

SCOUTS AUSTRALIA YOUTH PROGRAM REVIEW – WEBSITE & EMAIL FEEDBACK

Update 1 – 1/2/14

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
WA	Scout Leader / Group Leader	<p>I am delighted to hear talk of an incremental award scheme across the sections. The highest award in the Cub section prior to the Grey wolf, the yellow cord was seen as a step towards the Pioneer/Explorer/adventurer cords in Scouts and was worn proudly by Cubs linking to scouts. There was also Scout family badges (I can't remember the name precisely) in cubs, the highest level required cubs to find out about the Scout section, the names of leaders and patrol leaders etc. This was very helpful to enable the linking process. It would seem to be beneficial for the highest award in each section to require knowledge of and perhaps preferably some kind of participation with the next section. The awards should certainly also have names that are seen as a progression as they do in the UK.</p> <p>Scouting in the UK has very successfully adopted an icon in Bear Grylls. Where is Australia's Bear Grylls? Perhaps we need to find footy player's and/or Olympic heroes, who were Scouts to speak up. Currently it is an overwhelming battle for our teenagers to stay in Scouts and Venturers because schools are full of peer pressure and Scouting is not seen to be cool. One problem here is still the uniform, which should take its lead from what our teens are willing to wear (given some adult common sense too!) - there was a major mistake with the last uniform review in that the new uniform was designed to be worn tucked in, when teens considered that it was 'gay' to tuck in a shirt. The old Khaki shirt was also more comfortable in a hot climate.</p> <p>I have had a close involvement in the award scheme from Joeys through to Venturers and would be delighted to be involved in the review.</p>	<p>Award Scheme</p> <p>Image – Chief Scout - Uniform</p>
SA	VL	<p>I am pretty new to Scouts; my son joined in April this year and I have only recently been invested myself. I have no history with scouting as a child.</p> <p>In the middle of this year, I was asked to become a VL and start a new Venturer Unit, and I was keen to do so, largely so my son could continue this scouting, which he loves so much, for as long as he chose.</p> <p>However I VERY nearly quit before I began!!</p> <p>The internal politics, the instant (and VERY negative) pressure, plus the emotional roller-coaster I was put through to start with was enough to make any sane person walk away.</p> <p>Even now, these are a current and ongoing theme I see others being subjected to, and it's caused excellent leaders to move on after only a few months or a year of service. Still other parents won't step up into leadership positions for fear of the same turmoil entering their own lives.</p> <p>I am still happy to be a VL, because the youths are amazing, and so is the potential.</p> <p>But I find myself feeling extremely cautious, half expecting the pressure put on me to escalate again, at any time. It makes it very difficult to commit long term to the group, even though I am loving scouting and working with the Unit as a whole. I have to keep a door open in my mind, just in case it happens again; and so have other leaders, as demonstrated very recently.</p>	<p>Leaders – Time Commitment – Cost - Pressures</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>In addition, the financial pressure is already beginning to become prohibitive for me - fuel costs, in particular. The advice I have received is that it is not normal practice for leaders to be reimbursed fuel, and that my seeking costs associated with travel will place an enormous burden on Scouts and families.</p> <p>However, my fuel bill has more than doubled - sometimes MUCH more - because so much of what the children choose to do or what we as leaders are expected and required to do is at a large distance away for me; for example the leader training courses, and DVC meetings.</p> <p>As a single parent in part-time work, there just isn't enough extra cash in my account to cover this - and groceries too.</p> <p>What the leaders do reverberates throughout the whole group. To turn potential and currently successful leaders away by political and emotional wrangling will collapse the system as a whole, eventually.</p> <p>Right now, there are no leaders to take the place of the ones who have just left, and every one of us has been affected.</p> <p>We must address this matter URGENTLY if Scouting is to survive, and remain respected in SA.</p>	
Queensland	Ex-leader	<p>I joined as a scout leader as my sons, then cubs, would soon be advancing to scouts and there was no current scout leader at the time. I eventually quit due to study and work commitments.</p> <p>During my time as a leader, I saw a great deal of enthusiasm for the philosophy of scouting among other leaders. I also saw this enthusiasm suffer at the hands of the hierarchy who I must say seemed to take it on themselves to make the very nature of what we were trying to accomplish with our scouts as officious and difficult as possible. This wasn't all due to the megalomania shown by regional leaders, many of the fun-cramping, over-protective directives came from Scouts Queensland. As an example, I wasn't allowed to let mt scouts climb the tree outside the den or build a ropes course that was more than 1 metre from the ground. I completely understood the guidelines on protecting the scouts from predators, but to have to complete a risk assessment for a game of tiggy on a little-used bitumen car park area was in my view a little over the top.</p> <p>I know of a number of good leaders who were either forced out or quit because of the regional management. These were leaders who brought good energy and dedication to the role and now they're gone. The lesson here is if you take the enthusiasm away from the J/C/S/V/R leadership, then the scouting experience will suffer and youth members will find other activities to fulfill them.</p> <p>I have re-read this and I do sound quite negative. Usually I revise what I have written to make it sound more balanced, but in this case, I have left it \raw\" because that's how my experience as a scout leader left me feeling. I hope that you can find something constructive from this review reply and that it helps make the scouting experience for current &amp; future youth members more enjoyable."</p>	<p>ScoutSafe Issues</p> <p>Leader Management</p>
Victoria	AC - Joey Scouts	<p>I believe many of the programs and badges for the Joey Scout section are completed by early childhood centres and kindergarten these days. As we are a section that only has school aged children I think our program needs to be updated ensuring we keep up with the youth we currently have and that will join Scouting. I am very passionate and would love to be part of the YPR. Thank you.</p>	Award Scheme
QLD	Mother of a cub, a scout	<p>The registration fees are ridiculously expensive. As a committee member I can see that a large portion of what a group collects goes to branch to pay for insurances and god knows what else. This makes it really hard for the scouting movement to compete with other youth organisations.</p>	Costs

