

# FACTSHEET

# SCOUT UNIT COUNCIL



For a Scout program to be relevant to the young people that are participating in it, they have to always be involved in its planning and review. The program is fundamental to the success or failure of a Unit. The program must reflect the interests, goals and inspirations of the Scouts that will be participating in it. Unit Councils in the Scout Section are an essential way for Scouts to perform checks and balances on what level of engagement, control and direction they have over the program and their Unit.

In a Scout Unit, the Scouts should be leading the way, setting the agenda, and running the meeting, while the adult Leaders should be supporting and providing guidance when necessary. Within each Scout Unit, there should be a large amount of cross over in leadership as the youth are being (at times) completely autonomous from the adult Leaders.

The Unit Council should occur regularly so that all members that attend maintain a feeling of engagement and direction with the creation of their program and its implementation. A good suggestion of this is having a Unit Council once every 4 to 6 weeks. Not all Unit Councils need to occur in a formal setting, and sometimes it can be very beneficial for creativity and engagement for the Councils to be held in an outdoors environment.

Take time with your Unit Council and adult Leaders to go through the following statements. If you, the youth members, can agree with the statements, then you are on the right track:

- We do the planning and reflection on activities, programs and events with some guidance from adult Leaders
- We ensure that the whole Unit is following a strong Youth Leading, Adults Supporting model through the Patrol system, Plan>Do>Review> cycle, youth engagement in the SPICES and Scout Method
- We discuss and put in place checks and balances of our Unit's application of the Scout Method
- We are solving problems and issues if/when they arise
- We are collaboratively coordinating multi-Section events
- We have a significant position of leadership, allowing us to support the youth members in the Unit in their Scouting journey
- We discuss and endorse the awarding of significant achievements such as the Australian Scout Medallion.
- We set a clear standard of behaviour and support all Unit members in maintaining it
- We actively plan and lead the program and its elements
- Our Unit uses Patrols and Patrols often operate as sole entities. This means doing a balance of Patrol only activities as well as activities with the Unit
- We undergo a constant review of our performance as youth Leaders and adult Leaders

To help make your Unit Council as successful as possible you could do the following:

- Have clear guidance from a Chairperson/person leading the meeting (this should be a youth member)
- Have an appropriate level of support from adult Leaders, and/or Mentors from other Units, especially when specialist knowledge or advice is needed.
- When support and guidance is given, it is at a level where we are not given all the answers and still work together to come up with a solution
- Have and follow a meeting agenda (depending on formality, age of members and location of the meeting)
- Have creative, active time during all Unit Council meetings
- There is engagement and participation from all members present
- Record all the creativity, decisions, discussions and reviewing that occurs in our meeting

For more information about Unit Councils and programming for the Scout Section please refer to the Program Manual, Youth Leading, Adults Supporting documentation and programming support documentation.