

# Commissioner



## Fieldbook for Unit Service



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

# COMMISSIONER FIELDBOOK FOR UNIT SERVICE

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A Guidebook for  
Unit Commissioners



Visit the commissioner Web site for resources:  
[www.scouting.org/scoutsource/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/commissioners)

## **Key Changes in This Printing (As of January 2010)**

There have been some changes and additions made in this printing.

# CONTENTS

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1—Introduction 3</b>                     | <b>9—How to Remove a Volunteer 32</b>                        |
| <b>2—Commissioner Orientation 4</b>         | <b>10—Counseling 34</b>                                      |
| <b>3—Orientation Projects 8</b>             | <b>11—Youth Protection 36</b>                                |
| <b>4—The Commissioner Concept 10</b>        | <b>12—Unit Charter Renewal 37</b>                            |
| <b>5—The District Commissioner Staff 12</b> | <b>13—Unit Internet Advancement 48</b>                       |
| <b>6—Providing Unit Service 15</b>          | <b>14—Unit Commissioner Training 49</b>                      |
| <b>7—Your Commissioner Style 25</b>         | <b>15—Resources 53</b>                                       |
| <b>8—Be a Lifesaving Commissioner 28</b>    | <b>16—Self-Evaluation for Unit<br/>Commissioners 54</b>      |
|   | <b>17—Distinguished Commissioner<br/>Service Award 56</b>    |
|   | <b>18—Unit Commissioner Worksheets 57</b>                    |
|   | <b>19—Guidelines for Unit Action<br/>Planning Meeting 63</b> |
|   | <b>20—Unit Self-Assessment Forms 64</b>                      |

# 1—INTRODUCTION

This is a book for unit commissioners and for those who coach and guide unit commissioners.

## Your Commissioner Fieldbook

The purpose of this fieldbook is to provide a resource of practical, usable information, simply stated and readily adaptable. The material herein reflects the experience of thousands of commissioners from all parts of the country. Make good use of your fieldbook as you add to the BSA heritage of good service to Scouting units.

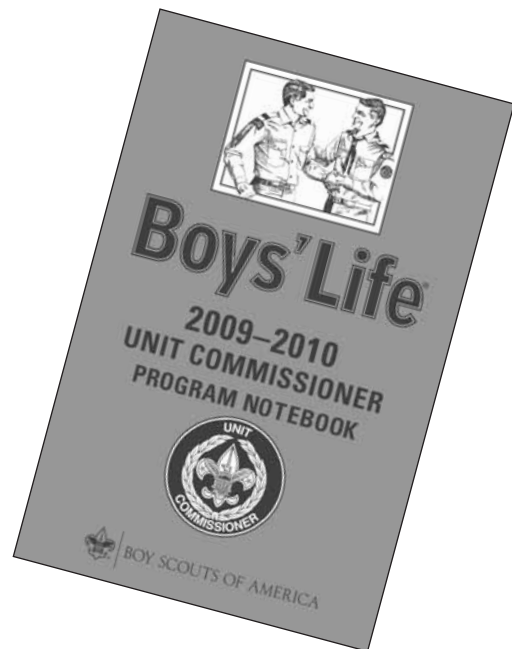
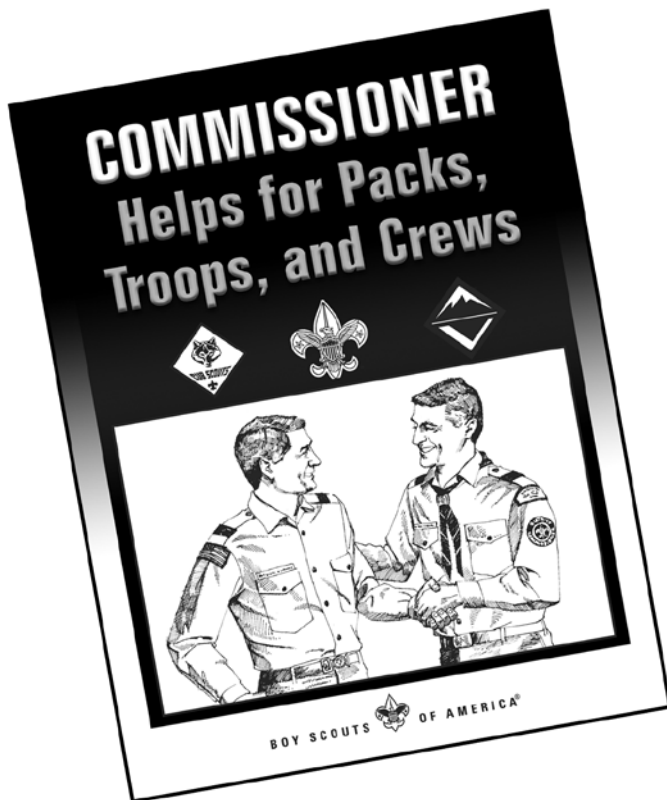
The fieldbook is designed as a reference to fit into a standard notebook. As you and your commissioner leaders or coach review the *Commissioner Fieldbook*, discuss any modifications of staff methods that may be necessary to produce more effective unit operations in your district. Write these out clearly and insert them in the proper section. The fieldbook allows your commissioner service to be flexible in method while remaining firm in purpose and principle.

## As a Commissioner . . .

As a commissioner, your role is different from that of other Scouters. The insignia you wear displays a wreath around Scouting's trefoil representing your commission to serve chartered organizations in the operation of Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews. The quality of Scouting depends upon the men and women who wear this **wreath of service**.

Following are companion publications for unit commissioners:

- *Unit Commissioner Program Notebook*—available through the Magazines Department
- *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*—available through the National Supply Group at [scoutstuff.org](http://scoutstuff.org)



## 2—COMMISSIONER ORIENTATION



On the next several pages, the important ideas that form the basis of commissioner service are illustrated. In a way, this orientation is a graphic table of contents for the fieldbook. **Ask your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner to go over each point with you.**



### Purpose of Scouting

Scouting's purpose for the youth of America is character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.



### Charter Concept

The Scouting program reaches youth through many community organizations. They include religious institutions; PTAs; service clubs; civic organizations; farm groups; fraternal organizations; groups of citizens; schools; and business, industrial, trade, and professional organizations. The Boy Scouts of America enters into a unique working association with a community organization that adopts the program and is chartered to operate its traditional Scouting units (packs, troops, teams, and crews).



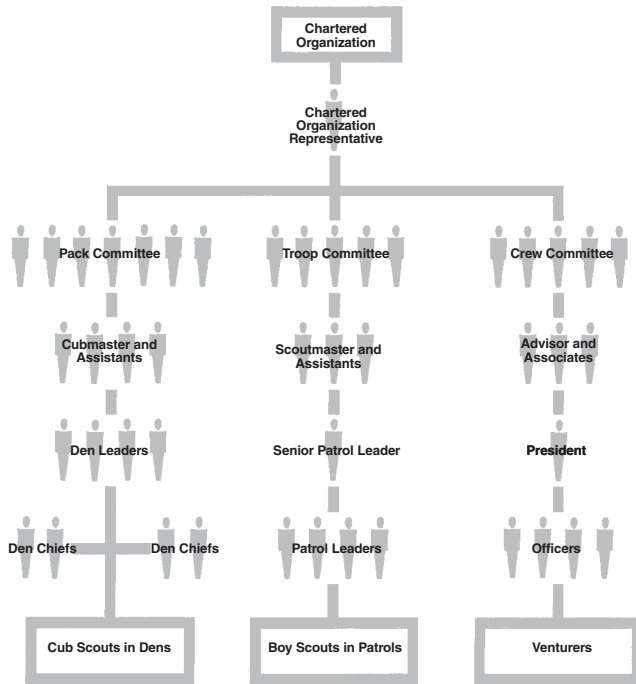
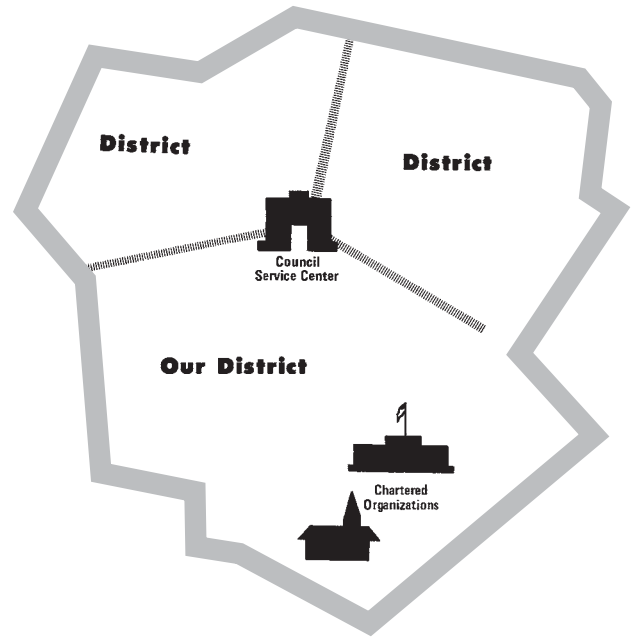
### Chartered Organization's Job

They have three principal responsibilities:

- Provide an adequate, safe meeting place
- Provide dedicated, capable adult leadership of good moral character
- Adhere to policies and guidelines of the Boy Scouts of America.

## Local Council's Job

A council and its districts have four major functions: membership/relationships, finance, quality program, and unit service. The order in which the functions are listed is not meant to suggest the order of their importance, but the natural interrelationship and flow of the functions. If one function suffers from lack of attention, all the work of the council suffers. Unit service, of course, is what commissioner service is all about. How a council operates is described in the booklet, *The Council*.



## Districts

To bring the Scouting program closer to each chartered organization and its units, the local council divides itself into smaller areas called “districts.” Every district has its own commissioner staff and district committee. How a district operates is described in the manual, *The District*.



## Traditional Unit Organization

Unit organization begins with the chartered organization and extends the program of Scouting to youth in Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews.

The chartered organization appoints a chartered organization representative to coordinate all unit operations within it, represent the organization to the Scouting district, and serve as a voting member of the local council. The organization selects a unit committee which screens, selects, and supports unit leaders to work directly with youth.

## Commissioner Service

There is only one council service to a unit that is constant—and that is the friendly personal help given by the unit commissioner. This person must be available to offer advice, program suggestions, and to support unit leaders. This *Commissioner Fieldbook* explains how the commissioner does it.

## District Committee

The district committee is composed of several operating committees that may be called upon to provide specialized advancement or camping help for units, organize new units, train leaders, and conduct events such as camporees. How the district committee operates is described in *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: How Districts Operate* which is part of the DVD *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support*. This DVD also contains several other training audiovisuals in support of commissioner service and district operations.



## Reregister Units

On-time annual renewal for all packs, troops, teams, and crews is the goal of a good commissioner staff. This can be done through Internet rechartering or through the traditional paper method.

The charter review meeting and charter presentation highlight your year of work with a pack, troop, team, or crew.

## Your Mission

As a commissioner, you provide units with meaningful service that delivers Scouting ideals to youth, brings about membership growth, and ensures on-time charter renewal. **Your mission is to help units succeed.**



## Commissioner Contacts

There should be a meaningful contact between you and the adult personnel of each of your assigned units as often as necessary (but at least monthly). These contacts help you to know the condition of your units and to provide tangible help to your unit's leadership.

## Leader Recognition

People who work directly with youth are the most important adults in Scouting. Find ways frequently to recognize them for their good work.



## Commissioner Training

You will learn the best way to carry out your assignment is through personal coaching sessions, commissioner staff meetings, and commissioner training courses.

## Priority Needs

Quick action is needed for such priorities as:

- Unit not meeting
- Unit with no leader
- Unit with no committee
- Unit with no new members
- Unit conflict with the chartered organization
- New unit leader lacks training
- Unit with weak leadership



## Unit Evaluation

Good evaluation records show the condition of your units and help determine the kind of help they may need.

## Summary

- Scouting works in cooperation with chartered organizations.
- Scouting has a program for Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, Webelos Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers.
- Chartered organizations provide leaders and meeting places.
- Commissioners provide constant service to units with meaningful contacts as friends and helpers.
- Commissioners act on priority unit needs.

## Unit Commissioner Online Fast Start

As part of your initial training as a commissioner, you will need to take the Unit Commissioner Fast Start course. You may access the training by creating or using your existing MyScouting account. Go to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) and log in to the Online Learning Center. If you do not have internet access, get with your commissioner coach and take the Fast Start course with him/her at your earliest convenience.

This course will give you some basic information on what the job of a unit commissioner is and how to carry out your responsibilities to better serve the units you have been assigned.



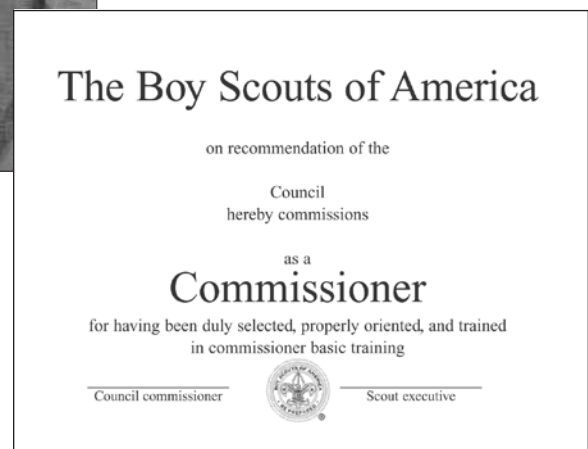
# 3—ORIENTATION PROJECTS

Complete the following projects with the help of your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner:

- 1. Create a personal My Scouting account by going to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org). Then log in to the Online Learning Center and take the Unit Commissioner Fast Start course. If you do not have access to the Internet, get with your coach and take the Fast Start course with him/her.
- 2. View the video *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*, and read about the job of the unit commissioner later in this manual or in *A Handbook for District Operations*.
- 3. Be sure you have been registered as a commissioner. (Commissioners must not be registered unit leaders.)
- 4. Fill in your personal calendar and *Commissioner Program Notebook* with dates and places for commissioner staff meetings, council and district events, roundtables, and other dates from the council and district calendar.
- 5. Confirm the date for the next commissioner training opportunity.
- 6. Study the unit rosters assigned to you and put them in your notebook.
- 7. Have your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner review the various adult volunteers involved with your assigned units.
- 8. With your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner, visit a unit meeting or unit committee meeting for each of your assigned units.
- 9. Have your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner review a basic kit of materials to help you help your units succeed.
- 10. Review the contents of this *Commissioner Fieldbook* to personally help you better understand your role as a commissioner.
- 11. Exchange phone numbers with each of your unit leaders as well as your district and assistant district commissioners.
- 12. View the *Commissioner Annual Orientation* DVD with your district commissioner or assistant district commissioner.
- 13. Listen to podcasts for messages on key issues on the commissioner Web site.
- 14. Go to the commissioner Web site at [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners) and become familiar with its contents.



**A commission will be presented to a new commissioner after he or she has been properly oriented and has completed commissioner basic training.**



**Following is a brief comparison of the different phases of the Scouting program.**



**Cub Scouting**

1. A boy may become a Tiger Cub when he enters first grade (or is age 7). A boy may become a Cub Scout when he has completed the first grade (or is 8 years old). He may become a Webelos Scout when he has completed the third grade (or is 10 years old).

2. Cub Scout activities are centered in the home and community.

3. The major character influence comes from sharing experiences with his family, den buddies, and pack leaders.

4. The Tiger Cub and the second- and third-grade Cub Scout submits his achievements to his parents for credit toward his advancement. The Webelos Scout passes requirements to his den leader.

5. The Cubmaster provides leadership to parents, den leaders, and den chiefs and, through them, to Cub Scouts.

6. The pack committee supervises the pack, coordinating the policies of the chartered organization and Scouting.

7. Tiger Cubs and Cub Scouts meet in dens varying from once each week to every other week. Webelos Scouts often meet in the early evening or on Saturday.

8. Den leaders and Boy Scouts serving as den chiefs lead weekly meetings.

9. The pack meets once each month with Cub Scouts and parents present.



**Boy Scouting**

1. A boy may become a Boy Scout when he has completed the fifth grade or has earned the Arrow of Light Award, or is 11 years old. He also must be at least 10 years old, but younger than 18 years old.

2. Boy Scout activities are centered in the organization's meeting place and in the outdoors.

3. Boy Scouting includes the influence of good adult role models, plus the experiences of participating in patrol and troop activities.

4. A Boy Scout meets his requirements for advancement within his troop.

5. The Scoutmaster leads Boy Scouts, acting through the senior patrol leader and patrol leaders.

6. The troop committee supervises the troop, coordinating the policies of the chartered organization and Scouting.

7. Natural groups of Boy Scouts function in patrols during the troop meeting and in other activities.

8. Youth as patrol leaders lead patrol activities.

9. The troop meets weekly, conducts occasional parents' nights, and has at least one outdoor activity a month.



**Varsity Scouting**

1. A young man may become a Varsity Scout in a Varsity Scout team when he is 14 years old (13 if he is in a troop). He may remain a Varsity Scout until his 18th birthday.

2. Varsity Scout activities are related to service, Scout advancement, high adventure/sports, personal development, special programs and events.

3. Varsity Scouting has five program fields of emphasis, with a youth program manager and an adult program supervisor for each.

4. A Varsity Scout has an individual plan of progress leading to the rank of Eagle Scout. He also can earn the Varsity Scout letter.

5. The Varsity Scout Coach is the adult leader, working through the team captain, squad leaders, and program managers.

6. The Varsity Scout team committee supervises the team, coordinating the policies of the chartered organization and Scouting, and provides program supervisors for the five program fields of emphasis.

7. Varsity Scouts function in squads in Varsity Scout teams for business and activity meetings.

8. The team program is carried out under the leadership of the youth team captain and program managers.

9. The Varsity Scout team meets weekly, alternating between business meetings and activity meetings.



**Venturing**

1. Young men and women may become Venturers when they are 14 years old and have completed the eighth grade or are 15 years old. A Venturer registered in a crew or ship prior to age 21 may continue as a member at age 21 until the crew or ship rechartered or until age 22, whichever comes first.

2. Venturing activities appeal to the ever-changing interests, needs, and abilities of high school-age youth.

3. Crew members want to test themselves in adult situations. Venturers don't want adults to run their show; they want adults to show them how.