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
	and an upcoming joey		
Victoria	Cubs Scout Leader	<p>Great to see a review happening!</p> <p>I was recently in NZ and saw a Cub Scout Record book there. The NZ one made the Australian Cub Scout Record Book (the yellow book) look like a university text book. How can we keep Cubs interested if they are faced with a book that looks like a government rules book? Please let's design the books that are for Cubs, for Cubs!</p>	Award Scheme
NSW		<p>The following is from a recent letter I wrote to Scouts Australia regarding a specific pack's practices but also regarding the religious aspects of scouting in Australia in general. The letter was largely ignored. I removed my son from the pack in question to 1st Boronia.</p> <p>I acknowledge that the Scouting organisation has a legal right to exercise whatever religious practices it wants and to insist that members observe those practices, however continuing to insist on these will condemn the organisation to obscurity in the long run.</p> <p>The current resurgence in Scouting membership is not grounds for perpetuating the adherence to dogmatic practices. On the contrary – it should be grounds for acknowledging the success of flexibility in the foundations of the movement.</p> <p>I believe that for Scouting Australia to continue along the road of increased religious observance will result in a winding back of the excellent progress the organisation has made in recent years to increase its membership and relevance to the Australian community.</p> <p>Although the Scouting movement has made some attempts at inclusion such as allowing allegiance to one's own God (or Gods) this specifically excludes religions such as Buddhism (which does not profess belief in a particular omnipotent identity) and Judaism (which prohibits reference to such an identity). It obviously also specifically excludes agnostics and atheists.</p> <p>The original Scouting promise includes “duty to God and the King” which reflects the Anglican traditions of the time and place where it was written. References to the King have been replaced in nearly all variations with allegiance to Country or Queen. Baden Powell originally approved a change to the Promise to remove any reference to God for several European countries. This demonstrates that he had no intention to exclude non-religious variations to the Scouting formula. Baden Powell's gravestone does not feature any religious symbol – only the travelers' “Going home” symbol, the Scout Fleur-de-lis and a clover leaf.</p> <p>One of the key aims of Scouting as I understand it is to develop in children a sense of right and wrong, good manners and caring for others. Various types of religious beliefs claim that religious education is the best (or possibly only) way to instill these values. A large proportion of the community would beg to differ. Scouting has a very worthwhile place in our society and in particular, my son has gained a lot of confidence and developed his social skills from being part of Joeys and Cubs.</p> <p>When I applied to have my son join Joeys and Cubs, there was no advice that membership of the organisation required participation in religious ceremony or activities. If membership of the organisation requires this participation, it should be very clearly stated in writing on the application material and in its publications.</p>	<p>Promise</p> <p>AoPG - Spiritual</p>
GWS Region	Region Commissioner	A review of this nature is certainly long overdue, and I do commend all involved with getting this process underway. My only concern at this point is we are still trying to sort the SIS10 training. Should we not try and finish one project first before taking on	Adult Training

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
NSW	Activities	another one. I would suggest however, the whole concept of SIS10 (external accreditation) marketed correctly, could be a valuable tool, as part of the overall review process.	
NSW	ACSL	A major barrier for cubs in an increasing secular society is the concept of \Duty to God\". I think the Guiding Movement has done well with its renewal of its promise \to be true to my beliefs\". Too many scouting policies are too Christian/monotheistic in their outlook and execution. Even the concept -Duty to God- compromises those who say worship a Goddess or have polytheistic beliefs. It also suggests that spiritual development needs to be theist- centric rather than any other way being valid. This discourages children at the earliest points. Scouting can promote spirituality without promoting theism. Many parents will not allow children to join organisations with theistic agendas. These are kids that could benefit from scouting (because most kids could benefit from scouting) - not through us changing their beliefs (as I believe this is *not* the role of the scout leader and the current approach to spirituality makes me uncomfortable in its clumsy execution) but by helping them explore them - and many will be excluded at the get go. Something I love about cubs is the idea that I can encourage kids to \do their best\" - this is at the heart of everything we do and is a lovely standard for helping with badgework awards. I'm very glad for this opportunity."	Promise AoPG - Spirituality
QLD	Parent	My sons joined Scouts in 2010 and I have played an active role in the fundraising and general behind the scenes running of the group. One area that I think could be quickly improved is to have all registered members on a list and when someone leaves ask them why. Since I have seen many keen and active children leave this particular group because of bullying, lack of program and inequality, until the regional group members feel like the organisation is open and transparent then really we are just pawns for the Leaders to use in the advancement of their own children.	Exit interviews
QLD	Section Leader Cub Scouts	There is a wide divide between Cub Scouts and Scouts that is hard to jump for some Cubs. My experience is that one who achieves a great deal in Cubs then faces having to essentially start again in Scouts, at an age when this is a big issue for them. It is very easy for a Cub to define the end of their scouting Journey once they have completed Cubs because there is no seamless continuation of challenges because a whole new award scheme replaces the Cub one which is finished on completion of Cubs, and there are so many other challenging opportunities out there. The continuation of a part of an award scheme into Scouts that is not completed in Cubs I think would help to retain members interest and motivation to continue into Scouts.  For example the Grey Wolf Award is achieved in Cubs before they move to Scouts, however it might be beneficial to have a large part of Grey Wolf Award completed in Cubs and then continue the award requirements into Scouts with the award presented at some intermediary level in Scouts. I know this would not be popular amongst some Cub Leaders and Cubs, but we need some good reasons to encourage members to move up to the next section and having some major awards conducted within and between sections I believe would help.	Linking One Program Award Scheme
Queensland	Cub Scout Leader	With my Cubs I have found that they want more hands on activities and learning things their way. They want more of a say on what they do and where. I have only been a leader for the last 12 months and had problems with the original leader. She had no control over them and sat them down and did boring things and paper work and repeated the same games. They had no outings because she couldn't do weekends. She has finally left after alot of kids left. Our biggest impact was mother's night for mother's day where she had the boys pampering mum with manicures, pedicures, facials and massages. We lost 3 boys just from that night. I took full control of the pack in June and since then we have had strong attendance, new chums join, more activities, pack council, sixer and second (never had one before), the cubs are responsible for their own actions and came up with a rule list and consequences. The sixer and second meet with me to help program the next term, camps, outings. We have new games every week, bring a friend nights every term that are always themed and cover our work. The best part about it is that the Cubs are having fun and half the time they don't even realise we are doing badge work and therefore they are remembering the information better when they are asked questions a few weeks later. We have play acting and they even run their own fundraisers now to help pay for their camps.  I find that if they are involved and the programs are exciting and fun and if the leaders enjoy themselves as well that it helps with attendance because they are looking forward to the next night or for the upcoming camp. As alot of my Cubs are moving up next	Program Behaviour Management Why Kids Leave Technology

