader.
- Be prepared to, and act on, the requests and needs of the Venturer Scout Leaders and Venturer Scouts.
- Enthusiastically promote quality Scouting: 6 to 26 and also be an advocate for the Venturer Scout Section at all times.
- Where necessary temporarily perform the duty of the Venturer Scout Leader in the absence of a qualified Leader.
- For Queen's Scout and Endeavour levels:
  - endorsement of examiners.
  - participate in the Branch moderation process.

#### **Accountable to:**

- District Commissioner, for Venturer Scout Section Program Delivery.
- Relevant Venturer Scout Commissioner (AAC/ARC/BC) for program standards, expertise and guidance.
- Venturer Scout Leaders in the District, as their first line of Program support.

#### **Personal requirements:**

- Enthusiasm and strong commitment to Scout Principles and Program
- Ability to communicate with and motivate Adult Leaders and to work harmoniously with them.
- Demonstrated understanding of the role and responsibilities of a District Leader - Venturer Scouts and a commitment to that role.
- Hold the Venturer Scout Section Wood Badge and basic Leader of Adults training (or undertake to complete the latter within six months of appointment).
- Complete the Leader of Adults Wood Badge within two years of appointment.
- While the primary requirement is to be able to work effectively with Adult Leaders, District Leaders - Venturer Scouts also need to be able to communicate with and work effectively with Venturer Scouts.

#### **Key functions**

1. Preparing today's youth as tomorrow's leaders.
2. Manages all aspects of Venturing in the local District that falls into the category of Program delivery.

**Reports to:**

District Commissioner, and with direct access to the Regional Commissioner Venturer Scouts.

**Duties:**

- Arranges provision of resources, new ideas.
- Visits Units by arrangement and participate in other activities.
- Encourages inter-Unit activities at District and Regional level, especially for new Units.
- Measures Venturer Scout membership penetration, retention and growth.
- Manages the growth activities in the District and Region.

**Leadership and learning:**

- Coordinates District program – Venturer Scouts and Leaders
- Participates in Leader/youth training, especially advice on PLAs.
- Encourages on-going Leader training
- Provides leadership for Units (as required) and plugging gaps in Leader needs
- Builds team cohesion within District
- Assesses District and Unit performance standards
- Attend all required meetings where possible.
- Liaise with Group leaders
- Maintain register of approved examiners.
- Unit viability – report to Region.

**Image and profile:**

- Liaises with local Rover Council/Scout Mindari.
- Liaises with other Organisations
- Promotes the image of Venturer Scouts in the District – Scouting, general, community, behaviour, dress
- Promotes publicity – Founder's Day, National Venture, input to Region newsletter and District Newsletter.

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