4. Venturers widen their horizons in fields of special interest, working with consultants who give technical assistance.

5. The Advisor leads through elected officers and committee chairmen.

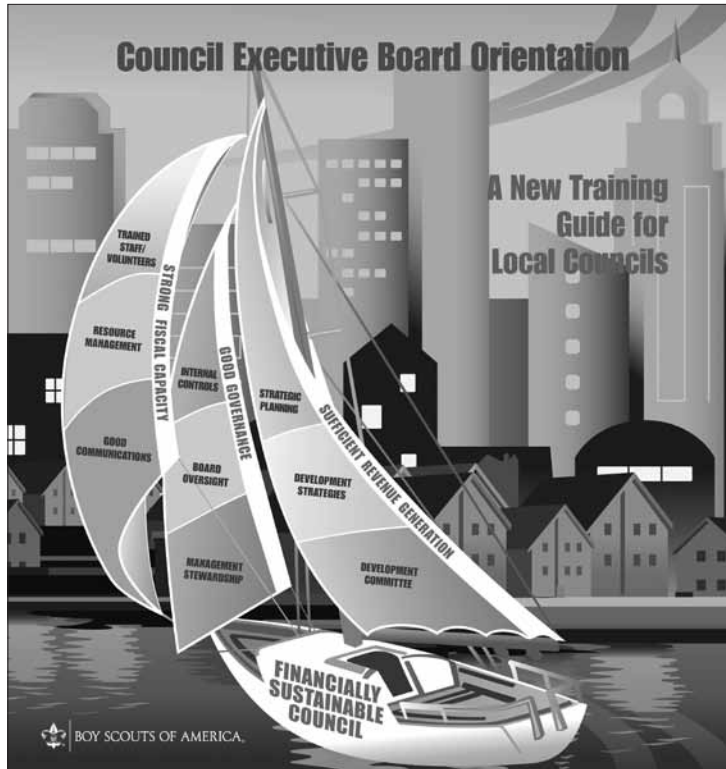
6. The Venturing crew committee supervises the crew, coordinating the policies of the chartered organization and Scouting.

7. Venturers function as a Venturing crew or Sea Scout ship under the leadership of youth officers, with adult guidance as advisers.

8. Activities are carried out through youth committees, under the direction of youth officers.

9. The crew holds at least three activities a month, two of which are crew meetings.

# 4—THE COMMISSIONER CONCEPT



**Commissioners are available to help units succeed.** A unit is the basic structure operated by a chartered organization to deliver the program of the Boy Scouts of America to youth members. The BSA works with and through the chartered organization to serve youth. It is important that the chartered organization and its units be served effectively with the guidance of a commissioner.

Unless Scouting units are strong and efficient, the program won't retain the Scout. No matter how well organized the council and the district, the program delivery system stalls or fails with weak units.

## Concept Statement

The concept for commissioner service focuses on the unit. The commissioner's specific mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency so that they can deliver a good program to a growing youth membership.

Today's commissioners are results-oriented rather than procedures-oriented. They are successful in their mission when units continue to operate, units regularly accept new youth, and units effectively deliver the ideals of Scouting to their members.

Commissioners are involved with carrying programs **to the unit**, and their main concern is to develop strength **within the unit operation**.

In other words, the concept calls for commissioners to develop the program capability in a unit.

## Strength

Commissioners must be sufficient in number to fill the needs of the council and district. They must be trained and guided in their efforts.

Unit commissioners are accountable for the success of their assigned units. There is no perfect formula for the numbers of commissioners or frequency of unit contacts. Numbers and methods should be determined by the needs of units to be served.

The commissioner structure of the district must also be dictated by the needs of the council and the district and the units to be served.

## Operating Committees

Effective unit service should include the specialized help of district operating committees. Providing service to specific units is the responsibility of all district personnel. It is important that commissioners call on operating committee members to help whenever needed.

## Roles the Commissioner Plays

A commissioner plays several roles, including being a friend, a representative, a unit “doctor” or paramedic, a teacher, and a coach.

The commissioner is a **friend** of the unit. Of all your roles, this one is the most important. It springs from the attitude, “I care, I am here to help you, what can I do for you?” Caring is the ingredient that makes commissioner service successful. Be an advocate of unit needs. A commissioner who makes himself or herself known and accepted with the unit leadership will be called on to help in times of trouble.

The commissioner is a **representative**. The average unit leader is totally occupied in working with kids. Some have little if any contact with the Boy Scouts of America other than your visits to their meeting. To them, you may be the Boy Scouts of America. Be a good example. Show that you believe in the ideals, the principles, and the policies of the Scouting movement. Represent it well!

The commissioner is a unit “**doctor**” or a paramedic. In your role as “doctor,” you know that prevention is better than a cure, so you try to see that your units make good “health practices” a way of life. Sometimes being a paramedic and performing triage on a unit to keep its program going or providing support to their leadership is critical. When problems arise, and they will even in the best unit, act quickly. Observe symptoms, diagnose the real ailment, prescribe a remedy, and follow up on the patient.

The commissioner is a **teacher**. As a commissioner, you will have a wonderful opportunity to participate in the growth of unit leaders by sharing your knowledge with them. You teach not just in an academic environment, but where it counts most—as an immediate response to a need to know. That is the best adult learning situation since the lesson is instantly reinforced by practical application of the new knowledge.

The commissioner is a **coach**. As a Scouting coach, you will help guide units in solving their own problems. Coaching is the best role for you when unit leaders don’t recognize a problem and where solutions are not clear-cut. Everyone needs coaching or assistance from time to time, even experienced leaders. You provide them with different “plays” that might be the right one for them to move ahead or succeed at solving a problem.

### Historical Note

In February 1910, an excerpt from *Association Men*, a magazine edited by the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), read, “The Boy Scout movement which took England by storm has gripped America.” Although local units of the Boy Scouts sprang up in various locations across the country, the first evidence of a national movement occurred in Washington, D.C., with the incorporation of the Boy Scouts of America in February 1910. Shortly thereafter, the national headquarters was moved to New York.

At the onset of the movement, it became apparent that local people needed to assume leadership. For several years, formal registration of units was done directly through the national organization. The first local council leaders were called Scout commissioners.

In the early years of the Scouting movement, there were two kinds of local councils—second-class councils that operated with a volunteer commissioner, and first-class councils that had paid commissioners. Greatly increased growth called for more paid leaders who became known as professionals. By 1935, all of the United States was served by first-class councils with little direct service to units from the national office. During these years of growth, commissioner service was the one unifying factor that made Scouting permanent.

Local councils began to require more specialized volunteer support and help in their operations. The commissioner, however, remained the line of service from the council to the unit to the chartered organization. Varieties of commissioners have been appointed through the years. The increasingly important role of the commissioner required that more knowledgeable people be recruited to service, train, and ensure that the ideals of the movement were carried out.

Through the years, the commissioner staff has continued to be involved in and concerned with the health of the council’s units, especially its unit leaders. The commissioner’s main responsibility is to help units succeed.

# 5—THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAFF



A district has several types of commissioners. There are unit commissioners who relate directly to units and there are other commissioners who lead and support unit commissioners.



## The District Commissioner

This leader is recommended by the district nominating committee for approval and appointment by the council executive board with the concurrence of the Scout executive. The district commissioner leads the commissioner staff of the district, guiding and measuring the district's unit service function of the program.

Major responsibilities include:

1. Recruit a full staff of commissioners.
2. Oversee the training program for all commissioners.
3. Guide unit commissioners to visit each unit regularly, identify unit needs, and make plans to meet unit needs.
4. Work with the district chairman and district executive as a member of the district's Key 3.

5. Plan and preside at monthly meetings of the district commissioner staff.
6. Attend district committee meetings to report on conditions of units and to secure specialized help for units.
7. Represent the district as a member of the council commissioner cabinet.



## Assistant District Commissioners

A district may have one or more assistant district commissioners. Each is responsible for an assigned share of the units in the district and the unit commissioners who serve those units. Assistant district commissioners are often assigned a geographic area of the district. They work closely with the district commissioner and district executive.

Major responsibilities include:

1. Recruit enough unit commissioners to serve their assigned units and area.
2. Conduct personal coaching and orientation sessions for unit commissioners.

3. Maintain regular contact with their unit commissioners to provide guidance in unit service needs.
4. Meet with their team of unit commissioners at the monthly district commissioner meeting to plan specific actions to help units be more successful.
5. Serve units with no assigned unit commissioner.
6. Help unit commissioners evaluate and improve their unit service performance.
7. Track the charter renewal status of all their units.



## Unit Commissioners

Many unit commissioners serve more than one type of unit. One might serve a Cub Scout pack, Boy Scout troop, Varsity team, and Venturing crew in the same chartered organization. Other unit commissioners may serve only packs, only troops, only teams, or only crews. Check with your commissioner leader or coach to see how your district is organized.

**The unit commissioner is a Scouting generalist whose passionate overriding mission in Scouting is to help units succeed.** Specific responsibilities include:

1. Help each unit earn the Centennial Quality Unit Award.
2. Use the annual commissioner service plan, maintain its scheduled opportunities for commissioner contact with units.
3. Know each phase of the Scouting program and be able to describe what each is and how each works. Review all Scouting program literature to support assigned units.
4. See that all direct contact unit leadership completes basic leader training, including Youth Protection training.
5. Visit unit meetings regularly.
  - a. Observe the unit in action and determine the degree to which the descriptions in the literature are being followed.
  - b. Privately use the commissioner worksheet.
  - c. Annually, work with unit leadership in conducting the unit action planning meeting and completing the unit self-assessment form.
  - d. If called upon, participate or help in some of the regular activities of the unit.
6. Visit regularly with the unit leader.
  - a. Be aware of unit leader needs and concerns.
  - b. Serve as the unit leader's friend and coach.

- c. Offer encouragement and support.
  - d. Using the literature available, help the leader see new opportunities for improvement.
  - e. Maintain the best possible relationship with unit leadership.
  - f. Encourage unit participation in district and council program events.
7. Work to assure effective and active unit committees.
  - a. Visit with the unit committee periodically.
  - b. Observe the committee in action.
  - c. Using the literature, offer suggestions for improvement.
  - d. Work with the committee to solve problems and improve unit operation.
8. Keep in touch with the chartered organizations of the units you serve.
  - a. Meet and encourage the orientation of the chartered organization representative.
  - b. Meet the head of the organization and explain your role as a help to the units.
  - c. Help develop a good relationship between the unit's leadership and the chartered organization leadership.
  - d. In close cooperation with the district executive, give the leaders of the organization a brief progress report and compliment them for using Scouting.
9. Know the neighborhood in which your units are located.
  - a. Help graduating members of one program join the next level of Scouting.
  - b. Identify potential sources for new youth members.
  - c. Cultivate men and women of good moral character who might become Scouting leaders.
  - d. Know your chartered organizations and prospective ones.
  - e. Learn about resources and characteristics of the neighborhood that might impact a unit's program.
10. Know the district and council.
  - a. Identify resources that can help the unit.
  - b. Know and share information about scheduled events that will help the unit.
  - c. Work closely with the professional staff.
  - d. Use members of the district operating committees to help meet specialized needs of your units.

11. Set the example.
  - a. Adopt an attitude of helpfulness.
  - b. Keep your promises.
  - c. Be concerned about proper uniforming.
  - d. Be diplomatic.
  - e. Be a model of Scouting ideals.

You have no choice about being a role model. You are one. The only choice you have is which role you'll model.

12. Continue to grow as a commissioner through training, experience, and consultation with others in the district.
13. Be sure that unit adults attend Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing roundtables.
14. Make certain that proper techniques are used to select and recruit unit leadership.
15. Facilitate the on-time annual charter renewal of all assigned units using Internet rechartering or the traditional paper rechartering method.
16. Help the unit conduct a membership inventory (at least annually) of youth and adults.
  - a. Help the unit committee chairman conduct the charter renewal meeting.
  - b. See that a completed charter renewal application is returned to the council service center.
  - c. Present the new charter at an appropriate meeting of the chartered organization.



## Roundtable Commissioners

1. Recruit and train a staff qualified to put on quality roundtables for unit personnel.
2. Plan and conduct monthly roundtable programs.
3. Make all arrangements for roundtables including meeting places, equipment, and supplies.
4. Conduct regular critiques to determine how roundtables can be improved.



## Your District Executive

Strictly speaking, district executives are not commissioners, but they are full-time *commissioned* leaders of the Boy Scouts of America. District executives share the same objectives as commissioners: to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth.

The district executive is a Scouting friend and coach for every commissioner in the district. He or she is employed by the council and works under the direction of the council Scout executive. The district executive works to deliver the Scouting program through volunteers.

You can expect your district executive to:

1. Provide professional coaching
2. Give inspiration and encouragement
3. Maintain regular contact with the heads of chartered organizations
4. Keep district records up-to-date
5. Arrange for help from the council service center
6. Provide vital behind-the-scenes administrative skills
7. Work with and support volunteers on the unit and district level
8. Suggest and support action plans for recruiting district volunteers

Both commissioners and professionals share responsibility for building good working relationships. Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other's role and competency.

Be accessible to your district executive. Exchange phone numbers, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, etc. Return his or her calls. Help make the most efficient use of each other's Scouting time.

Commissioners should know that they can turn to their professional for advice or troubleshooting. Develop good communications in which you and your district executive really listen to and understand each other.

Take good care of your district executive. Your district executive cares about you.

## 6—PROVIDING UNIT SERVICE



### Unit Contacts

**Your contacts with units must be as a friend, *not* as the district “superspy.” Find out how you can help if help is needed. Always keep in mind what is best for the success of your units. As a friend and coach of unit leadership, the commissioner operates quietly, generally in the background.**

A very important purpose of unit contacts is keeping yourself informed. If you are truly concerned about a unit’s health, you must know its condition at all times:

1. Is the unit program fun and challenging for Scouts? Do the leaders find it rewarding?
2. Is there a membership growth plan, and is it working effectively?
3. Will the unit reregister on time?
4. Will they qualify to earn the Centennial Quality Unit Award?

The purpose of your friendly visits is far more than looking for problems to report. Your contacts should strengthen the capability of your unit leaders, not glorify the commissioner. You are, in effect, a coach for the adults in the unit, helping to make sure they have all the plays from the playbook to win the game.

Always make notes on unit visits, unit needs, and other information on the units you serve so you will know how to best assist them in accomplishing their goals.

### FREQUENCY

Normally, you should make at least a monthly visit. However, unit contacts must be made often enough to accomplish your mission. Only you can say how often you must contact your units in order to bring about quality program, membership growth, and on-time charter renewal.

You must be close enough to your units to know what is happening, and your contacts must help the unit strengthen its capability to deliver quality Scouting to their youth members.

Your contacts with units will encompass visits to unit meetings, to unit committee meetings, with a unit Scouter at home, to a charter presentation, or other contact.

### UNIT MEETINGS

It’s usually a good idea to show the courtesy of a phone call before you visit a unit meeting. This helps guarantee a warm welcome. It also shows unit lead-



ers you are not trying to surprise them or catch them off guard.

When you visit a unit meeting, watch and listen. Be careful not to disrupt the program. You are a guest and you are an observer. Note the following:

- **Attendance**—The average should be 75 percent of Scouts registered.
- **Planning**—Does the program move along smoothly?
- **Adult Leadership**—Are those present actively involved? Do they seem to enjoy the meeting?

Stay long enough to get an accurate impression. A quick visit is often less helpful. Avoid making notes during your visit. This makes it appear that you are rating the unit leader, and it certainly does not contribute to the friendly and informal relationship you are trying to build. Act interested in what is taking place. Chat with committee members who are present. Get to know some of the Scouts. Don't break into the meeting or distract the unit leader from giving his or her attention to the meeting. Chat with leaders after the meeting and give them a chance to mention problems or ask questions.

After your visit, review and fill out your Commissioner Work Sheet or study the key quality points on the Unit Self-Assessment form. Many districts have a tracking system for commissioners to report online after their monthly unit visits as to what they accomplished or what needs the units have. This report will help give direction as to how the district can help the unit succeed at reaching their goals. It will help you make plans to strengthen any areas of improvement you may have discovered.

## UNIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND MONTHLY PROGRAM PLANNING MEETINGS

Most administrative procedures and many special events are developed here. Representing the Boy Scouts of America, you can influence unit planning by keeping goals and purposes clearly in focus. Often you must interpret unit, district, and council programs for unit committees. A strong committee is important to



the life of a unit, and you should be well acquainted with its members.

## OTHER CONTACTS

**Unit leaders.** Personal contact might be best for discussion of training, roundtables, youth leadership, recordkeeping, and other items when you need the leader's undivided attention.

**Committee chairman.** Personal contact is best for discussing the need for more active committee members, unit leadership, or more effective committee meetings.

**Chartered organization representative.** Discuss unit personnel situations or meeting facilities.

**Telephone.** Phone calls can be effective when used to give or receive information needed quickly or to follow up on commitments made.

**Roundtables.** Visit informally with leaders but do not use roundtables as a primary unit contact. Leaders attend to get program ideas and techniques for their next month's meetings. Do not take them away from the program. Talk with them informally during the fellowship portion of the roundtable.

**Unit events.** Parents' nights, blue and gold banquets, and courts of honor will show the amount of morale and parent support a unit has. Unit leaders take pride in these events and will appreciate your public support.

**District and council events.** Scouting shows, pow wows, camporees, recognition dinners, and other events let you compare your units to others in the area. This can help you determine what kind of service your units need.

**E-mail.** This contact can provide for immediate prompt communication with unit leadership. However, don't let e-mail substitute for effective group interaction and the instant two-way interaction of phone calls.

**District or council Web sites.** This communication method can provide more details about programs in a quick way to show the unit leadership how they can be more involved and who they can make contact with to learn more about participating in a specific program. The sites also allow interested Scouters to know who to make contact with when they need assistance.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Unit commissioners should never feel that "all is well" simply because they have casually contacted their units since the last commissioner meeting. Only when units are moving steadily toward completing the BSA criteria for the Centennial Quality Unit Award and have a good unit program is the commissioner successful.

# The Annual Commissioner Service Plan

The Annual Commissioner Plan gives **specific reasons for recurring and supportive visits with units** by the commissioner.