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>year they are even helping me find recruits for Cubs by encouraging their friends to come along. Sometimes even their friends' siblings have attended as well.</p> <p>I have noticed lately with our group that the kids have been leaving because they are bored, they aren't part of the team, the leader does the same thing over and over. We have had the biggest problem with the Scouts as they don't have a qualified leader but an experienced cub leader who is overseeing it all. If we had the resources to make it more fun and get them doing more with qualified scout leaders we will find that attendance is better and we wouldn't lose as many.</p> <p>Another thing is that the kids are very tech savy and don't like to part with their phones or games and this is causing problems as well. Also with the different learning difficulties we are finding that some kids isolate themselves and don't want to participate in group activities which is what a main part of scouting is really about.</p>	
South Australia	ACSL	<p>homesickness strategies which can be used within the weekly program to get cubs used to being away from home and taking responsibility for themselves. If they are going to be part of the movement they will not always be around a parent or caregiver. Time keeping needs to be addressed. Our program starts at 6.30. If cubs arrive late they will find the door is locked to all until opening ceremony is finished. Better communication from parents and caregivers if their child will not be attending as this can impact on program delivery. Our cubs should have access to the leadership courses which can be easily accessed to metropolitan cubs and scouts. This training would encourage youth members to continue on their scouting path and add to group wellbeing as a whole. Kids leave scouts because they can sense the tension and difficulties between leaders in the team. Too many chiefs and not enough indians in leadership with their own agenda which is picked up by youth and parents. too much conflict in leadership is swept under the carpet or ignored. leaders are not dealing with issues which filter down the line to youth and parents. leaders backstab and gossip to those outside the leadership group, not contacting directly the person they have an issue with. This creates a negative work environment within the entire group. resolving conflict within groups needs to be a priority for both youth and leaders. Our youth are excluded from activities held in the metro area by the costs associated and other logistics required. Financial assistance and logistic support of suitable alternatives could make a difference to non metropolitan participants.</p>	<p>Independence</p> <p>Program Delivery</p> <p>Youth Leadership Training</p> <p>Leader Hierarchy</p>
NSW	ACSL	<p>"The Interim Report is definitely thought provoking and the logical part of me things it good. The emotional part of me kept seeing red. Was the leaders under 30 that first really got to me, I do not think our group has any so if that's a new rule then we would close down. Scouting is different we do not want to be the same, its not a commercial venture. We have to keep our numbers large enough to be sustainable or we all suffer so we cannot continue to shrink. Both my kids left scouting. Happy at some stage to get them to give the reasons. Both times it was going up to the next section.</p>	<p>Adults In Scouting</p> <p>Burning Issues</p>
WA	Scout Leader	<p>I originally became involved in Scouting as a "Wolf Cub" in 1960 (no the last of the dinosaurs had already died out!). I left Scouting in 1975 when I joined the RAAF. My daughter joined Cubs in 2005 and within 2 years I was back as a Scout Leader. And I still love Scouting.</p> <p>However some of the things I believe need attention are:</p> <p>Leaders get told info at Mundari™s which is expressed as gospel e.g. Scouts can't use gas lights any more must have electric lanterns, OK who came up with this, where is it written and who is going to pay for them? I run a small Troop, 11 Scouts and at the beginning of 2013 it was 5 Scouts, we cannot afford to buy new tents, let alone expensive electric lanterns</p> <p>Scouts Australia have a good set of written policies, published on the internet and in printed form, however, these are broad policies. What leaders, particularly new leaders need is access to documented procedures to help with the day to day running of a Mob, Pack, Troop or Unit. For example, Leaders get told that there must be a female adult present if female Scouts are going to be on a camp, what do you do if you don't have a female leader?</p> <p>The Troop I am with was located in a 1920s constructed timber hall it was old but it was ours, there was another Scout hall in the area, we wanted to use that hall but Branch gave us no support and the Hall was demolished, now we have lost our hall and it is</p>	<p>Policy Communication</p> <p>Procedures for Policy</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Ethnicity Support</p> <p>Symbolic Framework (Jungle Book)</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>to be demolished. Branch has given us no support and left us paying expensive rent with no storage facility with only 11 Scouts to fund the rent!</p> <p>It would be extremely helpful if Branch were to have a list of support people within different religions or ethnic groups to assist leaders. I have had a Hindu Scout and now have a Muslim Scout. Information on religious, dietary and custom requirements straight from an expert source would be better than internet searches.</p> <p>In our area we have a couple of Groups who have waiting lists and we need more Scouts but these Groups do not refer these waiting kids to us, it is only a couple of kilometres extra to our Group.</p> <p>Cost is comparable to sports with membership for a "season" six months verse Scouts for a year, sports with shirts and shorts, sox special boots etc.</p> <p>How many Cub Leaders have read the Jungle Book? Read the book not watched the fictional modern animated cartoon which is nothing like the book.</p> <p>My favorite subject the uniform, it should be worn as per the policy, no jeans, no colourful runners, shirts tucked in, scarf correctly rolled, belt worn. My personal opinion is that the shirt could be changed not from the present colours but add a second pocket and epaulets, make it look like a uniform shirt.</p>	Uniform
		<p>As a non believer I've always found it troubling to lie on oath and I'm not alone. I've had parents take their children away from participating in scouts because they didn't want their children involved in what seems to be at face value a religious organisation.</p> <p>We should adopt the UK method of allowing an alternative promise that doesn't mention god. This would be of a great service to other leaders, parents and scouts alike.</p>	Spiritual Promise
NSW	ACSL	<p>Halls are generally old and need a lot of maintenance. It adds character but at times it looks really bad for potential members. Also means a lot more work for leaders to keep things running. We have a large group but the small old hall on small land is a challenge.</p> <p>Training to me has lost the reason I enjoyed it so much. Its now sit at home in front of a computer, I do that for work every day. The weekends were great and you met lots of people and exchanged ideas. Maybe there can be options to mix the two for those who can't get the time to spend a weekend.</p> <p>I am sure this is not unique but paper work. I takes a lot of time. Every group has to come up with its own IT solutions to do the same thing every group does. We cannot use the online data Scouts already has, I know the paper work is a must but we need to get the applications to make it easier.</p> <p>You cannot support more youth without the leaders. We have lots of leaders and hence can do lots of programming and events. Which means youth do not leave and we have waiting lists. Also we mix sections with leaders from every section known by all sections, We have Scouts visit Cubs, Cubs visit Joeys. Sometime the lower section has a joint night with the higher section. Sometimes I think the issue can be leaders staying too long in a role and not changing with the times. We change leaders a bit too regularly in our group but it definitely keeps things fresh and interesting, We do have trouble though as we are not always seen as old enough or having been in Scouting long enough to be taken seriously. We need a mix of freshness and experience or Scouting may get stuck in the past.</p> <p>As for the actual youth program I don't really think that is an issue. You interpret it for the child and the times. Scouting must stay</p>	Facilities Leader Training Managing Leaders Supporting the program