This plan follows the natural flow of adding new members, purchase of uniforms, preparation for summer camp, unit program planning, and replacement of adult leadership. The plan includes the following commissioner functions:

- 1. Membership inventory.** Conducted in December and again two months before the unit's charter expiration. It's surprising how many youth may not be registered.
- 2. Uniform inspection.** Held for Cub Scout packs in the fall, and Boy Scout troops in the spring and fall. The commissioner helps pack and troop leaders and lends dignity to a high-morale event. Encourage a complete uniform for all members. Develop unit pride.
- 3. Centennial Quality Unit measurement.** It is completed based on a calendar year. Completion of the commitment form for the year is conducted by the commissioner during the early part of the year, usually between December and February. An evaluation of their achievement toward qualifying is conducted between October 31 and December 31.

Commissioners should work regularly on a monthly basis to help their assigned units to achieve the award and most importantly to improve the quality of their unit's program.

The goal for the district is to have at least 60 percent of all units qualify in order for the district to qualify for the award.

- 4. Unit leadership inventory.** Conducted by the commissioner and unit committee by April 30 of each year. Find out who will continue and who will drop. Visit inactive adults. Recruit new adults. Is there two-deep leadership? Are direct-contact leaders trained?
- 5. Charter presentation ceremony.** Held 30 days after the renewal of the charter. The commissioner presents the charter at an event of the chartered organization (not at a meeting of the unit). Make it special.
- 6. Unit program planning.** Commissioners visit with unit leaders to help where necessary with the planning process. With a new program year starting in the early fall, a unit's annual plan should be completed by the first of August.
- 7. Youth Protection Training visit.** Explain and promote latest training, booklets, and videos about BSA Youth Protection at a fall meeting of unit adults, usually in November.
- 8. Other commissioner functions.** Ongoing—help units solve problems, improve unit program, and provide other help as needed.

## KEY COMMISSIONER SERVICE DATES

ACTION	WHO	CYCLE											
<b>• CHARTER RENEWAL</b> - Executive officer visit  - Membership inventory - Charter renewal meeting  - Submit to service center - Charter presentation  - Centennial Quality Unit measurement	District executive and head of the chartered organization	90 days prior to the charter renewal date											
	Commissioner and unit committee	60 days prior to charter renewal date											
	Commissioner and unit committee chairman	45 days prior to charter renewal date											
	Commissioner or unit committee	15 days prior to charter renewal date											
	Commissioner and chartered organization representative	30 days after charter renewal											
	Commissioner and unit leadership	December–February of each year the commitment is made October 31–December 31—achievement evaluation											
<b>• COMMISSIONER SERVICE PLAN</b>		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
- Membership inventory	Commissioner and unit committee												X
- Unit leadership inventory	Commissioner and unit committee				X								
- Troop uniform inspection	Unit leader and commissioner					X							
- Unit program planning	Unit leader and commissioner							X					
- Pack/troop uniform inspection	Unit leader and commissioner										X		
- Youth protection visit	Commissioner											X	

## Other Ways to Help a Unit

There are many ways a commissioner can help a unit; what is best depends on the specific needs and problems of the unit.

The Unit Commissioner Work Sheet is designed to be filled out *after* visiting a unit meeting. You should NEVER complete the worksheet while you are in the meeting. It outlines several common unit needs and some ways commissioners can help units with each need. *Commissioner Helps For Packs, Troops, and Crews* provides many more ideas for commissioner action to help units with a wide range of unit needs. Be sure you have both of these items handy. They are basic to good commissioner service.

Guidelines for Unit Action Planning Meeting is provided later in this manual. This meeting is initiated annually or after a change in the top leadership of a unit. It is a meeting between the commissioner and the unit leader and the unit committee chairman. The commissioner will share the Unit Self-Assessment form with the unit leader and ask them to review it with the committee chair prior to them getting together.

The Unit Self-Assessment form is a review of key quality standards to help determine how the unit is doing in providing a quality program. They will check “Doing a good job” or “Needs improvement” or “Needs help.” Then the commissioner, unit leader, and committee chair meet to discuss the completed form. This will be an opportunity to evaluate what the goals are for the unit for the year and how the district can assist, if needed, in helping them to achieve their goals. The areas marked as “Needs help” are especially the areas of interest where the district can assist. The area of need will determine the operating committee of the district to help with its accomplishment.

### NEW LEADERS

When units acquire new leaders, your interest and support can make the difference between success and failure.

If the leaders are new to Scouting, training is a top priority. Ask your district commissioner to arrange with the district committee for coaching or formal training immediately. Your job is to encourage the new leaders to participate in training.

Meanwhile they need orientation, and you are the best person to present it. You know the units and their condition. Use the Fast Start training videotapes with viewer guides for each leader’s specific job. You can also encourage the unit to provide support to their new leaders by going online to the E-Learning Center to take Fast Start, Youth Protection training, and other key training courses provided to support adult leadership positions. Your first concern is to get them started right. Show them that you’re there to help. Online

training allows adults to view the training when it is most convenient to them. However, the best method of training is still face-to-face. Online training also can be used as a refresher and a “jump start.” All online training should be followed up by personal coaching for details about their new position. Personal coaching will provide the practical side of what they have heard or seen.

You may have heard of “buyer’s remorse” in which a person who has signed a contract for a new house develops strong feelings of regret and uncertainty a day or two later. The same thing can happen to a person who has agreed to be a new leader. You can help, and here’s how:

- Prepare the new leader in advance that this may happen. Reassure them that these are normal feelings.
- Be sure to remind them that they will receive the necessary resources, training, and guidance to be a unit leader.
- Stress the value of what they will be doing for youth.
- Be sure to keep in touch with them starting a day or two after they agree to serve. Help build their confidence.

### TRAINING FOR LEADERS

All leaders should complete Basic Leader Training. The Basic Leader Training is composed of two parts: This is Scouting for all unit-level leaders, and New Position Specific Training or its equivalent based on the leader’s unit-level position.

This is Scouting is an introductory session that highlights the values, aims, history, funding, and methods of Scouting.

Once a volunteer has a solid overview of the Boy Scouts of America’s values-based program, they can begin training for their specific Scouting position through Position Specific Training. This training provides the specialized knowledge a new leader needs to assume a leadership role.

Each program level provides additional supplemental training.

### RECORDS

A certain amount of recordkeeping is necessary for all units.

You will often be asked by unit leaders to interpret the forms and records they are asked to keep. Be well enough informed to give guidance to good unit recordkeeping. Some basic unit records are:

Advancement Report

*Pack Record Book*

*Troop/Team Record Book*

These are available from your council service center, your local Scout shop, or the National Supply Group at [scoutstuff.org](http://scoutstuff.org).

## ROUNDTABLES

Cub Scout leader, Boy Scout leader, Varsity Scout leader, and Venturing leader roundtables are a major source of program ideas for unit leaders. While you coach leaders in unit operations, they receive program help from roundtables.

Roundtables are fun, practical, inspiring, and full of skills and program ideas. They allow program ideas that work in one unit to work in others.

Encourage your unit leaders to attend roundtables and take assistants and committee members along. Plan to visit a roundtable as often as you can. You'll find the evening well worthwhile.

## COUNCIL AND DISTRICT PROGRAMS

One of the great services you can render a unit is to interpret how council and district programs help meet unit needs.

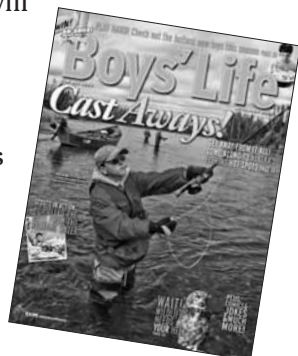
Whenever a commissioner is mistaken for a salesman or a council promoter, the confidence of the unit leader is lost. But unit leaders expect their commissioner to be on the lookout for ways to help enrich the unit's program. Therefore, your approach to interpreting council programs is all-important.

For instance, when you strongly recommend that unit leaders take training and attend roundtables, you are showing them ways to make their unit operation easier and more effective. You are not "promoting" training courses. When you encourage your units to participate in the council Scouting show or anniversary celebration, you are really showing leaders how they can use these events to enrich their unit programs.

If you are to interpret district and council programs effectively, you must be well informed about them. Read the council newsletter and all special releases with the viewpoint of how the activities can help your units gain strength. Guide your units to the council Web site and the national Web site for key resources to support the unit's program. Commissioner staff meetings review upcoming council and district programs so commissioners will be well informed.

## BOYS' LIFE

*Boys' Life* is written for boys 7 to 18, and contains contemporary articles, fiction, and features that provide wholesome leisure-time reading. Every issue has several pages of Boy Scout skills and Cub Scout activities.



Reading *Boys' Life* gives a boy the sense of belonging to a national organization, and helps him live Scouting between unit meetings. It can increase his enthusiasm for Scouting, and help keep him registered and active. *Boys' Life* can help improve a boy's interest in reading.

*Boys' Life* is an important part of the Scouting program. Every commissioner should be familiar with its contents. Be sure that the annual budget plan for each of your packs, troops, and teams includes the cost of *Boys' Life* for every Scout family. Unit charter renewal time offers a perfect opportunity to be sure your units are 100 percent *Boys' Life*.

## UNIT BUDGETS

A pack, troop, team, or crew must have money to operate. The unit budget provides a sound method of financing the unit program. The sooner a unit gets on a sound working basis financially, the longer it is likely to live and function.

A budget is prepared annually on the basis of projected income and expenditures. The *Pack Record Book* and *Troop/Team Record Book* contain detailed information on preparing the budget.

## LEADER RECOGNITION

Unit leaders are often taken for granted by youth members, parents, and the community. You can boost leaders' morale with frequent praise, thank-you's and congratulations. Good recognition is simple but genuine. When visiting a unit meeting, pick out something you see that is good and congratulate the leader. Whenever leaders have advanced in their training programs, or the unit has earned a ribbon or award at a district or council event, be sure that the committee, chartered organization, and parents know about it so they can congratulate their leaders.

As a representative of the Boy Scouts of America you will have opportunities to present recognitions to unit leaders. Make the presentations dignified and sincere. Let leaders know that the Scouting movement appreciates their efforts.

## UNIFORM INSPECTION

Commissioners set a personal example with correct uniforming and a modest display of badges. What is a modest display of badges? It has often been said that unit leaders wear most of their badges on the uniforms of their youth members. It might also be said that commissioners wear most of their badges on the uniforms of their unit leaders. Most of a commissioner's badges should reflect their service at a council or district level. For example, they proudly wear the Centennial Quality District emblem, but good taste might dictate that they refrain from wearing the Centennial Quality Unit emblem simply because they serve on the troop committee of their son's Centennial Quality troop.

## Boy Scout/Varsity Scout

### Uniform Inspection Sheet

#### Uniform Inspection.

Conduct the uniform inspection with common sense; the basic rule is neatness.

#### General Appearance. Allow 3 points for each:

- 15 pts.  Good posture  
 Clean face and hands  
 Combed hair  
 Neatly dressed  
 Clean fingernails

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Headgear. All troop members must wear the headgear chosen by vote of the troop/team.

5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Shirt and Neckwear. Official shirt or official long- or short-sleeve uniform shirt with green or blaze orange shoulder loops on epaulets. The troop/team may vote to wear a neckerchief, bolo tie, or no neckwear. In any case, the collar should be unbuttoned. The troop/team has the choice of wearing the neckerchief over the turned-under collar or under the open collar.

15 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Pants/Shorts. Official pants or official uniform pants or shorts; no cuffs. (Units have no option to change.)

10 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Belt. Official Boy Scout web with BSA insignia on buckle; or official leather with international-style buckle or buckle of your choice, worn only if voted by the troop/team. Members wear one of the belts chosen by vote of the troop/team.

3 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Socks. Official socks with official shorts or pants. (Long socks are optional with shorts.)

3 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

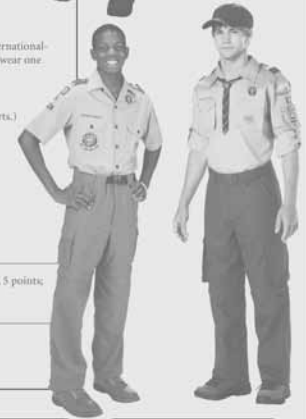
#### Shoes. Leather or canvas, neat and clean.

5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Registration. Current membership card or temporary certificate on person.

3 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Uniform points. Total points from above (70 possible)



5 pts. right pocket, 5 points; left sleeve, 5 points; shoulder epaulets, 5 points.

#### Inspection Score

Troop/Team No. \_\_\_\_\_

Patrol/Squad \_\_\_\_\_

Our unit inspection will be held on \_\_\_\_\_

Bring this form with you.

No. 34283

## Scout Leader

### Uniform Inspection Sheet

#### Uniform Inspection.

Conduct the uniform inspection with common sense; the basic rule is neatness.

#### Attendance. Presence at inspection merits 15 points.

15 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Headgear. Headgear is optional.

- 5 pts.  Boy Scout leaders wear the olive visor cap, campaign hat, or troop-approved headgear.  
 Varsity Scout leaders wear the blaze visor cap.  
 Cub Scout pack leaders wear the olive visor cap.  
 Den leaders wear the same visored cap as the youth they serve.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Shirt/Blouse and Neckwear. New long or short sleeves, or official long or short sleeves with appropriate loops on epaulets. Neckwear is optional but must be worn according to specifications in the Insignia Guide.

20 pts.

- Male Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders wear the long- or short-sleeve uniform or official shirt.  
 Female Cub Scout leaders wear either the official long- or short-sleeve yellow blouse, official long- or short-sleeve shirt, or the official long- or short-sleeve uniform blouse.  
 Female Boy Scout leaders wear the official shirt or official long- or short-sleeve uniform blouse.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Pants/Shorts. Units have no option to change.

20 pts.

- Male Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders wear the official pants or the official uniform shorts or pants with no cuffs.  
 Female Cub Scout leaders wear the pants or the official navy blue shorts, skirt, or pants with the yellow blouse, or the official pants or official uniform shorts or pants with the official shirt or blouse.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Belt

5 pts.

- Male leaders wear the official web belt or official leather belt with the buckle of their choice.  
 Female leaders wear the official navy blue Cub Scout or Webelos Scout buckle with navy blue pants, or the official web belt or official leather belt with the buckle of their choice with official pants or official uniform shorts or pants.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Socks

5 pts.

- Male Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders wear olive socks with official pants or official uniform shorts or pants.  
 Female leaders wear the blue socks with the blue shorts or pants, or the olive socks with official pants or official uniform shorts or pants.

#### Shoes

5 pts.

- Must be neat and clean.

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

#### Uniform points. Total points from above (75 possible)

#### Insignia. Correct epaulets, 5 points. Correct placement on left sleeve, 5 points; right sleeve, 5 points; left pocket, 5 points; right pocket, 5 points. Use the checklist on the reverse of this form to help determine score.

Insignia points from reverse (25 possible)

#### Total Uniform Inspection Score

Uniform and insignia points combined. A perfect score is 100 points.

\*For more information about insignia, see the Insignia Guide, No. 3388.



#### Total Uniform Inspection Score

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Office or position in unit \_\_\_\_\_

Our unit inspection will be held on \_\_\_\_\_

Bring this form with you.

Venturers have the option to decide if they want to wear the dark green uniform. If they do, they wear their patches in the same locations as Boy Scout and leader uniforms. They wear the dark green epaulets.

No. 34048

## Tiger Cub, Wolf Cub Scout, and Bear Cub Scout

### Uniform Inspection Sheet

**Uniform Inspection.**  
Conduct the uniform inspection with common sense; the basic rule is neatness.

**General Appearance.** Allow 4 points for each:  
 20 pts.  Good posture  
 Clean face and hands  
 Combed hair  
 Neatly dressed  
 Clean fingernails  
 Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Headgear.** Tiger Cub cap, Cub Scout Wolf cap, or Cub Scout Bear cap, according to den.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Neckerchief and Slide.** Triangular, Orange with blue border for Tiger Cubs. Gold with blue border for Cub Scouts working in Wolf book. Light blue with dark blue border for Cub Scouts working in Bear book. Each is secured by a slide for that rank.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Shirt.** Official long- or short-sleeve, navy blue. Wear with either pants or shorts.  
 15 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Pants/Shorts.** Official navy blue pants or shorts, no cuffs. To be worn with official long- or short-sleeve navy blue shirt.  
 15 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Belt.** Official navy blue web belt cut to proper length with Tiger Cub or Cub Scout insignia on buckle.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Socks.** Dark blue official socks with orange tops for Tiger Cubs and gold tops for Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_





**Shoes.** Neat and clean.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration.** Current membership card or temporary certificate on person.  
 5 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Insignia.** Correct placement: left pocket, 5 points; right pocket, 5 points; left sleeve, 5 points; right sleeve, 5 points.  
 20 pts. Notes \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Uniform Inspection Score**  
 A perfect score is 100 points.

\*For more information about insignia, see the Denman Guide, Vol. 2006.

**Total Uniform Inspection Score** ▶

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Pack No. \_\_\_\_\_

Den \_\_\_\_\_

Our unit inspection  
will be held on \_\_\_\_\_

Bring this form with you.

No. 34282

Pack inspections are held in the fall. Troop inspections are held in the spring and fall. Occasionally you will be asked to inspect the unit.

If you must conduct a uniform inspection alone, do so in a friendly but dignified manner. Involve the pack or troop leaders. The senior patrol leader goes with you as you inspect the whole troop, each patrol leader joins you for his patrol, and den chiefs join you for their own den inspections.

As you move through the inspection, find things to compliment along the way. At the end of the inspection make a brief complimentary statement.

When unit committee members are available, use them as inspecting officers. Have them work in teams. While one inspector is checking uniforms, the other can inspect insignia.

Uniform inspections are kept short and snappy. They are morale features rather than major parts of unit meetings.

There are printed uniform inspection sheets for Cub Scouts/Webelos Scouts, Boy Scouts/Varsity Scouts, male leaders, and female leaders. Ask your staff leader for copies to keep in your notebook. You may also download these sheets from the commis-

sioner Web site. These helpful sheets show proper uniform wear and insignia placement.

A supply of inspection forms should be secured, one for each youth and adult. Seven to fourteen days before inspection, unit leaders explain the plan, distribute the forms, and instruct the members to bring the inspection forms back to the inspection meeting. These forms are taken home so members can check all details of uniform and insignia.