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>about the out doors about experiences many children do not get at home, even as basic as lighting a match. Yes we do not use gas lighting any more but boy the Scouts enjoy that night when you teach them about it and private people can still use gas lighting. So lets not change the program too much but lets look at the supporting infrastructure from Buildings, IT and leaders.</p>	
NSW		<p>Read the review proposal with interest. Unfortunately nowhere did I notice integration with the wider Australian program of schooling, sports etc. From both a leaders as well as parents perspective it is incredibly difficult trying to fit activities in with school exams, club sport and other activities etc. Other than suggesting greater engagement with schools to “unify” activities in some way I unfortunately do not have any suggestions. I have however heard stories of overseas school starting to base their ethics around scouting as a way of avoiding religious bias.</p>	School connectedness
		<p>The Jungle Book is a lovely story but I find it difficult to incorporate into the program.  The cubs find it a bit too young and they are not interested.  They love anything outdoors.  Building shelters, fires, walks.  It is a wonderful change from the technology they all love using.  Kids have so much at their finger tips I am challenged each week to offer something new and exciting. Many things they have done at school.  The programming is the part that as a Leader I struggle with getting new and relevant things for 7 1/2 to 10 year olds such a big difference in ages and capabilities.  My three boys have all thrived on scouting though and I am very pleased to be involved with the organisation. It's just a matter of moving with the times.  Well done everyone for the wonderful work they do.</p>	<p>Symbolic Framework (Jungle Book)</p> <p>Outdoors</p>
Qld		<p>One of the issues I faced as a leader was disagreeing with the regional commissioner and even went down the path of putting a formal complaint in. She is still in and I was removed by rumour when I moved to Mackay and she spread rumours here which made it impossible to continue in scouting.</p> <p>My son joined the local venturer unit and found he did not enjoy the program so re-joined the old one in Maryborough QLD. This has been fine up until the regional commissioner moved Venturers from the group it was under to HER group (the one she supports the most). This has meant that most of the Venturers have now left and my son was informed tonight he could no longer be a Venturer unless he re-joined the group here. He has now left the movement.</p> <p>If you want to know why the membership is falling, I would say it is fairly and squarely the leadership of the movement. Too many people in the movement for some perceived level of social empowerment rather than in it for the kids. This is the problem with the regional commissioner. She bullies anyone who disagrees with her. I managed to get the local campsite into the black for the first time in its life (some 60 years), the tools I used have been slowly degraded until it again relies on the regional commissioner and her husband to fundraise for it. It is this she uses to exert control over the site and region.</p> <p>While you have leaders in your mix that bully people and exert control over others for their own self-esteem, and while they are protected by the leadership in each state scouts will always have a falling membership.</p> <p>As a manager of companies, former NCO in the Army and now a teacher I understand one thing – all business rot from the top, it is and always will be leadership that stuffs an organisation. It is also strong leadership that realises they have to do a little culling of poor performing leaders that can grow an organisation.</p> <p>Scouts is relevant in today's society, it is a pity you have leaders that do not understand how today's kids think and what they need. Nor do they wish to want to know as they are trapped in the archaic, imperialistic, controlling and very ancient set of ideals</p>	<p>Adult Management</p> <p>Bullying</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>that do not allow for their growth through constructive criticism – nor do they understand that respect is earned through deeds and how they treat people not taken because you have some perceived power from a title.</p>	
SA	Former member	<p>I have been wrestling with this since it was sent to me by a friend still involved in scouting.</p> <p>I looked at some of these questions back in 2006 and at the end of 2009 and presented the findings to people at branch (SA) and someone involved at National level and no one was interested. I also touched on these issues when applying for the position of CC both nationally and at Branch level and there was no interest. In fact, I would suggest that pointing out that there were problems in scouting was to my detriment. From that I can only conclude that scouting does not want leaders with vision they prefer managers towing the party line...</p> <p>However, in answer to your questions, The customer is both parent and child. The YM wants to have fun, the parent wants them to learn life skills etc. This is why the ads run on TV have limited effect as while they show kids having fun, the parents don't have a compelling reason to pay the money and provide the transport. My suggestion was a 2 pronged advertising campaign with radio or print being used to lay out the benefits to parents. This was my woodbead project. As I had to fight to get it accepted, I dare say it went nowhere. Having thrown away nearly 100 years of branding by adopting a blue uniform, scouting have also disappointed parents and older relatives who fondly remember their time in scouts. When I mentioned this to a friend who works in marketing, he was amazed that any organisation could be that stupid. Having seen the membership numbers nationwide, I note that the introduction of this uniform has not done anything to arrest membership decline</p> <p>From the limited data available (Scouts don't collect and keep the right stats) I managed to synthesise some figures on membership retention in SA. In a nut shell cubs is the fertile recruiting ground. YMs of scout age are starting to think scouts may not be cool and Joey age they are doing what their parents suggest. Cub age provides the opportunity to plant the seed of scouting. Having produced these figures I did suggest a program of following up on YMs leaving needed to be instituted to better ascertain reasons but nothing was done. I also suggested that having booths at schools during primary school parent teacher nights (when parents are concerned about their child doing well) would be a good idea but again...</p> <p>In SA we were also recently hampered by a CC who did not have any experience as a LOY and an ACC Adventurous who was risk averse. A lot of activities that kids like doing were stopped or so restricted that they may well have been. Although I pushed for it for several years, I don't believe that the 2006 National risk management plan has been fully implemented in SA yet. I certainly didn't hear of any serious attempts at reforming the controls in SS&amp;P in line with recognised risk assessment procedures. My favourite example was in case of a tent fire YM's were meant to roll out under the side flaps of the tent. Failing that, using their pocket knives cut through the tent to escape. Unfortunately, most tents have sewn in ground sheets and kids have been banned from having knives for some time now.</p> <p>Apart from changing meeting nights and possibly clashing with other events, YMs moving up to the next section has become expensive with every section having their own distinct uniform. When a LOY we told parents of older kids to buy the next section's shirt when their child grew but then used to get in trouble from people further up the food chain for not enforcing uniform policy. What do scouting want? A uniform section look or members continuing on? Another advantage of seeking feedback when YM's leave is suggesting alternate groups around the district that may meet on a more convenient night. Due to the recent amalgamation of groups in SA, it is one more thing add to the workload of district leaders.</p>	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Adventurous Activities</p> <p>Uniform</p>
	Ex Member	<p>It is interesting to read your own statistics on youth membership and your decision to review your offering. A 75% drop in per capita membership even after doubling your client base. You really have dropped the ball.</p> <p>Being a youth organisation of course the youth should have a say but at what age group are you talking about. An eight year old does not know what they really want or how to express it or they may ask for the impossible.</p>	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Leave Scouts</p> <p>Adults in Scouting</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>Why do parents send their kids to Scouts?. Because you promise to give their children experiences they don't have the time or the ability or the wherewithal to do themselves.</p> <p>Why do kids leave Scouts?. Because you fail to deliver on your promises.</p> <p>This is not your fault. You genuinely try. But with leaders too caught up with the near full time role of trying to run a scout group without help because you scare away all potential helpers and with these leaders unable to provide the promised experiences themselves because they don't have the abilities or time or have the nerve to break out of their own comfort zones this is not going to change.</p> <p>No organisation can function properly with one person trying to do everything themselves. This includes individual scout units.</p> <p>There is also one position only at unit level. Advanced leader or nothing. No different roles for people with different abilities or personalities.</p> <p>Not everyone cares about badges, they go there just for fun.</p> <p>With all the pressure on teenagers with having to go all the way through school, HSC, part time jobs and parents, scouts should be an escape and not just more work.</p> <p>It is impossible for the scouting movement to exist without adults. Why does this review not mention how to get adults interested and involved and how to retain adult membership. You can ask the youth all you want but without adults your wasting your time.</p> <p>Having been helping out at the local High School with their Duke of Ed hikes as a parent helper, that is helping the leader organise and run the walks , I joined a scout group in the Hunter Region this year as a way of expanding on this experience I thoroughly enjoy. Was very unimpressed. I wanted to help. Having over two decades of experience in kayaking, sailing and hiking every weekend I thought I could. Turns out the only way an adult can help is to become a full advanced leader and do it in the allotted time or you get kicked out. Seems your not interested in taking on the people willing to provide the activities you promise but fail dismally to supply. Only interested in full advanced leaders.</p> <p>Having a full time job, young family and my own interests it was too much an ask to take on another demanding role that would use up all my spare time. I did not want to be a leader in charge and thought the training requirements for just wanting to help out (become a full advanced leader or get lost) were way too onerous. Seriously – a certificate 3 in business management just to help out on an overnight hike, drive kids to a regional event or to do the cooking at a camp!. I was quite prepared to help out and to do all the activity courses to maximise my ability to help but then had my membership cancelled after voicing my opinion. Turns out your not interested in why you struggle to retain adults in your organisation. No adults - no scouts.</p> <p>I am willing to bet junior soccer coaches, footy coaches, athletics coaches and so on are not required to get a certificate 3 in business management to run a local sports group. Am most definitely prepared to put money on it that their canteen ladies don't have one either or are forced to get one under the threat of being kicked out if they don't.</p> <p>Different roles for different people. Canteen ladies don't want to coach, just help out while still being a member and feeling included. Feeling included, the most important thing to get anyone to stay.</p> <p>At organised school camps I am sure the activity leaders all have the relevant qualifications to run the camps but that not all employees are required to get a certificate 3 in business management under the threat of losing their job.</p> <p>I am not saying that the leaders in charge should not have this qualification (they probably should) only that not everyone needs to have one to be able to help if there is already a leader with the qualification.</p> <p>Why am I writing?. After being kicked out I still get emails from Scouts. Every time I reply and ask them to remove my name from</p>	<p>Policy Communication</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>their database but it does not happen. Might as well continue to voice my opinion.</p> <p>Yes I joined scouts with a lot of enthusiasm but my experience turned out very bad and I have a sour opinion now. But I would hope you can improve on the way you treat adults and your expectations of them in your organisation so that others feel prepared to not only try scouts but choose to stay on and help. In the last 30 years not only has your membership shrunk by 75% (per capita) but families have changed to two income families with a lot more pressure on their available spare time and a lot more options in how to spend their limited spare time and extra income.</p> <p>In my short time with scouts I saw the canoes and sailing dinghies sitting in the shed covered in a thick layer of dust and falling into disrepair. Upon visiting other units I witnessed the same thing. Canoes sitting there covered in a thick layer of dust, no means to transport them, and no one with the qualifications to use them. This is never going to change if you do not change your expectations on adults to make scouts easier and more enjoyable and not just more hard work with little benefit.</p> <p>What your doing now is not working (your going backwards) and if you keep doing things the same way you will continue to get the same results.</p>	
		<p>I am a cub scout leader in Subiaco in WA and would like to provide some feedback on the current Boomerang program for Cubs which I believe is out of date and can be hard to make exciting for cubs</p> <p>The highly prescriptive "tick box" format restricts the possibilities for creative programming</p> <p>I believe a more flexible and general set of activities would allow cub leaders to interpret them in many different ways and keep the program fresh and exciting for the youth members</p> <p>I would like to provide more detailed feedback.</p> <p>Can you please tell me how I can formally provide my ideas and suggestions?</p>	Award Scheme
ACT	Activities Leader	<p>Having spent over 20 years now repositioning Scouting as a leader training organisation rather than a youth activities organisation, why are you surprised kids are walking out the door?</p> <p>Faced with increasing competition, we put all our effort into professional-level leader training, requiring more and more commitment, in defiance of a strong trend towards people wanting to contribute more flexibly and the plain fact that plenty of other organisations were offering similar activities. It's great that we have accredited training courses on offer, except not everyone wants or needs professional qualifications to contribute. The training and accreditation burden has placed a substantial overhead on leader training, such that many people just can't be bothered. So you have less leaders. So you have more pressure on the remainder. So you can't offer the breadth of program. So you do less. Repeat. Accredited training should be available but not everyone needs it. We went the wrong way on this one.</p> <p>Scouting started with the program, and it is the only thing that will keep people in. I think we need to get back to the core of facilitating youth members 'learning by doing', which is what is different and positive about Scouting -- you can pay your money and be a customer, or you can join Scouting and learn to do it yourself. It's hard to get as excited about being a customer as it is about having adventures of your own. It's somewhat inevitable that a large organisation will become more conservative and lose the edge that made it great, but that's the edge we need to sharpen. I would strongly encourage you to consider all suggestions against the criteria, does it empower youth members?, and does it expand the program? More of the same isn't working.</p>	<p>Leader Training</p> <p>Learning by Doing</p> <p>Marketing</p> <p>Young Leaders</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>While I'm at it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enough about marketing already -- we haven't convinced people to stop calling us Boy Scouts in 40 years since admitting girls, so I don't have faith in our marketing efforts</li> <li>• the marketing I believe in is the program -- every youth member needs to have stories about the cool things they do to blow the 'knots in halls' stereotype right out of the water (UK Scouting's Bear Grylls advantage)</li> <li>• this email invited me to contribute to the blog but there isn't one, just a form that doesn't obviously go anywhere</li> <li>• with apologies to many committed leaders, some still wonderfully young at heart, I still think the Dutch and a few others are on the right track banning middle-aged and elderly people from youth leadership positions -- does your local Group _look_ like a youth movement when you attend Group Council?</li> <li>• uniform fails the 'empower and expand' tests</li> <li>• how about we act on the market research this time?</li> </ul> <p>There aren't enough weekends in the year to maintain activity leader accreditations.</p>	
	GL	<p>I believe we need to also look at cost of Scouts. I have only been involved in Scouts for past 5 months and have reviewed fee increases over past 3 years. In 2011 the quarterly registration fee was \$26 as per documentation held by our treasurer, in 2014 it will be \$36 – an increase in \$10 over 3 years – sounds small but it is 38% increase or 12.66% pa. Now I realise that costs go up but my wage along with most members parents their income has not increased the same – mine has gone up 7.5% over 3 years.</p> <p>In comparison my son also has soccer and cricket during the year at a total cost including equipment/ clothing etc of \$185. My stepson attends Army Cadets at Maitland at a cost of \$50 per term and this does include all uniform, boots, hat, socks.</p> <p>Our group in Muswellbrook charges \$75 per quarter and this does not cover our annual cost – we have calculated that we need to charge \$113 per quarter to cover. Parents involvement is low so fundraising is up to 3 to 4 people and really struggling to survive. Funding from external sources being sought continuously now but our group missed the good times of mining and never applied for any grants, now getting knock backs everywhere. Since I have taken GL role I have applied for \$38K in funding – hoping some positive results one day. Grants will not cover running costs only purchase of equipment and maintenance sometimes. Buildings getting old, no maintenance done for years, urgent work needs to be done – no support from upper levels.</p> <p>How do we compare in cost – very poorly. I am about to conduct a survey of all States to see if their fees have increase similar to ours in NSW and will be writing to State if their is anomalies in fee amounts/ rises over past 3 years.</p> <p>I also see Regions as support groups but seem to be running in a management way. The threats of closing groups if we do not comply is not an effective way to look after groups and have urgent works completed by VOLUNTEERS. I have recently received a memo from Region/ State re Annual Fire Statement saying that if not complying by 31/1/2014 we will be closed down until we do. These audits should have been done in 2000, mismanagement by someone high up and now we get threatened, yes threatened to completed urgently. If my work supervisor did this we would be now be sitting in the Industrial Relations Commission. Maybe our support areas need re training in how to deal with people.</p>	<p>Cost of Scouting</p> <p>Support from Regions</p>
NSW	Scout Leader in charge, Abseil Instructor,	<p>With the change-over to the SIS10 Adventurous Activity qualifications, there needs to be an easy and clear RPL process for those of us leaders who already have the skills and knowledge to fulfill the qualification. This needs to involve not attending long weekends and weeks of courses where the basics are gone over, paperwork is filled in, and we learn nothing new - and it needs to be relatively inexpensive - both monetarily and time-wise. Busy Scout Leaders who have multiple rolls in Scouting (and in life, because remember, busy people do LOTS of things and not just in scouting) need to be able to convert their skills to the new</p>	<p>Adventurous Activity Leader Training</p> <p>Award Scheme</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
	First Aid Instructor	<p>system without too much time input (which they have already done in the past getting their current qualifications and skills). If this is not done, many Scout Troops/Groups will be unable to do adventurous activities because their leaders' qualifications (which were perfectly fine last week) are now not valid.</p> <p>Also, the Green Scout Badge work book needs a major overhaul. It references itself far too much - so one item could count for many things. Some Scout leaders allow this, others do not and Scouts are redoing things over and over just to fulfill the multiple references to the same thing. ALSO, gliding is no longer accessible to NSW Scouts because the Gliding wing was shut down AND it was also too expensive to do 2 trips in a glider! But there is so much more that needs reviewing. The book is very confusing.</p> <p>The Maroon Venturer Book needs an overhaul because there are multiple places where a signature is required for the completion of one badge. This gets confusing and Venturers are forever chasing signatures to complete the book because they were unaware of the need for multiple signatures.</p>	
WA	ACSL	<p>One of the burning issues today is that of consistency across Australia. Youth these days are in touch instantly with youth in other states and they do not understand when the top awards in a section have different requirements or when the uniforms are different for example. Families move around Australia too and there needs to be a system where membership can be transferred to another state without having to pay new fees. Moving scout youth members also are taken back when they find their new branch has extra/ different requirements for badges. I see this as a major issue. Families within a branch also are disgruntled when they try to help their children follow the requirements in the section record book then find that the branch has extra requirements. This causes people to lose faith in the association.</p> <p>Somehow the national association needs to ensure that each branch/ state runs scouting , especially the award scheme and the top awards, in the same way.</p>	<p>Consistency nationally between branches</p> <p>Award scheme</p>
Queensland	joey scout	<p>I have been a leader at different levels-youth- cub scouts and joey scouts. I have also been a leader of adults cub scout section. There have been substantial changes. Commitment to an activity was almost 100%. I have found joey scout parents reluctant to allow their child to attend camps. I have found that even if the parents are allowed to accompany their child that the child may come for a part of the camp.I have had to allow part attendance. This includes both section,group and region camps. Regulations and cost have now restricted where we can hold camps. There are fewer privately run recreational camps. We use to have at least 4 here now there is one and the cost of going is prohibitive. In saying that scouting parents and leaders are still charging and expecting prices we charged back in 1987!!!</p> <p>There is not the commitment by youth and parents that there was when I started in scouts. The social changes such as joint custody, FIFO workforce and deregulated working hours have all played a part in this. I have had to shorten camps and allow a more family camp atmosphere to get people to attend.</p> <p>Leaders are constantly blamed for fall in membership. I have had youth as keen as mustard but one of the parents will block the child. On more than one occasion a parent has old me in no uncertain terms that it is nothing to do with the program I run Lack of family finance is cited, other parent objection,guardianship changes,sport training sessions, no system in place for those looking for a scout group. One many occasions parents have told me of difficulties in locating a scout group. Perhaps a central contact, not a group with vested interests, needs to be listed in phone book and as many other public outlets as possible. There have been instances of a groups with number in phone book enrolling youth in their groups. This may seem trivial but it was at the expense of other groups with fully trained leaders. In one case the section youth were being enrolled in had parents running the section!</p> <p>Award schemes in cub scouts and joey scouts need to be reviewed It is much easier for me to get youth to cover short term event</p>	<p>Adults in Scouting</p> <p>Award scheme</p> <p>Adult leadership</p> <p>Program</p> <p>Age Range</p> <p>Uniform</p> <p>Communication</p>