## MAJOR DEVIATIONS

The BSA Scouting program is broad and flexible in operation. There is no canned program, and units do not operate under a rigid system. However, you must learn to tell the difference between creative programming and major deviations from Scouting methods.

For example, when a Cub Scout pack substitutes a theme of its own that doesn't appear in any of our program material but has activity for everyone, that's creative programming. But when a pack committee decides that Tiger Cub dens will operate like Webelos dens, that's a major deviation from the Scouting method.

If a troop that has the capability decides to camp on its own halfway across the country, that's creative programming. If a troop becomes a drum and bugle corps, eliminating the patrol method and advancement, that's major deviation.

Often it is best to involve the district committee in such situations. You, as a friend of the unit, provide help and coaching through others as you deem necessary.



## The National Centennial Quality Unit Award

The vision of the program is "To improve the QUALITY of program in every unit in America!"

A unit commissioner is successful when the units he or she serves are providing a quality program for youth. The national Centennial Quality Unit Award is one of the BSA's principal measurements of Scouting success.

The Centennial Quality Unit Award recognizes outstanding packs, troops, teams, crews, and ships that conduct quality programs for their youth. Here's how it works:

The unit may earn the Centennial Quality Unit Award based on its achievement in six key criteria as outlined on the commitment form. During a meeting in the first part of the year, a review is made by a council representative, usually a commissioner, with the unit leadership to determine the commitments to be made for the upcoming calendar year.

The unit fills out the commitment form, usually between December and February, and has it signed by the unit leadership, the commissioner, and the district executive. The original is retained by the unit and a copy is returned to the local council service center so the unit's commitment can be properly recorded.

Between the following October 31 and December 31, the unit leadership and the commissioner meet to review the unit's progress toward qualifying. If during the discussion it is determined that the unit has qualified, the "achievement form" is signed and submitted to the council for processing. The unit can then order the awards for the youth and adult members to recognize them for qualifying.

If this evaluation is completed before the end of the year and it is determined that they still have some work to do to qualify, they can develop a plan of action to complete those specific criteria prior to year-end. One of the major duties of the commissioner during the year is to assist the unit in achieving its commitments for each criteria as the year progresses. This will allow every unit to become a Centennial Quality Unit.

There are streamers, plaques, emblems, and pins to use for recognizing units and unit members. You will want to help present the recognition pieces. Units receive recognitions dated for the calendar year. There are also emblems available for all council and district volunteers to wear on their uniform if they qualify for the Centennial Quality Council or District Award.

As a commissioner, you

1. Become knowledgeable about the award criteria, forms, and procedures. See the national Web site at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) or the commissioner Web site to

- review the latest award criteria for packs, troops, teams, crews, and ships.
- 2. Carefully brief unit personnel of the units you serve and assist them in establishing their goals for each criteria.
- 3. Throughout the year, provide help and encouragement for units to meet award criteria.
- 4. Guide the annual review of unit achievement for the award.
- 5. Provide a proper presentation of the recognition for the unit's achievement in front of their youth members and their families.

## Service to New Units

Do you remember the care you gave a baby son or daughter? Consider the sensitive care in building a cooking fire after a storm. How delicately does the glassblower treat his new work of art? Successful council leaders know that commissioners must treat new units with the same finesse. Provide immediate service to the new unit (remember the fire builder).

How do commissioners care for a new unit? Here are some dos and don'ts:

- 1. First, be absolutely sure that a new unit is under the care of a commissioner before the organizer leaves the unit. Provide transition; allow no time to elapse between the organizer's and the commissioner's supervision.

- 2. Make the presentation of the first unit charter a very special event for members of the chartered organization and the unit members. This will help cement a closer relationship between the unit and the chartered organization.
- 3. Attend the first meeting of the unit committee. Listen and guide, but do not take over. If necessary, help the committee chairman build the agenda. Concentrate on having an enthusiastic committee that supports the work of the unit leader.
- 4. Unit leader training is a priority and should be done as quickly as possible. Follow up if unit leaders missed Fast Start or basic training. Provide the missing sessions if they cannot get to district courses. Tailor the training to the unit.
- 5. Be sure new unit leaders get "youth buy-in." In crews, be sure youth officers are elected and that the Advisor trains the officers using appropriate training material. Success requires that youth embrace the program.

In troops, be sure the patrol method is used. Troop success depends on the development of boy leaders.

In packs, be sure that all dens are meeting regularly.

- 6. Don't assume that the unit will have a program. Guide the unit in planning the first month or two of its program. Be sure unit leaders know about program helps and other program resources.





7. Be sure that unit leaders get to the next district roundtable.
8. Encourage them to keep track of youth advancement. Good rank advancement is a sign of how the unit is progressing.
9. Don't appear to be a "checker-upper." Commissioners are there to assist and guide, like good friends. Be a good listener. First impressions are very important with a new unit.
10. Help the unit start plans for a long-term outdoor experience (Cub Scout resident camp or day camp, Boy Scout resident camp, Venturing superactivity, etc.). Does the council have a video or other presentation that will help the unit get excited about camp? Use a camp video with parents and leaders, or take leaders to visit camp.
11. Recognize unit successes. Congratulate leaders for all achievements, no matter how small.
12. Help leaders solve immediate concerns. Don't let them fester. Be their best Scouting friend and confidant.
13. Play a helpful mentoring role with unit leadership, and a trusting relationship will continue.

New units have a greater chance to succeed if a unit commissioner is assigned and gets acquainted during the organizing process.

## Special Notes on Priorities

✦ **Unit commissioners should not fall into the trap of doing everything except their appointed job—unit service.** Because of the many programs and activities of Scouting, unit commissioners might find themselves promoting projects, carrying messages, acting as judges, running FOS campaigns, etc. While all these activities are unquestionably important, they are *not* the primary responsibilities of unit commissioners.

Unit commissioners cooperate with other Scouting personnel working on specific programs even though they are not responsible for them. However, commissioners must concentrate their Scouting time helping with specific unit needs and helping each unit become more effective with its program and operation.

The unit commissioner should stay in close touch with the assistant district commissioner, district commissioner, or district executive about how the district can help strengthen the quality of a particular unit's program and leadership.

✦ **Commissioners must not be registered as unit leaders.** Although some commissioners may be registered on a unit committee because they have a Scout in the unit or because of previous personal history in the unit, **their principal Scouting obligation must be with commissioner responsibilities.**

There is no room in a person's schedule for other Scouting assignments. A commissioner who accepts other jobs in Scouting probably does not understand the scope of his or her assignment. Carrying other jobs in Scouting will only dilute the effectiveness of their vital role as a commissioner.

✦ A commissioner might be tempted to give the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Good commissioners do not. They establish priority units. Priority units receive their most careful attention.

✦ **Prioritize unit needs.** Keep a running list of needs, problems, and desirable improvements for each of your units. Highlight the most urgent needs and problems. Most people's time is limited, so concentrate your energies on the unit needs you have highlighted.

For example, a unit commissioner becomes aware that the Scoutmaster of Troop 10 absolutely must be replaced. However, the commissioner has been asked by someone to find out who will represent his three units at a ticket sales kickoff, get Troop 10 registered for the camporee, and solve a uniform problem in Troop 10. But hold on, absolutely nothing that commissioner might be expected to do is more important than helping Troop 10 with the replacement of its Scoutmaster.

Replacing a Scoutmaster involves the chartered organization and the troop committee. It might involve some very sensitive human relations and a lot of careful commissioner diplomacy. It involves some important Scouting procedures, keeping things going during the transition of troop leadership, and getting the new Scoutmaster off to a good start.

The unit commissioner might not want to consider much else in Scouting until Troop 10 has a new Scoutmaster. Helping Troop 10 replace their Scoutmaster could be the difference between the life or death of the unit. By comparison, solving the uniform problem or getting someone out to a ticket sales meeting is unimportant.

See chapter 8 for the process and specific procedures for treating the "hurry cases" of unit service. "Commissioner Paramedics" deal with priorities.

# 7—YOUR COMMISSIONER STYLE



There is increasing awareness of the importance of a commissioner's style to a commissioner's success. Diplomacy, exceptional service, and service recovery are part of that style.

## Frontline Diplomat

Units are people. To help units succeed, today's commissioners must be people-oriented more than procedures-oriented. They are truly a council's frontline diplomats. Because they operate mostly by persuasion rather than by legislation, unit commissioners should exercise the highest degree of diplomacy.

Good unit commissioners operate with skill and grace in their relationships with unit adults. They handle new and difficult situations in a way that maintains good relations and avoids offending people. They help unit leaders operate more effectively without arousing their hostility. Unit commissioners can conduct negotiations between several people who might not be working well together.

Unit commissioners also are sensitive to different personalities, cultures, socioeconomic lifestyles, and unit circumstances. As Lord Baden-Powell once said: "What suits one particular troop, in one kind of place, will not suit another within a mile of it."

**What are the qualities of Scouting's diplomat?**  
A model commissioner should

- Be an effective communicator
- Be a good listener
- Have sound judgment
- Be tactful
- Have Scouting background or be a fast-track learner
- Be both persistent and patient
- Be adaptable
- Know and practice Scouting ideals
- Be enthusiastic
- Treat everyone with respect, even when they annoy you

## Exceptional Service

Exceptional commissioner service has three important qualities:

1. It **exceeds unit leader expectations** rather than barely meets expectations. Simply meeting the expectations of unit leaders is not enough in our increasingly competitive society. Most people expect more than just "good enough" service.

Here is a formula for successful commissioners:

**EXCEPTIONAL DISTRICT SERVICE EQUALS UNIT LEADER PERCEPTION OF HELP RECEIVED MINUS HELP THE UNIT LEADER EXPECTED.**

Think about ways to exceed the expectations of unit adults.

2. It provides **caring service**, not just competent service. Commissioners must truly care about units. Commissioners must believe in unit people. Commissioners must have a solid relationship with their assigned units.
3. It is provided **promptly**. Unit adults want service now, not when we get around to it. Commissioners respond promptly to unit needs. If they don't, they may not get a second chance to help—or worse, there may not be a unit left to help. Exceptional district service results in successful units.

## Roots and Wings

**“There are two lasting gifts we can give our children—one is roots, the other is wings.”** Thus reads one of those card shop posters with a scenic panorama and two soaring seagulls.

“Roots” and “wings”—that is a profound bit of advice for any of us who work with children. It's also a profound message for commissioners involved with the Boy Scouts of America.

Commissioners have some of the deepest **roots** in Scouting's history; they are the keepers of the traditions and standards of the BSA. Perhaps it's a paradox that commissioners also have **wings**. They are on the cutting edge of progress in the BSA as they help unit leaders understand and utilize change and new ideas to keep Scouting relevant to the world in which we live.

**Roots** give Scouters a sense of confidence and commitment—those feelings that cause people to continue helping youth despite challenges and barriers along the way. Commissioners help units feel a part of the great traditions of Scouting . . . the inspiration of a campfire, the pride in wearing the uniform, or the excitement of the camporee. Commissioners uphold the ideals of the Scout Law and Promise, the value of youth leadership, and the quality of good unit programs. Good commissioners have roots.

**Wings** give Scouters the excitement of personal growth and the freedom to embrace change. With wings, Scouting can remain relevant and responsive to youth. Commissioners help units feel comfortable with program improvements. They help units see the excitement of new ideas. Commissioners help each unit

relate what the unit is doing in the community around it and the cultural background of the young people it serves. Good commissioners have wings.

**Good commissioners have both roots and wings.** A roots-only commissioner can be boring or even oppressive. These commissioners may perpetuate rigid patterns and nostalgia that no longer fit a given unit or community or council. Roots-only commissioners need wings.

A wings-only commissioner may sell out the solid values of good Scouting, breed insecurity in others, and only enjoy change for change's sake. These commissioners often don't help others build a strong bond to Scouting. Wings-only commissioners need roots.

Effective commissioners balance their roots and their wings.

## Service Recovery: How to Right a Wrong

“To err is human; to recover divine,” says Harvard customer service expert Earl Sasser. He adds that we may strive for perfection, but we won't be perfect; so when there are mistakes, we must have a process to make them right.

Such advice is as valuable for Scouting as for businesses, schools, and other organizations in the community. We do make mistakes: the national office prints conflicting information in two of its publications; a local council double-books a favorite summer campsite; a district changes the roundtable location and forgets to tell all of the leaders; a commissioner fails to show up at a pack committee meeting; a Scoutmaster forgets to award a Second Class badge at a court of honor.

When a mistake happens, what should we do?

- Find a sincere way to say “I'm sorry.” Admitting a mistake might not be easy, but it sets the stage for overcoming a blunder in the future.
- Act immediately. People appreciate prompt action. Don't let problems fester; they often get worse—at least in the minds of the offended.
- Take the initiative. It's often wise to notify a unit of a blunder and start the recovery process even before unit Scouters discover the mistake: “Bill, we lost your charter renewal envelope. We'll help you redo the paperwork, and the council will reimburse you the bank fee to stop payment on the check you wrote for registration fees.”
- Smooth ruffled feathers. Remember that some people might be upset not only with the person or group who blundered but also with the whole Scouting organization.

- Let them know you care. Council and district attitudes toward unit people are crucial. Unit Scouters must be treated like the champions of Scouting they are. Commissioners must assure them that “We care about you!”
- Turn a blunder into an opportunity. When a mistake happens, don’t think just about damage control. Find creative ways to handle the problem to maximize unit leaders’ satisfaction with the district or council so that they feel better about Scouting than they would have if the mistake had never happened.
- Be prepared. Commissioners are empowered to handle, correct, and make restitution for blunders that affect unit people. Know how to listen for a problem, interpret what you hear, and take appropriate action.

Be thankful if a unit adult promptly expresses dissatisfaction to you so you can try to do something about it. You may have a worse problem if that leader simply leaves dissatisfied or lets the problem fester, thus affecting unit operations.



# 8—BE A LIFESAVING COMMISSIONER



No, you don't carry a rope and life buoy. But, when there's a "critical illness" in one of your units, you become a "Scouting paramedic." You become a "lifesaving commissioner." You may even help put together a "lifesaving team." The urgent cases you're likely to face include loss of adult leadership, no unit program, or conflict between unit leaders and the chartered organization. **Without intensive care from you or a team of lifesavers, such a unit could become terminal and stop serving kids.**

Dead units, obviously, provide no help to youth. Perhaps your district volunteers have made a pact not to lose another unit. Perhaps you have made a commitment never to lose a unit. **That will require prompt, intensive, and often persistent care when major unit problems occur.**

## Watch the Vital Signs

Just as paramedics and other medical caregivers check vital signs, so a good commissioner watches the vital signs of a unit. Any one or a group of bad signs should alert you to a life-threatening situation:

- Youth dropping out
- No youth recruiting or poor recruiting methods
- No adult leader

- No planned program
- No youth leaders
- No discipline
- Unit stops meeting
- Charter lapses
- Chartered organization leader unhappy with the unit
- Only one adult active
- No involvement of parents
- Adult conflicts/poor communication

Can you think of other life-threatening vital signs?

Now, go into action!

## Go into Action Fast

Don't wait until next month's commissioner staff meeting. Don't wait until someone else suggests the perfect solution. Go into action now.

A commissioner might be tempted to give the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Paramedics don't do that. Neither do lifesaving commissioners. Establish that unit as a *priority* unit. Priority units receive your most careful attention.

Regardless of unit trauma, there are specific things you can do:

- **Consult with your assistant district commissioner or district commissioner.** Touch base with your district executive. They may have information you need. They need to know what you now know. Plan together. Individuals often save lives, but paramedic teams are better.
- **Ask some basic questions:**
  1. What problems must be solved to save this unit? (Be sure to distinguish between a real problem or issue and merely a symptom of a problem.)
  2. What are alternative strategies for solving the problems and saving the unit? (Outline at least two possible strategies.)
  3. Which strategy are you going to try first? Why?
  4. Who will you involve? Who is going to do what? When?
  5. How will you know the unit is saved?
  6. If all else fails, what is “plan B”?
- **Be enthusiastic** and transmit this enthusiasm to other people who are involved. Unit leaders who are discouraged will be uplifted by your attitude that their situation is far from hopeless. Share a vision of the future but be sure that vision is realistic for the unit’s current situation. **Demonstrate that you care.**
- **Apply “first aid”** for the priority unit. If the unit leader quits, keep youth members meeting with another adult. If there’s no organized program, get one going. If the unit is not meeting, identify adults who are still around and consult with them. Provide an incentive: what this unit will mean to boys in the neighborhood, or to specific boys by name.
- **Apply “second aid”** for the unit, based on your best strategy or action plan.
- **Generate a real atmosphere of teamwork** by involving the other people you talk with. As you involve others, gain their commitment to help. Give them specific things to do to help. Organize people around some tangible nucleus of activity. Perhaps that activity is a troop’s first overnight camp experience . . . or a court of honor/parents meeting . . . or a get-together with the head of the chartered organization to plan for the unit’s future. Reassure people you won’t leave them alone and you will help show them what to do. Hit-and-run service won’t do.
- Occasionally, unit commissioners might find it necessary to recommend changes in personnel or in the way a unit is operating. Replacing a leader is often a delicate matter. Such action is taken with

good judgment and tact and involves the chartered organization. Because Scouting operates mostly by persuasion rather than by legislation, commissioners must exercise the highest degree of diplomacy.

- Whatever the problem, examine the facts, consider possible solutions, reach a conclusion, and move toward action.

## Typical “Hurry Cases”

BSA first aid books teach us about “hurry cases.” Most accidents you come upon will be minor. You will have plenty of time to give first aid treatment. However, the following situations, called hurry cases, are life threatening. You must quickly administer the correct first aid. Otherwise, the victim might die—in this case, a unit with Scouts who want to be active in Scouting.

- Stopped breathing
- Poisoning by mouth
- No heartbeat
- A blue baby
- Severe bleeding
- Comatose
- Choking

**Unit Not Meeting.** (“Stopped breathing”) A unit that has stopped meeting is in serious trouble. You must move quickly to salvage the remaining leadership and membership. The gap in meetings may just be the result of a misunderstanding. Contact the leaders, committee, parents, and members of the chartered organization.

**Unit with No Leader.** (“No heartbeat”) If the unit leader has quit or leaves for any reason, see that the leader is replaced quickly. Call the committee chairman and help the committee select and recruit a suitable replacement. Ask the committee chairman to assign a registered adult to continue troop meetings in the interim. It’s often important to keep the incentive for unit leadership very visible and very alive.

Carefully review *Foundations for Selecting Unit Leadership*. Helping a unit and its chartered organization recruit quality unit leaders may be the greatest contribution you can make to the future of good Scouting.

When a unit acquires a new leader, your interest and help can make the difference between success and failure. If the leader is new to Scouting, training is needed. Ask your district commissioner to arrange with the district training committee to begin coaching and formal training immediately. Your job is to encourage the new leader to participate in training. In some cases, you may need to take the new leader to the next training course or roundtable.

Meanwhile the new leader needs orientation. You are the best person to do that. You know the unit and its condition.

**Unit with No Committee.** (“Choking”) A unit leader with little or no adult help might not survive very long or the unit program weakens and youth get cheated out of the great opportunities of Scouting.

If the committee is not working, get in touch with the chartered organization representative and explain the importance of having an active committee of at least three people. If the chartered organization representative is not responsive, go to the head of the organization. Set the date for a meeting of those who could serve. If the head of the organization is reluctant, ask the district executive to help.

**Unit with No New Members.** (“Severe bleeding”) Units should register new members year-round. If no new members are added and there are plenty of youth in the area, find out why the unit is not growing. A commissioner should be alert to the need of regular recruiting and bring this to the attention of the unit leader. There are many ways to recruit new youth. Check with your district executive.

Lack of youth members may, however, only be a symptom of other problems. Good attendance is the clearest indication that members are getting a good program. When the trend is consistently downward, program planning may be defective or the leadership may be weak.

Commissioners must help leaders grow to fit their units, rather than keep units small to fit the leadership.

Sometimes unit leaders will decide not to accept new youth because they don’t have enough help. Explain to them that help often comes from the parents. Keeping youth out of the unit only eliminates the possibility of their parents becoming involved.

Leaders who tell you that they want to keep the unit small because it’s easier to handle may lack confidence. They are probably running a one-man show and will eventually weaken the program unless you help them find other interested adults to share the unit leadership.

However, there is usually a limit to a given leader’s membership capability. Some can handle only 16 youth while others can lead 50 or 60.

Without a growing membership, there can be no Scouting.

**Unit Conflict with the Chartered Organization.** (“Poisoning by mouth”) Misunderstandings sometimes occur, and they can threaten the life of a unit if left unresolved. You may need to play a neutral role; be a mediator. Help unit leaders realize that the unit belongs to the chartered organization. Help leaders of the chartered organization realize they have some

responsibility for the success of the unit. Work toward bringing unit and chartered organization leaders together to talk and build some consensus about the unit. Help them get better acquainted and recognize their mutual objectives.

A commissioner who has gained the respect and friendship of both unit and chartered organization leaders should have little difficulty in getting them to work together.

Check the “Chartered Organization Support” section of *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* for more ideas.

**New Unit Leader Lacks Orientation or Training.** (“Blue baby”) Give the new leader preliminary information about the unit. Learn as much as you can about the new leader. Provide some basic printed materials to get him or her started. Review basic program literature.

Have all new leaders exchange their names and contact information. Explain what other people in the unit do: The chartered organization representative represents the chartered organization, the unit committee supports the unit program and helps with administration, and assistant leaders help the leader with unit operation.

Refer the leader to the unit record book and the unit roster to become familiar with the unit’s attendance, age distribution, rank distribution, and den or patrol organization. Show a few of the basic program resources. Be sure to provide a Fast Start videotape and viewer’s guide for their program level or reference them to the online E-Learning Center on the council’s Web site or [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).

Let the new leader talk. Answer questions. Show that you have a strong personal interest in their unit. Explain the value of training courses and roundtable.

When the session is over, you should have a good idea of the new leader’s strengths and weaknesses. You can now plan the best method to help the leader develop their full potential.

**Unit with Weak Leadership.** (“Comatose”) In almost every case, a problem unit stems from weak leadership that must be either strengthened or replaced. Remember that the unit belongs to the chartered organization, and you must not remove leaders. You do have the responsibility, though, to see that the Scouts receive a good program. Therefore, it’s your duty to impress upon the chartered organization representative and unit committee the importance of providing strong leadership for their Scouting unit.

## Continue Normal Care

Medical caregivers don't stop routine care and preventive health practices when the patient lands in the hospital. It's just that the emergency must come first. Use a time of crisis as a time to resolve other much smaller problems. Sometimes, in time of crisis, you really have the attention of unit people. It could be a good time to help them see other ways they can improve their unit program and operation.

Use *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* to continue normal unit care.

Keep in mind that if you have strong, regular contact with unit adults before problems occur, problems can usually be resolved easily. It's all about good relationships and building trust.

Sometimes a unit leader just wants to be heard. So be a good listener. That's one of the best ways to prevent communication gaps later.

## Lifesaving Team Approach

Some districts may use a formal lifesaving team approach to save the most distressed or highest priority units. A permanent lifesaving team works within the district to provide Scouting CPR and operate the district's intensive care operation.

## Urban and Rural Areas

Major urban and rural low-income areas may have a much higher percentage of fragile, precarious units. The need for unit lifesaving is much greater. Methods may vary. Even the way unit service volunteers in the district are structured may be different.





# 9—HOW TO REMOVE A VOLUNTEER



What? “Fire” a volunteer? Can that be done? If so, how can it be done? Most key council and district leaders have asked these questions, and they deserve some answers. As a commissioner, you should be prepared to help guide volunteers with these questions.

***Note:** This chapter does **not** address removing a person on cause or grounds for legal action such as theft, misrepresentation, or committing an immoral act. (That information exists elsewhere.) This chapter will focus on the ineffective volunteer, the person who just isn't working out. You know that something must be done, but you don't know what or how.*

First, here are some types of poor performance:

- 1. Bad chemistry.** This refers to the person who just can't get along with others and may even greatly offend some, driving good people out of Scouting.
- 2. Bad politics.** This volunteer is a poor team player who is not in keeping with the organization's image. This person prevents others from being effective and may also drive them out of Scouting. This volunteer may hate his or her Scouting responsibility and lets others know it.
- 3. Bad job.** This volunteer may be a nice person but simply doesn't perform assigned tasks and can't seem to meet the objectives of his or her Scouting responsibilities.

## What to Do

Guide volunteers with these ideas first. Sometimes easy solutions work.

- Some people simply don't know what to do, so train them. Sit down for a friendly and helpful coaching session.
- Find something else for them to do in Scouting. Most people have things they can do well. Discover their hidden talents. Gracefully change their assignment to build on their strengths.
- Some people try to do too much in Scouting. That's often our fault. We have asked them to do more than is reasonable, so reduce their workload.
- Get your facts straight; don't act on hearsay.
- Sit down in a relaxed setting to talk about what's going on. Often the person is the first to know things aren't working out but might be reluctant to ask for help.

## If All Else Fails

There will be times when a volunteer has gone beyond the point where coaching, training, or a change of assignment will help. Quick action might need to be

taken for the good of Scouting. Don't let a bad problem fester. Now what?

First, you don't really "fire" a volunteer, you replace one. "Hire" and "fire" are words for the workplace, not volunteer organizations. Replacing a volunteer sounds more positive.

## Who Has the Authority?

Who has the authority to remove a volunteer? A good rule of thumb is this: *The person or group with the authority to appoint a volunteer has the authority to remove and replace that volunteer.* For example, a district commissioner appoints an assistant district commissioner (ADC); the district commissioner may clearly find a replacement for the ADC.

In the case of unit Scouters, commissioners must remember that it is the chartered organization that has made the appointment. The commissioner role is to help the head of the chartered organization or the unit committee to make the change.

In the case of an elected officer, the local council may decide to go through the normal district nominating committee process to remove such a volunteer.

## Now Act

Write or make a visit. Here are some ideas you can suggest to key people in your chartered organization.

- If writing, use some variation of the following:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_ Council (or the chartered organization), I extend our thanks for your role in \_\_\_\_\_ (unit or district). Your time, efforts, and involvement are appreciated. Your replacement has been nominated and confirmed by \_\_\_\_\_. This is effective \_\_\_\_\_ (insert date).

Your support in this transition would be appreciated as the \_\_\_\_\_ (insert organization/unit/committee/etc.) endeavors to carry out the policies and procedures of the BSA.

- If you visit (in most cases, this is best), don't go alone. Having a second person along might keep things under control and running smoothly. Here are a few additional tips:

—Make an appointment. Say that you want to talk about his or her future as a \_\_\_\_\_ in Scouting, and mention the volunteer who is coming with you. Refuse to say more. He or she should get the message.

—Be businesslike, brief, and pleasant. Tell the person that you have made a mistake. He or she apparently isn't able to carry out the assignment. You had assumed otherwise, and that was your mistake. Commend the person's other contributions in or out of Scouting, but indicate that you must now take action to replace the volunteer in this assignment. Be factual. Be prepared to listen. Don't argue.

—Honor the person's dignity and avoid gossip. Don't verbally attack the volunteer. Protect his or her self-esteem. Share the responsibility and say, "We've both made some mistakes." Don't dump all of the blame on the other person. Don't say something you might be sorry for later. Just explain, wait, listen, repeat yourself if necessary, and leave.

—Be prepared for four possible reactions. The volunteer might:

1. Be smooth and controlled
2. Be shocked and emotional
3. Become angry
4. Be relieved and ready to discuss practical solutions for the future

—Before pulling the plug, make sure members of the next higher authority to you, are behind you. Then you can tell the person that the decision is nonnegotiable.

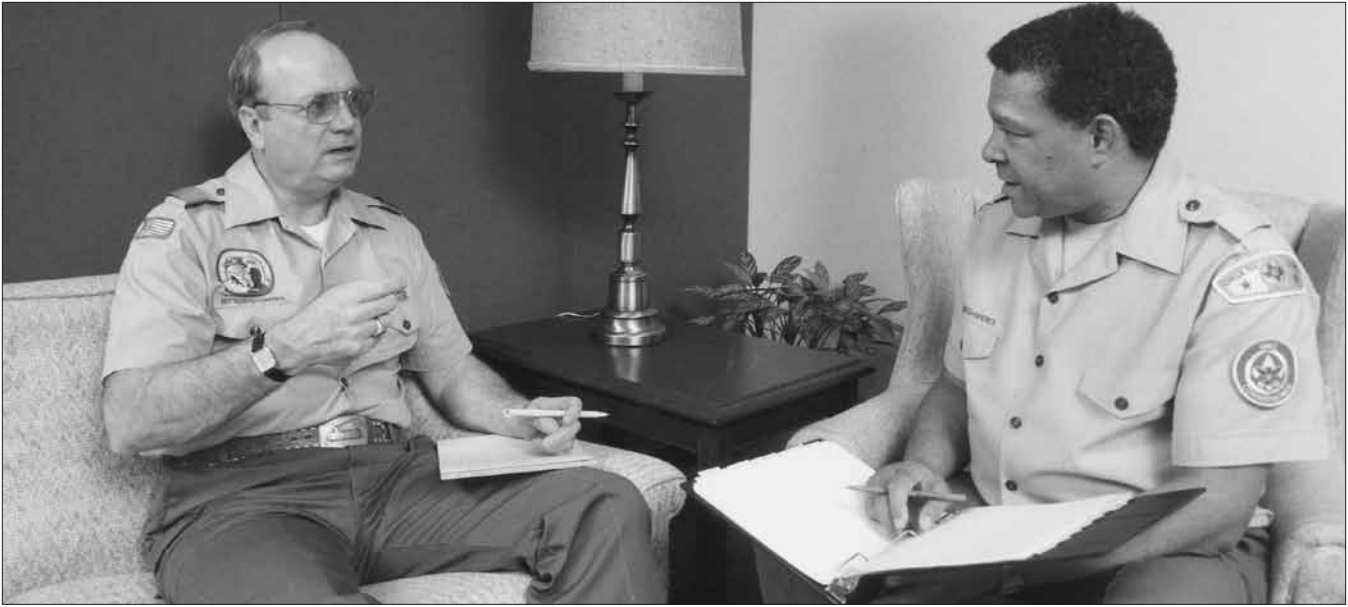
Some of this may seem a bit strong. There is no joy in this task for anyone. Removing a volunteer is one of a leader's most difficult tasks. It requires discipline, good judgment, and sensitivity. Always keep two things in mind: (1) Do what's best for youth, and (2) The BSA has a right to choose its leaders.

## Learn for the Future

Try to do the following:

- Get a clear understanding of the assignment before recruiting.
- Select the right person.
- Try new people out a bit at a time.
- Train and coach.
- Have an understanding of what constitutes a job well done.

# 10—COUNSELING



The best way to strengthen a unit is to strengthen its leadership. Counseling is an effective method of helping unit leaders develop their potential. Even the leader who has completed formal training and has years of experience can benefit from counseling. Where the need for an answer or a solution is not immediate, counseling is preferred over teaching. As a commissioner, you should develop your ability as a good counselor.

In fact, coaching a leader through a difficult problem and arriving cooperatively at a solution is one of the most rewarding moments for a commissioner.

**Counseling is the ability to listen and react in a way that will help others solve their own problems** and attain their potential. Counseling is the art of helping others arrive at the right answer by their own analysis of the situation and the facts. When it is done skillfully, they may not even know that they have been guided. You should counsel whenever someone needs

- Help to solve a problem,
- Encouragement in a difficult task,
- Help interpreting facts,
- Assistance to resolve indecision or confusion.

Here are some points that will help you become an effective counselor.

1. Carefully select a time and place where there will be few interruptions. Provide a *relaxed atmosphere*. The midst of a unit meeting is obviously not such a time.
2. *Listen* more than you speak. Remember the old Vermont proverb “Don’t talk unless you can improve the silence.” Listen for hidden meaning and watch body language.

3. Try to *understand* what a leader tells you. The commissioner first tries to understand before he or she tries to be understood. You may need to check out your understanding with the other person (“Bill, are you saying that . . . ?” or “Bill, is . . . how you really feel?”)
4. Let the leader know that you *really hear* what they are saying. Acknowledge with brief verbal or non-verbal cues what the leader is saying so they know they are not talking to dead air.
5. *Do not give quick, easy advice*. Guide leaders as they find ways to solve their own problems. Sometimes people just need friendly, nonjudgmental ears or sounding boards. Talking it out can help them clarify the solutions and learn to trust their instincts—with your help.
6. *Summarize* the problem and help them organize their thoughts.
7. *Support their thinking with further information* and data. You may suggest several possibilities, but let the leader select the one he or she thinks might work. *Provide facts*. Know the difference between information and advice.
8. *Encourage* them to review verbally several possible solutions to the problem.
9. *Be supportive*. Talk through the person’s problem with them. Even if it seems small to you, it may be big to them, so don’t minimize their challenge.
10. *Reflect feelings*. Restating feelings indicated by the leader helps to clarify his or her meanings and to show sympathy for his or her point of view.
11. *Use positive body language*. Leaning forward, good eye contact, and hand gestures indicate interest.

(How would you feel if the listener's eyes were closed?)

12. *Be aware of your biases.* Commissioners are likely to have conversations that test their own prejudices. Try to remain open in a conversation where biases might make you a poor counselor.
13. *Avoid making judgments.* A warm, sympathetic listener creates a spirit of openness—especially for emotions. If the commissioner criticizes each statement and each feeling expressed, the leader will likely clam up.
14. *Avoid anger.* Some leaders can be very trying. They may accuse or criticize the commissioner, or use ethnic or sexual insults. Anger is the worst defense. Remain cool and professional.

Let your unit Scouters know that what is important to them is also important to you.

## Making Suggestions

Often it's better to offer a suggestion in the form of a question. Sometimes they are more acceptable when they come as questions. For example, perhaps a unit leader will tell you he is not getting any help from his unit committee. Here are some questions that might help:

“Do you make a report to the troop committee at each of its meetings?”

“Have you thought about ending your report with the specific help you need next month?”

“Could you have an understanding with your chairman that at the close of your report, he will take the needs for the unit and assign them to the members of the committee?”

## Leadership Styles

If you are to counsel people in leadership effectively, you must know something of leadership styles. Three styles of leadership are often identified:

1. *Autocratic*—The leader runs the show. Members do not make decisions.
2. *Democratic*—The leader advises members who make the decisions.
3. *Laissez-faire*—The leader lets the group make all the decisions without any direction from the leader.

Good leaders will use each of these styles. They will choose the one that is best for each given situation. For example:

1. Leaders supervising unit swims where there are possible dangers give orders and expect obedience (autocratic).
2. Pack leaders are planning a Cub Scout bus trip. The activity chairman explains financing and available tours, and lets the group decide (democratic).

3. A number of weekend activities have been suggested by members of the patrol leaders' council. The leader sits back and lets them discuss and decide (laissez-faire).

Each leadership style expects a certain response:

1. Autocratic—obedience
2. Democratic—cooperation
3. Laissez-faire—initiative

However, if only one leadership style is used constantly, the reaction is likely to be:

1. Autocratic—defiance
2. Democratic—inaction
3. Laissez-faire—chaos

## Decision Making

Unit leaders and committee members make many decisions that affect the welfare of the unit. Since the commissioner has a major concern for the health of the unit, the best possible decisions are desired. For a commissioner to effectively counsel leaders and committee members, the decision-making process must be understood.

There are five basic steps that will help make a decision that leads to action:

1. Determine the real problem.
2. Examine the facts.
3. Consider possible solutions.
4. Reach a decision on the best solutions.
5. Move toward action.

## Additional Counseling Tips

- Allow at least 30 to 40 minutes to discuss a major issue.
- Don't try to cover more than two key issues in a single session.
- Rehearse the session in your mind before the visit.
- Try to spend two-thirds of your time in supportive behavior and one-third of your time in solving problems.
- State things in a gentle, non-aggressive, and non-threatening way.
- Convey a “let's solve this together” attitude.
- Don't get frustrated—change often takes time.
- Unless a commissioner has demonstrated helpfulness to unit leadership, that commissioner hasn't earned the right to offer more direct guidance and may have difficulty developing a meaningful relationship with unit people.

# 11—YOUTH PROTECTION

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## Child Abuse

The Boy Scouts of America is deeply concerned about the tragedy of child abuse. Use the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*, to discuss this issue openly with parents and Scouting leaders. This pamphlet is located in the front of every Scout's handbook.