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>badges. These are one good thing that we could expand on. I have noticed that the work load in cub scout section is onerous.. I have run the 2 sections together in recent years. Back in the 60's the award scheme for cub scouts was under weighted. Gradually the expectations grew to the ridiculous. Setting realistic badge requirements would hopefully eliminate some of the tick and flick which is currently occurring. There are definitely instances of this practice. I know of a whole pack of 12 receiving their bronze boomerang at the same time! Youth receiving badges that I have had to spoon feed youth through over a period of weeks in order to cover the requirements. I have witnessed whole sections receive achievement/challenge badges when they have only covered one part of a badge which may have another 3or 4 mandatory requirements</p> <p>Conflict resolution- We have people in higher positions who have no skills at all and in fact cause more problems. There is usually very little effort to be proactive and get out and about to find out what is really happening in other sections and groups. I have seen a number of good leaders leave because of failure of matters to be investigated properly.</p> <p>The hierarchy can lack expertise,commitment and instigate instability by playing leaders and or parents against one another . I have seen good groups and sections collapse because of poor ,management by higher levels. We have a ridiculous line system where Joe Blow with no scouting knowledge or management skills can be dropped into a key role in a group or section and suddenly no one else's opinion is worth a cracker even though they may have far better management skills and knowledge. recruitment of new leaders with little thought about their abilities to fit the role...as long as there has been someone found to fill the vacancy.Scouting touts itself as a business but I fail to see how that is good business practice! The move towards a business model is perhaps where scouting has lost their people friendly appeal.</p> <p>Provision of more realistic section programs similar to joey scout section has in place. There is an abundance of joey scout material-programs which are user friendly. I notice that South Africa is now providing sensible programs- program on a plate for time poor leaders in the cub scout section.</p> <p>Age range of joey scout section- I have had to knock back several 5 year olds. These children would have increased my membership considerably. Some groups are sending 7 old straight to cub scouts because it will save them having to buy a new uniform for cub scout in a few months time. Effectively that means the joey scout section is restricted to 6year olds a very restricted age range indeed!</p> <p>Uniform - Unfortunately the uniform is not uniform - I think the section colour insert should be abandoned. It is affecting leader's perception.We used to send youth up when they were ready for the next section not whether it was going to cost parents money for new uniform!!! The shirt with no insert meant it could be worn in next section. Also youth who are over-sized or undersized have trouble getting suitable uniforms.</p> <p>Communication within sections,group and region can fail. The good old filter system unfortunately affects what others think is important. There has been some improvement from branch level in recent years. It often falters at the group/region level unfortunately it means the youth miss out on activities. It doesn't help scouting's image as parents and carers gossip. The first time a section leader may hear about an activity is via gossip from parent of one group to parent of another group. It doesn't nothing for the poor leader or the group that hasn't been kept up to date</p>	
	Assistant Group Leader	<p>I have been watching the review with great interest and am really excited about an end to end review.</p> <p>One are that I think needs consideration is how the program aligns (or not) with relevant legislation. For example in Queensland it is a breach of the criminal code for a parent to leave a child under the age of 12 unattended for “an unreasonable amount of</p>	Legislative Issues