If you suspect a case of child abuse, report your suspicions to the Scout executive (or his/her designated staff member) immediately. They are equipped with the latest information regarding how Scouting is geared to deal with this critical issue. Remember that taking action is critical because if nothing is done, that child and other children will continue to be at risk. Child abuse can be physical, mental, sexual, or neglect. It can come from a variety of sources, both within and outside Scouting, including abuse by other youth, by leaders, and by parents.

Adults react to child abuse in a variety of ways, from outrage, to fear, to disbelief, to indifference. Some parents have the notion that their children will somehow be exempt from this danger. None of these approaches is really useful. Scouting has long advocated that parents should be involved with their children's Scouting activities. Every Scout leader should encourage parents to know the adult leadership, join in planning events, and to get acquainted with other parents and their children.

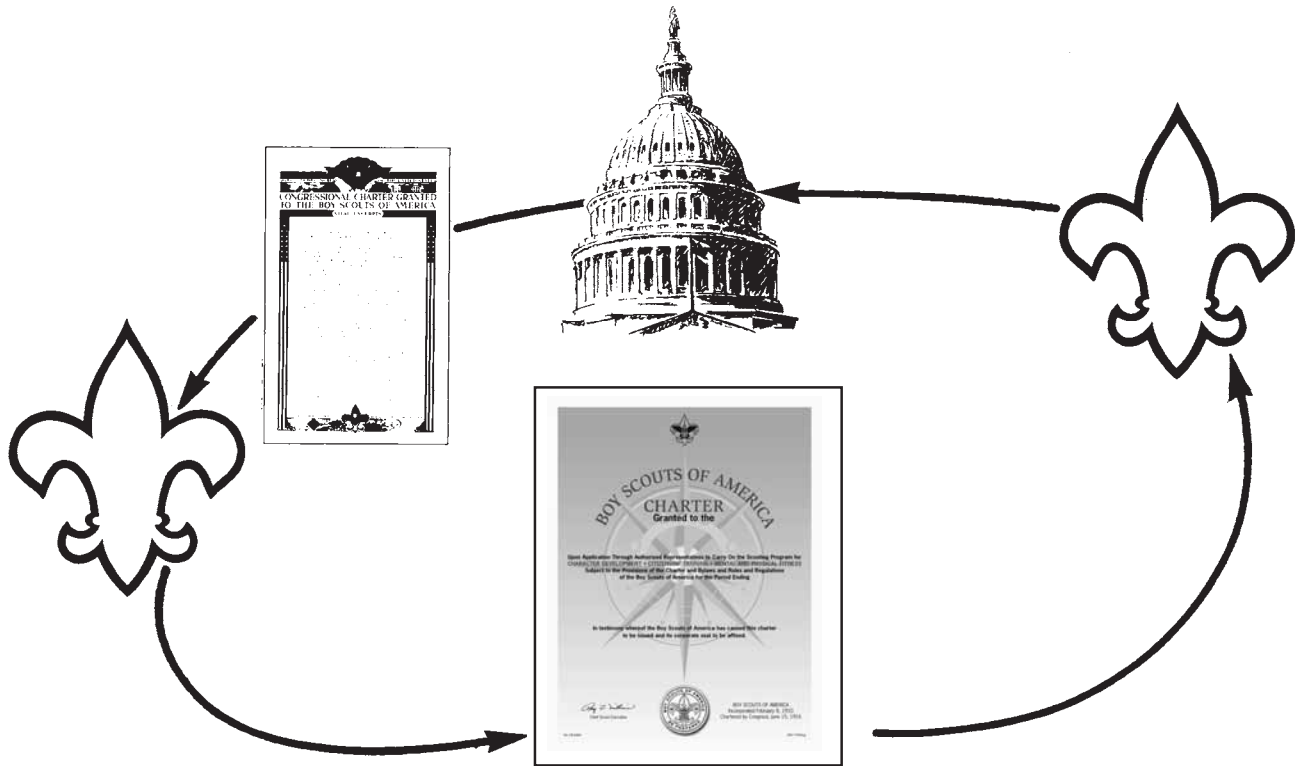
## Youth Protection and the Commissioner

Each unit commissioner plays an important role in youth protection:

1. Annually explain and promote the latest training, booklets, and videos about BSA Youth Protection for unit adults in every unit you are assigned to serve. This is usually done as part of your November visit at a unit committee meeting.
2. Help units and their chartered organizations use proper leader-selection procedures.
3. Coach unit people if child abuse occurs.
4. Promote unit use of the videos designed to protect youth from sexual abuse: *It Happened to Me* for Cub Scout age, *A Time to Tell* for Boy Scout age, and *Personal Safety Awareness* for high school age.
5. Explain to unit adults how the boy and parent use the inserts in the front of the youth handbooks.
6. Consult with your council. Talk with your district commissioner or district executive to find out about the latest BSA resources on the prevention of child abuse.



# 12—UNIT CHARTER RENEWAL



Scouting is unique among youth organizations. One of its most unusual characteristics is that it doesn't own or operate Scouting units. The ownership of packs, troops, teams, and crews is vested in other community organizations or groups that generally have as their main activity something other than Scouting. Representatives of Scouting approach these organizations and convince them of the value of owning and operating one or more units. The Scouting movement provides the program, technical help, and special outdoor facilities. The chartered organization provides an adequate, safe meeting place and dedicated, capable adult leadership, and adheres to the principles and policies of the BSA. Through the strength and wisdom of this arrangement, millions of youth have benefited from Scouting. Without this unique working association, the program would be costly and limited to a very few.

## Service to Chartered Organizations—Year-Round

Provide year-round service to chartered organizations and their units so they are successful in achieving their objectives.

The professional Scouter serving the district should have an ongoing relationship with the head of the chartered organization. This relationship is built around personal visits which should be conducted at least once a year. On each of these visits the professional:

- Discusses the success or needs of the unit and begins the solution of any problems.
- Reviews the role of the chartered organization and the local council to help the unit be successful.
- Reviews key personnel to determine replacements, additional personnel, and recognition.

As a commissioner, you also help maintain a good relationship with the chartered organization and between the organization and its units. You help everyone see Scouting as an integral part of the chartered organization's program for youth. You also help facilitate congenial, constructive communication between unit leadership and leaders of the chartered organization. See *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* for specific actions by commissioners related to chartered organizations.

## Renewing the Scouting Charter

Since 1916, when Congress granted a charter to the Boy Scouts of America, Scouting has granted charters to organizations. Scouting renews its national charter by reporting to Congress annually. Likewise, chartered organizations report to Scouting once each year to renew their local charters. As a commissioner, you are in an excellent position to help chartered organizations carry out their trust and renew their privileges and obligations. **The commissioner is responsible for the on-time charter renewal of all assigned units.**

# Charter Renewal Process

## OBJECTIVE

Provide a plan to reregister packs, troops, teams and crews on time with no, or minimal, losses in membership and adequate leadership.

## THE PLAN

The National Council provides a service to councils that enables units to expedite the paperwork portion of the charter renewal process over the Internet. This option, launched from the council's Web site, provides a more accurate and efficient renewal for many units and for the local council.

This option changes *only* the paperwork of the unit charter renewal process, and it should be integrated with *all* of the person-to-person steps described below. They are still an important part of the process. Here's how it works (*online activity in italics*):

- ✦ At Least Four Months Before Renewal Date. The **council prepares a unit charter renewal kit for each unit** due to reregister, including *a letter outlining the use of the Internet rechartering system, the council's Web site address, and the unit's unique access code.*
- ✦ At Least 90 Days Before Unit Renewal Date. The **district executive visits the head of the chartered organization** to renew the Scouting relationship. This visit is an opportunity that they cannot afford to delegate to anyone else. In districts where all units have the same renewal date, district executives must start even earlier to complete all visits on time.

The meeting should be a face-to-face discussion, since the relationship concept is central to our mutual long-term success. The local council provides a computer printout of adults and youth members presently registered. This form serves as the charter application and is inserted into the prepared charter renewal envelope. The professional serving the district delivers the envelope to the key person in the chartered organization to carry out the steps of charter renewal.

Obviously, if problems are anticipated in the reregistering of the unit or there is other major corrective action to be taken, this visit should be held earlier so that positive action may take place prior to the renewal date.

**The commissioner** should keep the district executive advised of any matter which might affect the smooth renewal of the charter. Don't wait until charter renewal time to address major problems.



- ✦ Sixty Days Before Unit Renewal Date. Using the computer printout, **the commissioner** and unit committee **conduct a membership inventory** of currently registered youth and adults. All inactive members are listed and assigned to various persons who will visit or contact them to attempt to reactivate them. Be sure to brief the visitors/callers on what to say when they make their calls.

Every effort should be made to recruit additional youth and adults so that the unit can reregister with no loss in membership. Also, be sure to register any youth who are participating but are not yet registered.

The charter review date is set and officials of the chartered organization, the unit committee, unit leaders, and the unit commissioner or other district or council representative are urged to attend.

- ✦ Sixty to 45 Days Before Renewal Date. **Units choosing to renew their charters online will select a person as their renewal processor.** *He/she will visit the local council's Web site, complete the steps through the submittal process, and print a revised charter renewal application to be brought to the unit's charter renewal meeting for review, discussion, and authorized signatures.*

*(To assist districts in this process, there is a report available to council employees with membership reporting capabilities titled Commissioner's Status Report. This report provides commissioners with the renewal status of each unit, including the date of first login, the current stage of the process completed, and date submitted. Two other reports that are available are the New Members Added Report and the Members Not Renewed Report. Both of these reports are designed to provide information to the district in an effort to follow up with new youth and dropped youth identified through the renewal process.)*

✦ **Forty-Five Days Before Unit Renewal Date.** The **commissioner** and unit committee chairman conduct the **charter renewal meeting**. Also in attendance should be the commissioner, chartered organization representative, executive officer of the chartered organization, unit leader, and all other unit volunteers. The executive officer of the chartered organization approves all volunteers and the unit leader certifies the youth to be registered.

During the meeting, additional changes may be made to the application. The renewal application with appropriate signatures and applications for new youth and adults (including appropriate fees) are all completed at this meeting.

All forms and fees are then delivered to the council office or the district's charter renewal turn-in meeting at least 15 days before the unit renewal date.

Units using a third-party unit management software program must submit *both* the signed hard copy and the computer disk with the completed charter renewal application. Proper registration fees and signed applications are also submitted.

✦ **Following the Renewal Meeting.** The **council's registrar** receives the charter renewal application, new youth and adult applications, and appropriate fees following the charter renewal meeting. *If the unit has renewed its charter using the Internet, the registrar reviews this information online along with the hard copies from the unit charter renewal meeting.* The registrar then creates the new charter and registration cards for the unit. The registrar mails the registration cards to the unit leader and makes the new charter available to the district for presentation by the commissioner.

✦ **Thirty Days After Renewal Date.** The commissioner makes a **formal presentation of the new charter** at an appropriate gathering of the chartered organization.

**Please Note**—Commissioners and professional staff must be sensitive to the fact that some units (for a variety of reasons) may need or choose to use the paper method for charter renewal. Do not criticize units that do not find the Internet method helpful; its use is optional. Help units use the option that is best for them.

## **FAILURE TO REREGISTER**

If the unit fails to reregister on time, immediately discover who has the charter renewal forms and what is holding them up. Consult with your district executive. Hand-carry the forms through the reregistering process and bring them to your district executive.

## **How to Do a Membership Inventory**

1. Appoint a unit adult to conduct the inventory.
2. You will receive computer printouts of all youth and adults registered during the past year.
3. Set a membership inventory date at a meeting of the unit. Before the inventory date, meet with unit leaders to discuss ways to make best use of the inventory.
4. At the unit meeting, the unit adult in charge of the inventory calls the roll. Following the unit meeting, the leaders and committee members meet. Absent or inactive members are coded on the unit copy only of the computer printouts. A review of the unit record book will supply information on recent attendance.
5. All absent or inactive members are assigned to various persons to contact them to determine if they are to be reregistered.
6. Unit leaders and committee members agree on a plan to recruit new adults and youth.



## UNIT CHARTER RENEWAL MEETING AGENDA

(conducted 45 days prior to charter renewal date)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| I. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING COMMENTS                  | Unit Committee Chairman  |
| II. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW                                 | Commissioner   |
| • Adult   |  |
| • Youth   |  |
| III. COLLECT FEES                                     |  |
| • Charter   |  |
| • Adult   |  |
| • Youth   |  |
| • <i>Boys' Life</i>                                   |  |
| IV. COMPLETE RENEWAL FORM                             | Commissioner   |
| • Check for accuracy and completeness                 |  |
| • Executive officer approves and certifies volunteers |  |
| • Unit leader approves and certifies youth            |  |
| V. CONFIRM CHARTER PRESENTATION DATE                  | Commissioner   |
| VI. CENTENNIAL QUALITY UNIT                           |  |
| • Review the annual commitment criteria               |  |
| • Analyze any needs to achieve award                  |  |
| VII. CLOSING COMMENTS                                 | Executive officer of the chartered<br>organization<br>Commissioner |

Troop 0540  
Charter Renewal

Troop 0540  
Unit: Troop 0540  
District: 02 New Horizons  
Unit Status: R

County: PASSAIC

Term (In months): 12

Expire Date: 10/31/2007

Chartered Organization: St Brendans Roman Catholic Church  
Liberty St  
Clifton, NJ 07011

Executive Officer  
Thomas Orlandi  
Liberty St  
Clifton, NJ 07011

Boys' Life:  
Term: 12 months  
Begins: 01/2007  
Ends: 12/2007

<p>Executive Officer Certification _____ Signature _____</p> <p>Our organization approves this application and all reregistering adults. I understand the responsibility for the approval of new adults can be given to our chartered organization representative (Complete information is on instruction sheet no. 28-420)</p> <p>Council Representative Certification _____ Signature _____</p> <p>24 Months Completed tenure _____ Disability Code _____</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">Registration</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Qty</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Fee</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paid Youth</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multiple Youth</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ XXXXXX</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paid Youth BL Subs</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paid Adults</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multiple Adults</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ XXXXXX</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paid Adult BL Subs</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Charter Fee</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 20.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">Total Fees Submitted</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> </table> <p>100% Boys Life _____ On Time Unit? _____</p>	Registration	Qty	Fee	Paid Youth	_____	\$ _____	Multiple Youth	_____	\$ XXXXXX	Paid Youth BL Subs	_____	\$ _____	Paid Adults	_____	\$ _____	Multiple Adults	_____	\$ XXXXXX	Paid Adult BL Subs	_____	\$ _____	Charter Fee	_____	\$ 20.00	Total Fees Submitted		\$ _____	
Registration	Qty	Fee																											
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Paid Adult BL Subs	_____	\$ _____																											
Charter Fee	_____	\$ 20.00																											
Total Fees Submitted		\$ _____																											

Position	Adult Members			Birth Date	Gender	Phone
	Trained	Name	Address			
Chartered Org. Rep. N	Robert P Dunham	10 Liberty Clifton, NJ 07011		04/15/46	M	H (972) 772-5031
Committee Chairman	Gene Rycharski	137 Nash Ave Paterson, NJ 07503	Y	12/01/51	M	B (972) 844-0666
Committee Member Y	Robert P Dunham	10 Liberty Clifton, NJ 07011		04/15/43	M	H (972)772-5031
Committee Member	David Pavoni	158 Dallas Ave Paterson, NJ 07503		12/08/61	M	H (972) 279-7956
Scoutmaster Y	Bernard Donohue	345 Ridgeway Ave Paterson, NJ 07503		12/02/48	M	B (972) 523-8764
Assistant Scoutmaster	Robert S Rycharski	137 Texas Ave Paterson, NJ 07503		03/23/87	M	(972) 274-4098

Adults Printed 6

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Troop 0540  
Charter Renewal

Youth Members

Rank	Name	Address	B/L	Birth Date	Grade	Gender	Phone
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Angelo Damiano	228 Liberty Ave. Paterson, NJ 07503	Y	10/03/92		M	H (972) 274-5586
	David Ernst	3011 Dallas Grapevine, TX 76051					
Tenderfoot	Steven Escudero	230 Liberty Ave. Paterson, NJ 07503	Y	12/01/91	8	M	H (972) 274-3133
Tenderfoot	Louis A Hilsky	11 Ham Ave. Clifton, NJ 07011		06/14/92	7	M	H (972) 772-1214
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Robert Kroezyński	180 Irving Ave. Clifton, NJ 07011	Y	06/06/90		M	
F	Jeremy M Kune	103 Deer Dr. New Bern, NC 28560	Y			M	

Youth Printed 6

Unit Leader Certification

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Unit Totals:  
Paid Adults 5  
Paid Youths 6  
Total B/L Subs 5

# UNIT RENEWAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

## UNIT INSTRUCTIONS

Cross out any incorrect information and enter the correct information in the blank space directly *below* each item.

District name and number, subdistrict name and number, county, unit number, status, term, and expire date can be changed if any are incorrect and the change is approved by the local council.

Chartered organization name, address, code number, and executive officer's name, address, and phone number can be changed if in error. The chartered organization can be changed only with the approval of the local council.

For BSA units, the *Boys' Life* term, begin date, and end date **MUST RELATE TO UNIT EXPIRE DATE**. *Boys' Life* end date must be two months after unit expire date. Cross out incorrect information and print new information.

For Venturing units, the special interest code and description should be entered.

## UNIT REGISTRATION FEES

Enter the number of paid youth members and their fees. Each unit must have at least five paid youth members.

### Executive Officer Certification

The executive officer of the chartered organization, by signature, certifies that the organization approves the application. The executive officer also certifies that the organization has approved all registering adults. In BSA units, the responsibility for approval of adults can also be given to the chartered organization representative. The chartered organization certifies that all registered adults subscribe to the Declaration of Religious Principle, policy of nondiscrimination, and the Scout Oath or Promise. Adults agree to be guided by the Charter, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America.

Enter the number of multiple youth members.

Enter the number of youth member *Boys' Life* subscriptions and the fees. Please calculate and remit the appropriate state and local taxes. On late registrations it may be necessary to deliver back issues.

Enter the number of paid adults and their fees.

### Council Representative Certification

An individual representing the council must sign here indicating that all procedures and policies have been followed.

Enter the number of multiple adults.

Enter the number of adult *Boys' Life* subscriptions and fees. Please calculate and remit the appropriate state and local taxes. On late registrations it may be necessary to deliver back issues.

**Charter Fee.** All units are required to pay an annual charter fee of \$20. This fee is submitted with the unit's application and helps defray expenses of the general liability insurance program.

Enter total fees required

- A. The number of months indicates the completed tenure for this unit as of the last expire date.
- B. If the unit is serving a majority of youth with disabilities, indicate code on proper line as follows:
- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| V – Visual             | O – Orthopedic        |
| E – Emotional          | D – Developmental     |
| H – Hearing            | L – Learning disabled |
| M – Mental retardation |                       |
- C. Place a "Y" on the line indicating 100 percent *Boys' Life* if at least one subscription to *Boys' Life* magazine goes to the home of each youth member.

### Adult Member Listing

Go through the computerized Charter Renewal sheets and draw a line through the complete information for any adult no longer active in the unit. Make sure every active adult in the unit is on the list. If any are missing, you must have an application for those individuals unless an application has been handed in since the Charter Renewal was originally run. In that case, write in the name and address on the Charter Renewal or the Overflow page. Check all the addresses, phone numbers, and birth dates. Correct any that are wrong or missing.

**Reregistering With No Change.** Do nothing.

**Position Codes.** Use the following codes to indicate a change in position. All positions may be male or female. The minimum age for these positions is noted in parentheses beside the position.

CR	Chartered organization representative (21)
CC	Committee chairman (21)
MC	Committee member (21)
TL	Tiger Cub den leader (21)
CM	Cubmaster (21)
CA	Assistant Cubmaster (18)
WL	Webelos den leader (21)
WA	Assistant Webelos den leader (18)
DL	Den leader (21)
DA	Assistant den leader (18)
PT	Pack trainer (21)
AP	Tiger Cub adult (18)
SM	Scoutmaster (21)
SA	Assistant Scoutmaster (18)
VC	Varsity Scout Coach (21)
VA	Assistant Varsity Scout Coach (18)
NL	Crew Advisor (21)
NA	Crew associate Advisor (21)
SK	Ship Skipper (21)
MT	Mate (21)

### Requirements for Pack Registration.

Packs must have: IH, CR, CC, two MCs, or one MC and one PT, CM, and one den leader who may be a Tiger Cub den leader, or a Cub Scout den leader, or a Webelos den leader. There must be an AP registered with each Tiger Cub. This person does not

pay a fee in this position or fill out an application if they are the parent of the Tiger Cub. If they are not the parent, an application must be filled out for this person. The following are optional positions: CA, WA, DA, PT.

#### Requirements for Troop Registration.

Troops must have: IH, CR, CC, two MCs, and SM. The SA is an optional position.

#### Requirements for Crew Registration.

Crews must have: IH, CR, CC, two MCs, and NL. The NA position is optional.

#### Requirements for Ship Registration.

Ships must have: IH, CR, CC, two MCs, and SK. The MT position is optional.

The above are the minimum requirements to register a unit. The only position that may register in more than one position in the same unit is the CR. This person may also be the CC or an MC. All requirements can be found inside the adult application.

**Fee Paid in Another Position/Unit.** An adult who paid a registration fee as an adult in another unit does not pay a registration fee in this unit. Circle the position.

#### Training – How To Update Top Leader Trained.

As of September 1, 2001, the positions trained must also include the top leader position in order for the training to reflect on council reports. All trained adults must have completed **AO1 – New Leader Essentials** as well as program-specific training below.

**Packs – Cubmaster** is the top leader and must additionally complete **C40 – Cubmaster Specific Training**.

**Troops – Scoutmaster** is the top leader and must additionally complete **S11 – Intro to Outdoor Leadership Skills** and **S24 – Scoutmaster Specific Training**.

**Crews – Venturing Advisor** is the top leader and must additionally complete **P21 – Venturing Leader Specific Training**.

**Ships – Skipper** is the top leader trained and must additionally complete **P21 – Venturing Leader Specific Training**.

**Teams – Varsity Scout Team Coach** is the top leader and must additionally complete **S11 – Intro to Outdoor Leadership Skills** and **V21 – Varsity Leader Specific Training**.

#### Youth Member Listing

Go through the computerized Charter Renewal sheets and draw a line through the complete information for any youth no longer active in the unit. Make sure every active youth in the unit is on the list. If any are missing, you must have an application for those individuals unless an application has been handed in since the Charter Renewal was originally run. In that case, write in the name and address on the Charter Renewal or on the Overflow page. Check all addresses, phone numbers, and birth dates. Correct any that are wrong or missing.

**Reregistering With No Change.** Do nothing.

A. Use the following codes to indicate changes in rank:

PACK	TROOP/TEAM
C Bobcat	N Boy Scout
W Wolf	T Tenderfoot
B Bear	2 Second Class
R Webelos	1 First Class
A Arrow of Light	S Star
	L Life
	E Eagle

**Registered but Not Listed.** An individual who is registered in this unit now, but whose name is not on the renewal application. Print all information in the proper space on the first available line, or on an overflow sheet.

For **Venturing** youth members, indicate sex by using the letter M for male and F for female.

**Boys' Life.** A youth member wants to get *Boys' Life*. Mark a "Y" in the *Boys' Life* column.

Follow the same steps as for adults regarding individuals with no change, dropped individuals, and new members.

**Unit Leader Certification.** The unit leader certifies that each member meets the age requirements as follows:

**Packs.** The Cubmaster certifies that each Tiger Cub is under the age of 8, is in the first grade (or is age 7), that each Cub Scout has completed first grade but has not completed third grade (or is age 8 or 9), and that each Webelos Scout has completed third grade but has not completed fifth grade (or is age 10 but not yet 11 1/2) and has parental consent.

**Troops.** The Scoutmaster certifies that each boy is under the age of 18, has completed the fifth grade, and is at least 10 years old, or has earned the Arrow of Light Award and is at least 10 years old, or is age 11 or older.

**Teams.** The Varsity Scout Coach certifies that each boy is at least age 14, and is not yet age 18.

**Crew/Ship.** The Advisor/Skipper certifies that each Venturing youth member is at least 14 and completed the eighth grade or is 15 years of age but not yet 21. The youth members in these units may be male or female.

#### EXCERPT FROM THE DECLARATION OF RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE

The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God and, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and the organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

Only persons willing to subscribe to the Declaration of Religious Principle and to the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America shall be entitled to certificates of leadership.

#### POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Youth membership in the Boy Scouts of America is open to all boys and young adults who meet the joining requirements. Membership in Scouting, advancement, and achievement of leadership in Scouting units are open to all youths without regard to race or ethnic background and are based entirely upon individual merit.



## Charter Presentation

The date of this ceremony is determined by the time of the receipt of the charter renewal application at the council service center. From four to six weeks should be allowed for the return of the charter. Membership cards are mailed to the unit leader by the council registrar according to the current national membership validation procedures.

If possible, stage the presentation under the auspices of, and at a regular meeting or activity of, the chartered organization. This serves to accentuate the character of the relationship, puts the organization in a better position to recognize its unit leaders, and assures attendance of the largest possible number of the organization's members.

The charter presentation belongs in the hands of the organization rather than the unit itself. There are members of the organization who will attend an organizational affair, but who will not be motivated to attend a meeting put on by the unit. It is important to capture the interest of as many members of the chartered organization as possible. Parents of youth members will be just as likely to attend in either case.

Each occasion must be considered individually, and circumstances will color the decision as to location of the ceremony. A unit consisting of youth of different religious faiths will require careful consideration, particularly if the organization is a religious one. Other things to be taken into account are personalities involved, available facilities, and community attitudes.

The charter should be presented to the head of the chartered organization unless that person directs otherwise.

### COMMISSIONER'S ROLE

Guide the unit leadership and the chartered organization in setting up the ceremony. Select a time when the ceremony can take place at a meeting or activity of the chartered organization, if this is practical. Otherwise, make sure that the head of the chartered organization can be present at a special meeting of the unit.

You should help coordinate the program, making sure that many people are involved. Some of the assignments might be:

**Chartered Organization Representative.** Reserve meeting facilities. Make an appointment with the head of the chartered organization to be present and prepared to receive the charter. Invite members of the chartered organization to attend.

**Committee Chairman.** Invite parents. Involve committee members in the program.

**Committee Members.** Help unit leaders with parts of program (awards, ceremonies) and setup (decorations, seating). Plan refreshments.

**Unit Leaders.** Plan unit program around the charter presentation.

Many councils develop special teams to present charters within the district. Toastmasters clubs are a good source of personnel for charter presentation teams as well as chamber of commerce members.

This in no way should detract from the commissioner's role—only supplement it if the human resources can be found.

Participants in the charter ceremony should include the head of the chartered organization, the chartered organization representative, chairman and members of the unit committee, unit leaders and assistants, den leaders and Webelos den leaders (if a Cub Scout pack), youth leaders (if in a Boy Scout troop or Venturing crew), and youth members of the unit.

Be sure you have the new charter to present.

## CHARTER PRESENTATION CEREMONY

This ceremony may be used at a meeting of a service club or as a part of a regular meeting of a chartered organization.

**Note:** A short inspirational message could be added to the following suggested charter presentation ceremony. Note that this ceremony is written for a troop, and must be adapted for use at a pack, team, crew, or ship charter presentation ceremony.

**Opening Statement.** “I am pleased to be with you to recognize the great relationship that exists between the Boy Scouts of America and \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization). The Boy Scouts of America exists primarily to serve chartered organizations and their needs as they reach out to serve youth of their respective organizations and youth in the nearby community.

“In recognition of this great relationship, I would like to call forward at this time the chairman and members of the (unit committee).”

**Charge to the Unit Committee.** *(Call forward the troop committee chairman and the members of the committee.)* “You have assumed the responsibility of being the board of directors for Boy Scout Troop \_\_\_\_\_ (number) a \_\_\_\_\_ (organization). The chairman of the committee presides over the monthly meetings of the troop committee and also assumes the direction of the troop should the Scoutmaster or assistants be unable to serve. As members of the committee, you have assumed the obligation of providing the troop with camping experiences, advancement opportunities, information on events and activities conducted by the district and council, transportation for troop activities, the financial stability in support of approved fund-raising projects, and guaranteeing continuity of the troop through the years.

“On behalf of the chartered organization, do you accept these responsibilities to be accomplished to the best of your ability? If so, answer ‘We do.’ *(Committee members respond.)*

“Congratulations! Please accept your registration cards as a member of the Boy Scouts of America.” *(Present cards to each person.)*

**Charge to the Scoutmaster and/or Assistants.** *(Call forward the Scoutmaster and assistants.)*

“You have accepted a major role on behalf of this chartered organization by assuming leadership of young people who will enjoy the Scouting program. You have accepted the responsibility of providing weekly programs, monthly camping trips, and participation in council and district events for your troop members. The time you devote to these young people will only be rewarded in the satisfaction you get from seeing them grow into great American citizens who will live by the Scout Oath and Law. On behalf of the chartered organization, do you accept these responsibilities to be accomplished to the best of your ability? If so, answer ‘We do.’ *(Scoutmaster and assistants respond.)*

“Congratulations! Please accept your registration cards as members of the Boy Scouts of America.” *(Present cards to each person.)*

**Charge to the Chartered Organization Representative.** *(Call the Chartered Organization Representative forward.)* “You have been appointed by your chartered organization to represent it as a voice in the local council of the Boy Scouts of America. You become an automatic voting member of the local council and will represent your organization at the annual council meeting, which selects leadership for the council for each ensuing year. In addition, you have the responsibility of coordinating the various Scouting units that exist in your chartered organization, making sure that they work one with the other to coordinate a natural graduation program from the Cub Scout pack to the Boy Scout troop to the Varsity Scout team or Venturing crew or ship. You are also a member of the district and are encouraged to provide assistance whenever and wherever you are able.

“On behalf of the chartered organization, do you accept these responsibilities to be accomplished to the best of your ability? If so, answer ‘I will.’ *(Chartered organization representative responds.)*

“Congratulations! Please accept your registration card as a member of the Boy Scouts of America.” *(Present registration card.)*

**Youth Leaders.** *(Call forth all youth leaders.)* “You have been selected as the youth leaders of this troop. You will be expected to be an example and you will be asked to provide leadership, program ideas, and initiative to all the members of the troop who fall under your influence. You are, above all, expected to abide by the Scout Oath and Law and set a leadership pattern for all to follow. On behalf of the chartered organization, do you accept these responsibilities to be accomplished to the best of your ability? If so, answer ‘We will.’ *(Youth leaders respond.)*



“Congratulations! Please accept your registration cards as members of the Boy Scouts of America.”

*(Present registration cards.)*

**Members of the Troop.** “Will all members of the troop please stand? As members of this Scout troop, will you do your best to attend meetings regularly, provide help to your leaders, personally advance in rank, and demonstrate your willingness at all times to abide by the Scout Oath and Law? On behalf of the chartered organization, do you accept these responsibilities to be accomplished to the best of your ability? If so, please answer ‘We will.’ *(All members of the troop respond.)*”

“Congratulations! Please accept your registration cards as members of the Boy Scouts of America.” *(Present registration cards.)*

**Charge to Parents.** “Will all parents please stand? As parents, you are expected to attend parents’ meetings of the troop, assist with needed transportation, provide leadership support when needed, and be willing helpers in time of need, in order to provide the troop with an outstanding program, quality leadership, and good parental support. If you are willing to do your best to support the leadership of the chartered organization and provide what help you can give to the program, please answer ‘We will.’ *(All parents respond.)*”

**Charge to the Chartered Organization.** “Will all members of the \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of chartered organization) please stand?”

“You have heard the troop committee, the troop leadership, the Chartered Organization Representative, the youth leaders, members of the troop, and parents all pledge their support to the Scouting program in this chartered organization. May we ask you to cooperate

with the Scout leadership chosen by your chartered organization and provide, whenever called upon, help to make this program a vibrant living part of the youth program and youth outreach of your organization? If so, answer ‘We will.’ *(All members of the organization respond.)*”

**Charter to the Head of the Chartered Organization.** *(Please call him or her forth.)* “You have heard the pledge of commitment of all these members of your organization and the troop in supporting the Scouting program as a major youth program for your organization. With the acknowledgment of this support, I am pleased to present to you the charter signifying your right to use the Scouting program for the year ahead in a way that conforms with both the rules and regulations of your organization and those of Scouting. On behalf of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, I present your charter and pledge the cooperation of the local district and council to help make the program a vibrant living part of your program for youth.

“I would also like at this time to introduce the volunteers (if these are present) from our district who will provide support to you. May I introduce (the district chairman, your commissioner and/or district commissioner, and any other visiting Scouters) who will help you carry out an effective program of Scouting for the year ahead.

“Thank you for the opportunity to present this charter and thank you for accepting Scouting as a program of action for your organization.” *(Present the charter and turn the program over to the head of the chartered organization to make any remarks.)*



# 13—UNIT INTERNET ADVANCEMENT

---

Online advancement entry is available! Each council has the option to make this available to its units. A council must be licensed for Internet rechartering in order to use this feature. An implementation packet is available through the council. It includes

- A sample training outline to use with unit leadership and other volunteers
- A Web page example to use as a beginning point of design
- Suggestions for obtaining and distributing the unit ID codes
- Frequently asked questions to use as the council supports units
- A CD with the contents of the packet, plus a PowerPoint presentation for training

Units can use Internet Advancement to record their youth member advancements from any online location—at home or at the office. They will find this new method to be easy, convenient, and accurate because they enter the information.

Here's how it works:

The council has an Internet Advancement page on its Web site with instructions and a link to this new functionality.

Internet Advancement makes it easy for unit leadership to record awards, ranks, and merit badges to youth via an online process. This system is separate from Internet rechartering, but uses a similar concept.

At any time during the year, the unit advancement processor from each active unit will be able to record advancements to youth member records. And, they'll also be able to print a unit roster at any time. The roster is the most current information from ScoutNET, and it will include the person ID for each adult and youth member.

These are other reports available from Internet Advancement:

- Unit Advancement Summary shows ranks, merit badges, and awards saved in each person record for current members of the unit.
- Advancement Report lists each youth member that has new ranks, merit badges, and awards, if any. This is the official unit Advancement Report to be signed and submitted to the office.
- Unit Awards Summary lists the number of new ranks, merit badges, and awards by name as a shopping list.
- Advancement Update Summary lists any ranks, merit badges, and awards that were already in the member record and were updated online.

The council will provide each unit with a unit ID, and the unit will assign an adult to record advancements. Ranks must be recorded based on program identification and in the correct rank and date sequence. Only the Eagle Scout rank cannot be awarded by this process. Awards to be entered will not include nominated awards, such as those for meritorious action, and awards that are controlled by other organizations, even if approved for uniform wear. As BSA policies for rank entry are enforced, what units enter will meet these requirements.

There's a link established to the Internet Advancement help on the council Web site. There's also a Frequently Asked Questions link on the Internet Advancement site and these should be reviewed.

If you have any questions or comments, contact your council office and they'll be glad to help you. Councils and districts are encouraged to provide an orientation at the district roundtables for units to learn more about Internet Advancement. This might be a regular annual session at the council's pow wow or University of Scouting or College of Commissioner Science.

# 14—UNIT COMMISSIONER TRAINING



One dramatic change in American society has been the need for learning as a lifetime activity. Education has become as important an activity for adults as it always has been for children.

Commissioners must also view learning as an important part of their Scouting lives. Plan to participate in the following commissioner training opportunities within the period allotted from the time you agreed to serve:

- Orientation video or Online Unit Commissioner Fast Start within 48 hours
- Personal coaching/orientation within 2 weeks
- Commissioner basic training within 2 months
- Arrowhead Honor earned within 1 year
- Commissioner's Key earned after 3 years
- Continuing education every month at commissioner staff meetings and special sessions during the year.

## Personal Coaching/ Orientation

Start by viewing the video, *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed from the Commissioner Service and District Operation Support DVD* or take the online Unit Commissioner Fast Start course by accessing the Online Learning Center at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).

Personal coaching is a person-to-person orientation that allows the trainee to set the pace. This learner-

oriented training should provide a full understanding of a subject before the next subject is introduced. Coaching orientation sessions for unit commissioners are usually conducted by district commissioners, assistant district commissioners, or sometimes by the district executive. Coaching sessions help develop good commissioner communication that extends far beyond training.