State-Branch-Country	Role-Section	Message	YPR Related Topic
		<p>time". This has led to some increasing concerns about patrol activities where our younger scouts are involved especially on overnight activities where an adult is not present e.g. patrol camps.</p> <p>Another consideration is who exactly we deem to be a worker and therefore the implications under WHS and young worker legislation e.g. if a patrol leader is running a patrol activity are they considered a worker?</p> <p>These issues are increasingly presenting as issues for parents and have clear ramifications for how we deliver our program. I am sure there is much other legislation that ought to be considered as part of the review.</p> <p>I am happy to be contacted to further discuss these issues if needed.</p> <p>I look forward to seeing the review progress. It is a really great opportunity for the movement, its members and supporters.</p>	
Victorian Branch	Honorary Commissioner	<p>I am not sure in what format you might like my observations, but may I first give my background. I have completed 60 years as a leader, much of which was spent with Venturers and Leader Training. I have been a school teacher, principal of a high school, headmaster of an independent school and a colonel in the CMF "in my spare time"! I hold degrees in commerce, education and educational administration.</p> <p>When reading the outline of the YPR in Australian Scout I was most interested in two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The affect of girls in what was a traditional boys' movement, and</li> <li>2. The span of years that a modern youth might wish to spend in the movement.</li> </ol> <p>Girls: In summary, at the lower secondary school years they are streets ahead of the boys and tend to dominate any institution of which they are members. Perhaps the cub and scout sections could have been kept to the original gender.</p> <p>Span of years: I think the days of life-long membership are over. There are so many other activities which youth members are encouraged to try. I suggest that no matter how good the programs and the leadership, four or so years might be enough for the vast majority.</p> <p>I am very happy to expand on the above. I have few statistics to support my views, but a lifetime with youth does bring home quite a few lessons through observation.</p>	<p>Girls in Scouts</p> <p>Period of Scouting Years</p>

## BLOG POSTS

### “UK Scouts Change Their Promise”

*Does Scouts Australia need to follow?*

*Do we aim for a variety of alternative Promises or, should there be just one Promise?*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
Yes, absolutely. It is long overdue that the promise removes archaic concepts of duty to some mystical sky being, unless the person holds such beliefs. The UK's new promise, modified to remove the reference to the Queen, another archaic concept (as we do now) is pretty much spot on.	Promise
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whilst I personally like the current promise, I know there are many who would be put off by it. It would make sense to make the reference to God optional, like the reference to the Queen. Personally I think scouts needs to review its overall policy on religion, I would say that a large portion of young people are atheist or agnostic. Many atheists have probably not joined scouts for precisely this reason. (Anecdotally I would estimate 50% to 60% of people my age are atheist.)	Promise Religion
I agree. With more than 30% of the population non-religious this should be considered. <a href="http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Australia">http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Australia</a>	Promise
i am agnostic; but its not that i don't believe, quite the opposite; i like different parts of multiple religions (Baptist; Buddhist, Christian)  When i was a cub/scout + 20 years ago those numbers would have been different.	Religion
No. We should stick to the firm foundations Scouting is known for. Changing our Promise will not bring more people in the door but blur what society already think that Scouts live by. 'Duty to my God' is a blanket promise for all beliefs and to delete/change it is of little consequence in the big picture of adventure and good citizenship that Scouting promotes. I think there are far more important changes we can make in Scouting than debating a few word changes, explain it properly to each age group and they will know what they are Promising.	Promise
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I am happy with the current promise. The word "my" in "my God" should suit everyone. "My God" could refer to any deity of an established religion or to something more abstract such as Mother Earth.  I have never had anyone question me on the promise or indicate that they did not want to join because of it. I don't think that the promise needs too much focus as part of this review.	Promise
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I don't mind the UK promise but with not reference to God it kind of sounds like Scouts are the final judge of our actions. At least a promise to a higher authority keeps us human.	Promise
As a leader with some scouts who aren't Christian then a personal GOD is very important IF that Scout is to make a promise that is meaningful to them. Not sure how an atheist can promise if they don't actually believe what they are saying. However I guess that's down to their own values and conscience. I am not religious and never have been and feel quite comfortable using GOD as a definition for my personal belief system. If the question becomes whether GOD is the only way to define a belief system then I'm opposed – this is a personal promise and has to be based on personal values to have any real meaning to an individual.	Promise
I think the reference to "my god" is still important. The meaning is lost on a lot of young minds, but it sows the seeds of what that could actually mean. Doesn't matter what religion you are from, or if you have no religion at all (like me)- My God is what I choose to make it.. It might take youth members a lifetime to work it out, but I think that journey is a part of being a human. I think we should ensure that there is no specific or implied link of that to any particular religion- but in what I've seen, that seems to be the case. However- I don't like promising to serve the Queen. The entire concept is outdated. 100 years ago, the Queen (or King I should say)- was a very important figure, politically and culturally, and loyalty for one's country was expressed by a love and obedience to the monarch. Today this just isn't the case, especially in Australia, where the Queen and Royal Family are moreso celebrities in glossy mags than anything else. I don't see how encouraging youth members to promise loyalty to her can help in their development or understanding of the world in any way.	Promise Queen reference

<p>☑ I would welcome this promise change. Whether it is driven by a belief in god or not, a basic set of values is what we are wanting to achieve. Spirituality does not need to include god on any level and I think this is best left to the religions, if the scouts choose to follow one.</p>	<p>Promise</p> <p>Spiritual</p>
<p>I like the changes they have made regarding duty to god. It is such a difficult area of the program, I think all leaders struggle with it – mostly because they don't know what their own beliefs are, so how can they assist kids to look into their own. I would welcome these changes in Australia</p>	<p>Promise</p>
<p>The problem as I see it is that we as Australians are not comfortable in talking about our religious beliefs and matters of faith. This leads to an environment where everybody just sits there and ignores the problem. The elephant in the room as it were. As we go further down this path the less aware of the diversity of faith we will become and the less tolerant of each other we will be.</p> <p>This breaking down of (religious) cultural barriers needs to be a core aim of the Scouting movement in Australia if we are to be catalysts for change in society and by ignoring the elephant in the room we will fail.</p> <p>We need to develop resources and people to work in this delicate area and build relationships with the religious institutions in this country. The appointment of chaplains to the movement will help build these connections and enrich us. The development of Scouting Fellowships along religious lines will help the members develop as people who will then become a resource for the rest of the movement to engage their particular creed. There also needs to be the development of language that can be used in Scouting to describe different concepts in the realm of spirituality that do not cheapen or dismiss an individual's beliefs. We need to be very conscious in this area however that in doing so we do not water it down so much as to become irrelevant. It is imperative that we build an environment that is not afraid to acknowledge our diversity and encourages frank and honest communication about it.</p>	<p>Religion</p> <p>Resources</p>
<p>I'd gladly welcome this change to our promise. Promising a duty to God is no longer a meaningful element of the Promise to many people, and certainly does not act as a litmus test for being a good and useful member of society. Our society has moved on from that, and our organisation must too.</p>	<p>Promise</p>

## “Our Purpose”

*What is the purpose of Scouting in Australia?*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
<p>This is the best question.</p> <p>I believe one purpose is to give youth members the opportunity to think for themselves and learn from making their own decisions. Once one of our patrols decided to eat only coco pops for the whole of patrol camp. The first meal was great. They then learned through their own decisions and experiences. They never had coco pops ever again.</p>	<p>Personal Development</p>
<p>“This is a tough topic because schools and other organisations have caught up with our method.”</p> <p>Yes they are running the activities, but are they running the Patrol System? BP said – “The Patrol System is the one essential feature in which our training differs from that of all other organisations, and where the system is properly applied it is absolutely bound to bring success. It cannot help itself. PL training is the very heart of the Patrol System.”</p> <p>I believe that is still true. Maybe that is the strength we need to build on.</p>	<p>Patrol System</p>
<p>Scouting's purpose is to teach young people leadership skills, by giving them chance to apply these skills in outdoor activities and community service. It is also about learning initiative.</p> <p>Other organisations do this, but scouts still does it best. (I say that as someone who has also been involved in other leadership programs).</p> <p>The problem is these skills take time to recognise and so the program also has to keep members in scouting, and the leadership aspect could be a bigger part of our advertising. A few days ago I heard a member describe scouting as “a way for young people to experience outdoor activities in a safe environment” and whilst this is true, it is not the core feature of scouting and I think many people forget that.</p>	<p>Youth Leadership</p> <p>Patrol System</p> <p>Personal Development</p>

<p>Interesting point about the patrol system, I have always wondered why the venturer section (and maybe the Rover's section although I kind understand why for that one) don't use the patrol system?</p>	
<p>Hi, Not sure if this is the correct place for this comment. As i look around my Scout Hall there is a TON of history on the walls on the plaques/shields/etc. I see names of hundreds of high achieving former scouts all the way to Queen Scouts. These former scouts may not be interested in being involved in the program as leader, possibly as mentors. But what i see value is the benefits they got from the program.</p> <p>Being a Scout in today's modern world is a huge commitment, not just for the kids; but more for the parents. I see the value in interviewing these former high achievers to see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* where they are now?</li> <li>* what benefits they got out of the organisation?</li> <li>* did Scouts push them higher in their studies/career?</li> <li>* what stood out for you in the program when you where in it?</li> <li>* what are your thoughts on the YPR and what suggestion would you be willing to offer?</li> </ul> <p>I think these answers could be used to promote parents to commit to supporting their kids getting started in the program and continuing to stay the distance in the program, highlight the value in the program and the benefits kids can get out of it long term.</p>	<p>Personal Development</p>

### “Successful Scouting”

*What makes your mob, pack, troop, unit or crew successful?*

*Are you doing something unique or different beyond the traditional scout meeting model that the youth members love?*

*Share your ideas so we know who to investigate in the future and share the good practise.*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
<p>We have found that our youth like outdoor activities, however they also like to simply have fun every now and again without specifically having another aim/purpose. Having variety is the key but also just letting them chill out every now and again (e.g. Nerf Gun Night). An aspect is that they are intrigued by is technology. Using supplemental tools to the program such as iPads (Grogs Knots, trivia / knowledge, NightSky etc) can assist in capturing attention. In many cases I believe we try and use a previously successful program without updating it.</p> <p>My Cubs love the Science Nights where we have lemon powered torches, Mouse trap powered cars etc. We have done Cub versus Wild where they light a fire with flint and steel (cotton wool balls for fuel); learn to fire a sling shot (soft pellet ammunition with everyone wearing safety glasses), filter and distill water etc. Trying to take the program and add a spin to it so that it is something that they have not done or tried.</p> <p>An aspect that I notice is that some groups do not engage in the adventurous activities as some leaders only program what they would like to do. This I think is a key reason as to why we are not able to retain our youth (e.g. Scouts that have never abseiled, kayaked and canoed).</p> <p>Cost is an issue with Church Groups and Cadets being cheaper and copying our programs.</p>	<p>Program Delivery</p> <p>Adventurous Activities</p> <p>Cost</p> <p>Technology</p>
<p>After a 2 year break I've come back on-board to help a struggling group that had amazing resources but hardly any youth members. So we started to copy another group that has no resources and heaps of youth members. The differences: operational efficiency and imagination. We branded the group as a 'mountain scout group' but we don't have a mountain. So we invented one – it's now on our new group badge. We then started inventing horizontal mountaineering activities with internal caves, floor pulley systems, rope bridges, etc. (Operational efficiency = running concurrent section meetings: It works)</p>	<p>Program Delivery</p> <p>Alternative Delivery</p>
<p>Different – yes that is the whole key. I quite often talk about and plan by the notion of 'different' and 'variety' with my cubs and parents. I really enjoy it when</p>	<p>Program Delivery</p>

the cubs have heaps of fun on a camp or activity. This is because I tell them that next year we'll do camps, activities, visits that are completely different. We loosely plan around a 3 year cycle. We even espouse the notion that every week is completely different. Variety is the key to great cubbing. Don't let it get boring. Don't play the same games week in week out. Don't just keep doing the same camps or camp locations. (The only exception we have is a water weekend that is an annual group camp to launch the year, its extremely popular). Just keep looking for new things that the cubs have never done inside or outside of scouting. Other organisations may have our principles and ideas but will never match the opportunities we give,	
---	--

### “Benefits of Scouting Today”

*The Advocate of Tasmania has written about the falling number of leaders and youth in Scout Groups in the Mersey District. Despite this, kids, parents and leaders are enthusiastic about the role that Scouting can play in the lives of young people today. Does your area have a similar story?*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
Good to see scouts in the news, hopefully that will help them to pick up some more leaders to continue.	Retention
I think the most pressing point made in that article was that while we are pretty good at recruiting in Scouts, we are not so good at retention. This comes down to the leaders at the mob, pack, troop, unit and crew level. Perhaps we could have days to re-inspire the leaders, who in turn can re-inspire the youth? Youth get bored of badgework (if not done in a fun way), and programs shouldn't be recycled too often. Scouting needs to respond to the needs of today's youth. While the foundations of Scouting are still solid, some of the surroundings are less so.	Program Delivery
A good article but a bit negative. People wont join an organisation that is not dynamic and progressive. We need to put an emphasis on the positive at all times. Young adult Leaders need plenty of positive feedback these days if we want to retain them. And we need to be far more flexible in the way we get them to do their training.	Attitudes

### “Scouting - a youth movement supported by adults, not organised by adults”

*Annie Asquith, a Patrol Leader from the National Youth Council and a member of the Victorian Branch Youth Council, writes in the December National eNews about finding out about opportunities out there for young people to be involved in Scouting beyond their local level.*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
My experience is that young people are often disregarded in the decision making process within Scouts Australia. They are seen as a resource to be used as needed, but otherwise ignored, and definitely not integral. While this is slowly changing, there is a long way to go. This begins with older members respecting that youth have a valid point of view, and vice versa. The key is diversity in committees and other decision making bodies... a diversity of ages, skills, experience, gender... etc.	Youth Involvement

### “Scout Leaders As Role Models”

*An article from Essential Kids, an Australian website, caught our attention and we thought about the role Scouting can play in meeting the needs of boys. Responsible risk taking is one of our movement's strengths, after all! What are your thoughts on this article?*

Comment	YPR Related Topics
Scouting is one of the few places left where young people can still take risks and learn from mistakes... we definitely need to keep that close to the core of what we do in Scouting, as well as advocating its benefits to the wider community.	Risk Taking

### “Flat Pack Billy Cart”

*Does a "flat-pack" billy cart fit with the Scout Method?*

<b>Comment</b>	<b>YPR Related Topics</b>
Not sure any Scout Groups would be buying these but then again I might be falling into the trap of assuming a leader would already know the benefits gained from getting kids to making their own cart.	Scout Method