Personal coaching is also like on-the-job training. Coaching sessions are short and related to the trainee's experiences on the job. Coaching breaks the total job of commissioners into bite-size pieces for better digestion. Use pages 3–9 as part of your first orientation session with your commissioner leader/coach. Review other sections of the fieldbook in subsequent sessions.

## Basic Training



The new commissioner should participate in the three-session commissioner basic training course as soon as possible. This training involves actual visits to Scouting units and includes sessions on “Why Commissioners?” “Units: the Commissioner's Greatest Priority,” and “How To Help a Unit.”

After completion of commissioner basic training, the Trained Leader emblem may be worn below the badge of office.

Commissioners receive their formal commissions only after they have been properly oriented and have completed commissioner basic training.



No. 00933

## Arrowhead Honor

Only commissioners may wear the Arrowhead. It is a visible sign of competence. Arrowhead projects are measurements of performance. Successful completion is the result of good training. The Arrowhead Honor signifies a high level of performance and the ability to put training into practice.

To qualify for the Arrowhead Honor, *unit* commissioners complete commissioner basic training and the following projects:

1. Visit each assigned unit eight or more times throughout the year.
2. Fill in and follow up on a Unit Commissioner Work Sheet or use the Unit Self-Assessment form for each assigned unit.
3. Conduct membership and leadership inventories in each assigned unit.
4. Attend six district commissioner staff meetings and provide the training topic for one meeting.
5. Participate in a charter renewal meeting that results in on-time unit reregistration.
6. Participate in a charter presentation.
7. Attend a council commissioner conference or planning conference, or actively participate in a major council event.
8. Help a unit resolve a specific problem or improve some aspect of their unit operation.

### ARROWHEAD HONOR PROJECTS

**Commissioner Work Sheet.** Fill in and follow up on a Unit Commissioner Work Sheet for each assigned unit. The work sheet is designed for use after a visit to a unit meeting. Use the work sheet as a unit analysis and a plan of action to strengthen any weaknesses discovered. It should not be used as simply a report of unit weaknesses, but rather as *a guide to determine priorities for commissioner help*.

**Unit Self-Assessment Forms.** Each type of unit has a specific form describing a set of standards that helps a unit's leadership and the commissioner to evaluate their status in establishing the goals or vision for the unit annually. Individually, the unit leadership and commissioner will mark their status for each standard before they conduct the unit action planning meeting as to whether they are: (1) Doing great, (2) Need



No. 33750A

improvement, or (3) Need help. This format can help create some discussion between the unit leadership and the commissioner and determine how the district can assist the unit in achieving its goals.

**Membership and Leadership Inventories.** Conduct inventories in each assigned unit. The procedure is simple as outlined in the section "Charter Renewal." A unit commissioner must be able to conduct the inventory, interpret it correctly, and *coach the unit leader effectively to follow up on information gained from it*.

**Staff Meetings.** Attend six district commissioner staff meetings. These meetings keep you well informed about council and district activities, provide training opportunities, and give you the opportunity to join the companionship of men and women who enjoy doing something worthwhile. *See your district commissioner or district executive to get your training topic assignment*.

**Charter Renewal.** Participate in a charter renewal meeting. You may or may not conduct this meeting, depending on the procedure used in your district. However, *you are responsible for the on-time completion of the charter application* whether the charter review is at a unit committee meeting or a district coordinated review.

**Charter Presentation.** Participate in a charter presentation ceremony. Charter presentations may be conducted in many different situations, as described in this fieldbook. The highlight of the ceremony is the formal presentation of the charter to the head of the chartered organization by the commissioner. *Help make this a meaningful event for the chartered organization*.

**Conference.** Attend a council commissioner conference, College of Commissioner Science, University of Scouting, or other special training where you receive additional training in specific issues of commissioner service. This type of conference is usually held annually, and *is important to your development in commissioner service*.



## Commissioner's Key

To qualify for the Commissioner's Key:

### TRAINING

Complete personal coaching orientation including the orientation projects.

Complete the commissioner basic training sessions: "Why Commissioners?," "Units: The Commissioner's Greatest Priority," and "How to Help a Unit" outlined in *Commissioner Basic Training Manual*.

### TENURE

Complete three years as a registered commissioner within a five-year period.

### PERFORMANCE

Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award for your position.

## Continuing Education

A dynamic feature of today's society is the need for learning as a lifetime activity. As commissioners, we must continually adjust our skills to provide a more valuable service to our units. **Commissioners should therefore view learning as an important part of their entire Scouting lives. For all commissioners, training is a continuing process—every month, every year.**

Continuing education includes the annual council commissioner conference or similar opportunity and a short training topic at each district commissioner meeting. Commissioners may also participate in advanced unit program training such as Wood Badge. Some selected commissioners may participate in a national course at the Philmont Training Center.

Another valuable training resource is *Unit Problem Solving for Commissioners* part of the *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support DVD*. This video helps commissioners increase their skills in handling common, often unit life-threatening problems. For each of the problems, the video sets up the problem, instructs the group to discuss their ideas for a solution, and then adds video solutions to the group's ideas.

## A Basic Kit of Materials

Every unit commissioner should have a loose-leaf notebook containing materials and information that will facilitate service to the unit.

Following is a recommended list of notebook materials:

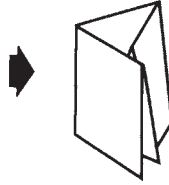
1. A list of units served, with a roster of the adults and youth members for each.
2. Names and addresses of council and district officers.
3. A map of the council and district.
4. A calendar of council and district events, including training opportunities.
5. Camp information.
6. Latest issues of *Boys' Life*, *Scouting*, and the council newsletter.
7. Commissioner Work Sheet (Cub Scout Pack).
8. Commissioner Work Sheet (Boy Scout Troop/Team).
9. Commissioner Work Sheet (Venturing Crew).
10. Guidelines for Action Planning Meeting
11. Pack Self-Assessment form
12. Troop/Team Self-Assessment form
13. Crew/Ship Self-Assessment form
14. *The Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.
15. *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

This fieldbook contains a list of other resources that are available to help units succeed. Commissioners should be thoroughly familiar with these. As they gain experience, they, no doubt, will acquire their own library of these references.



# UNIT COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE COMMISSIONER KEY/ ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD

Cut along solid lines; fold along dotted lines.  
**(Reproduce locally.)**



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ARROWHEAD HONOR RECORD</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Council _____ District _____</p> <p>Complete basic training and the following projects:</p> <p>1. Visit each assigned unit eight or more times throughout the year. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>2. Fill in and follow up on Unit Commissioner Work Sheets or self-assessment forms for each assigned unit. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>3. Conduct membership and leadership inventories in each assigned unit. Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TENURE</b></p> <p>Complete 3 years as a registered commissioner within a 5-year period. Tenure for one award cannot be used for other training awards. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMMITTEE ACTION</b></p> <p>The leadership training committee has reviewed this application and accepts the certifications as to the candidate's meeting the required standards. The award is approved. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRAINING</b></p> <p>Complete the three-session training program outlined in <i>Commissioner Basic Training Manual</i>. Date and Initial _____</p> <p>"Why Commissioners?" _____ First visitation _____ "Units: The Commissioner's Greatest Priority" _____ Second visitation _____ Third visitation _____ "How to Help a Unit" _____</p> <p>Complete personal coaching orientation including orientation projects. Approved _____ Date _____</p>
<p><b>Arrowhead Honor (cont.)</b></p> <p>4. Attend six district commissioner staff meetings and provide the training topic for one meeting. _____ _____ _____</p> <p>5. Participate in a charter renewal meeting that results in on-time unit reregistration. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Participate in a charter presentation. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. Attend a council commissioner conference or planning conference, or actively participate in a major council event. Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p>8. Help a unit resolve a specific problem or improve some aspect of their unit operations. Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">When completed, clip Arrowhead Honor portion and send to council service center.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Council _____ District _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">2006 Printing</p>

# 15—RESOURCES

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## Commissioner Service

- Administration of Commissioner Service*, No. 34501  
*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621  
*Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*, No. 33618  
Commissioner Work Sheet (Pack), No. 34125C  
Commissioner Work Sheet (Troop/Team), No. 34126A  
Commissioner Work Sheet (Crew), No. 33660B  
Guidelines for Action Planning Meeting  
Pack Self-Assessment form  
Troop/Team Self-Assessment form  
Crew/Ship Self-Assessment form  
*The District*, No. 33070  
*A Handbook for District Operations*, No. 34739  
*Commissioner Annual Orientation DVD*, AV-04DVD03  
*Commissioner Service and District Operation Support DVD*, No. AV-06DVD08, with audiovisuals in support of commissioner service—  
*Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: How Districts Operate*  
*The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*  
*Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners*  
Unit Commissioner Program Notebook, No. 26-006

Check out the commissioner Web site at [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners). This site includes information on all commissioner resources, podcasts on key issues of interest to all commissioners, and special presentations about topics of interest.

Note the select line of items to increase commissioner identity. They may be ordered at your council Scout shop or by calling 800-323-0732.

## Cub Scouting

- Cub Scout Program Helps* (annual), No. 34409  
*Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221  
*Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, No. 33832  
*Webelos Leader Guide*, No. 33853  
*How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*, No. 46-014  
*Cub Scouting's BSA Family Activity Book*, No. 33012  
*Cub Scout Leader Fast Start Training* video, No. AV-01DVD22

- Cub Scout Leader Specific Training*, No. AV-01V013  
*Pack Record Book*, No. 33819

## Boy Scouting

- Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 34554  
*Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009  
*Troop Committee Guidebook*, No. 34505  
*Troop Program Features* (Volume 1, No. 33110; Volume 2, No. 33111; Volume 3, No. 33112)  
*Troop Program Resources*, No. 33588  
*How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*, No. 100-015  
*Boy Scout Fast Start* video, No. AV-01DVD022  
*Boy Scout Leader Specific Training DVD*, No. AV-02DVD15

## Varsity Scouting

- Varsity Scout Leader Fast Start*, No. AV-02DVD04  
*Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook*, No. 34827

## Venturing

- Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655  
*Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494  
*Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239  
*New Crew Fast Start*, No. AV-0322CD  
*Venturing Fast Start CD-ROM*, No. AV-0321CD

## General

- Advancement Report, No. 34403B  
*Cub Scout and Boy Scout Fast Start Leader Training DVD*, No. AV-01DVD22  
*Troop/Team Record Book*, No. 34508  
Uniform Inspection Sheet  
Adult Leader, No. 34048  
Boy Scout/Varsity Scout, No. 34283  
Cub Scout/Webelos Scout, No. 34282  
Unit Renewal Application Instructions, No. 28-420

# 16—SELF-EVALUATION FOR UNIT COMMISSIONERS

Unit commissioners may ask, “How will I know I’m doing a good job?” That’s an important question for all Scouters. There are several answers.

A unit commissioner is successful when the units the commissioner serves are successful. Are your assigned units providing a quality program for youth? Are your assigned units growing in membership? Did your units reregister on time? Did they meet the requirements for the national Centennial Quality Unit Award last year? Are your units progressing toward qualifying for the Centennial Quality Unit Award this year?

A good tangible “yardstick” that provides unit commissioners with specific checkpoints of their effectiveness is the Self-Evaluation for Unit Commissioners found on the next page. This one-page form has more than 20 areas to mark either “outstanding,” “satisfac-

tory,” or “needs improvement.” After you have filled it out, review it with your assistant district commissioner or district commissioner. Discuss with them how you might provide even better service to units.

We often say that a commissioner’s best work needs to be done with our weakest units. Therefore, the fairest use of unit data in a unit commissioner’s evaluation is to measure the improvement in the unit from the time the commissioner was first assigned to the unit, or by specific problems the commissioner helped that unit solve.

For information on the Distinguished Commissioner Service Award, see page 56.

A commissioner is a person who sets high goals and has high standards. America’s youth deserve no less!

## 4 COMMISSIONER MODELS

### Which one are you?

*Effective commissioners combine good Scouting information and good human relations.*

*Of course, there are many kinds of people with varying degrees of ability. Meet four commissioners.*

#### “Super Scouter Scott”

Scott is the best informed commissioner in the district. He is always present to share his knowledge with unit people and is usually in uniform with as many badges as a person can earn.

However, he often overwhelms unit leaders with his experience, is somewhat insensitive to unit leader needs, and seems more interested in Scouting procedures than in people.

The message Scott conveys to unit folk is, “*You are a number. I am here to process you.*”

#### “Bad-News Bob”

Bob is poorly informed and disorganized about Scouting; is slow to respond to unit needs; and is often unsure how to help. He is also somewhat impersonal, aloof, uninterested, and insensitive to unit people.

The message Bob sends to units is, “*We don’t care.*”

#### “Exceptional Ed”

Ed is a friendly and tactful commissioner; is always sensitive to the needs of unit Scouters; and is interested in their potential to serve youth. Ed is also

well informed about Scouting, provides help in a timely manner, and is consistent in following through with appropriate guidance.

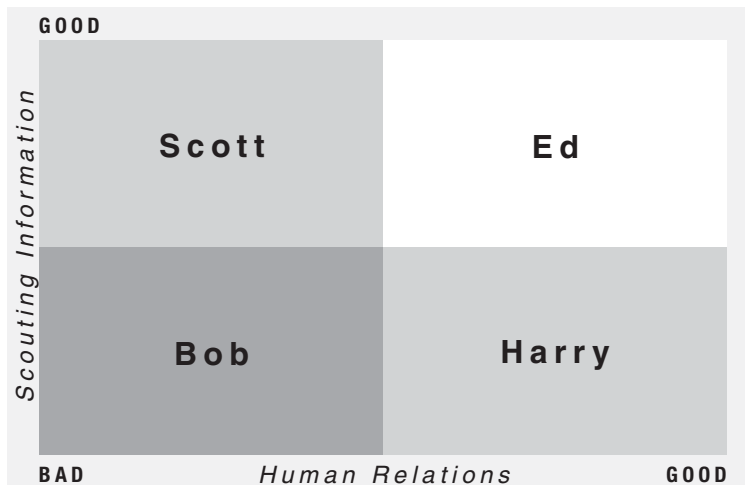
Ed convinces units that, “*We care and we deliver.*”

#### “Happy-Go-Lucky Harry”

Harry is a very personable commissioner who is inter-

ested in unit people and is tactful. Unit people love him. But, Harry is not sure how to help his units. He has weak Scouting program skills and is often slow in recognizing the need for unit operation changes.

Harry sends this message to unit leaders, “*We are trying hard, but we really don’t know what we’re doing here.*”



# SELF-EVALUATION FOR UNIT COMMISSIONERS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Council \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Units and chartered organizations served \_\_\_\_\_

Use this form to review your service as a commissioner and as a guideline for future performance. It can help you improve your quality of unit service.

## Instructions

1. Fill it out yourself.
2. Seek help from your staff leaders to improve problem areas.
3. Fill it out quarterly, semiannually, or annually as needed.

Evaluate your performance in each of the following areas:



**Outstanding**  
**Satisfactory**  
**Needs Improvement**

## SERVICE

- Interpret aims, methods, and program of the BSA.
- Exceed units' expectations for service.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## To Chartered Organizations

- Establish and maintain contact with chartered organization leadership and chartered organization representative.
- Understand goals of chartered organizations assigned.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## To Units

- Know unit conditions at all times—conduct visits and analysis.
- Assure rechartering of all units assigned.
- Promote commitment to Quality Unit achievement.
- **Identify and promote action on priority unit needs.**
- Use district committee for specialized help for units.
- Understand the procedure for proper unit leader selection, including approval of the unit leader by the head of the chartered organization.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## To Leaders

- **Be accessible to unit leaders.**
- Assist in year-round membership recruiting and roundups for youth and adults.
- Encourage attendance at roundtables/program forums, training events, and outdoor activities.
- Aid in counseling and morale building.
- Help ease the leader's burdens rather than leaving more burdens to carry.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## PERSONAL

- Attend and participate regularly in commissioner staff meetings.
- **Communicate effectively with others.** Listen well. Be diplomatic.
- Demonstrate proper uniforming consistently.
- Complete orientation and basic commissioner training.
- Participate in continuing education for commissioners.
- Commissioner service is my principal Scouting responsibility.
- Experience job satisfaction.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

List other areas of interest or concern:

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# 17—DISTINGUISHED COMMISSIONER SERVICE AWARD

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- Purpose** To upgrade commissioner service and to recognize commissioners who are providing quality service.
- Requirements** The following requirements are for currently active council commissioners, assistant council commissioners, district commissioners, assistant district commissioners, roundtable commissioners, and unit commissioners:
1. Complete training as outlined by the local council, including earning the Commissioner's Key.
  2. Serve as an active commissioner for five years and be currently registered with the Boy Scouts of America.
  3. Recharter at least 90 percent of the units in your area of service for a minimum of the past two consecutive years.
  4. Assist units so that more than 60 percent of the units in your area of service achieve the national Centennial Quality Unit Award for a minimum of the past two consecutive years.
- The following requirements are for roundtable commissioners:
1. Complete training as outlined by the local council, including earning the Commissioner's Key.
  2. Serve as an active commissioner for five consecutive years and be currently registered with the Boy Scouts of America.
  3. Conduct at least nine roundtables per year for the past two consecutive years.
- Recognitions**
1. The following recognition items are available from the Supply Division:
    - Distinguished Commissioner Service Award Plaque
    - Distinguished Commissioner Service Bolo TieThe title on both commissioner recognitions will read, "Distinguished Commissioner." The plaque is approximately 6 x 8 inches. The medallion is cast in three colors: Council Commissioner and assistants—silver; Plaque, No. 17610; Bolo Tie, No. 00747 District Commissioner, Assistant District Commissioner, and Roundtable Commissioners—gold; Plaque, No. 17609; Bolo Tie, No. 00748 Unit Commissioner—bronze; Plaque No. 17608; Bolo Tie, No. 00749
    - An embroidered square knot, No. 05019 (silver knot on red background), may also be presented.
  2. Local councils certify the eligibility of individuals, and present the recognition. (There is no national application.)

# 18—UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEETS



## UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEET (PACK)

FOR USE AFTER VISITING A MEETING OF PACK NO.

Under each heading (bottom half of this page and reverse), circle the number of the statement that most closely resembles the pack meeting.

- 1 = An ideal situation
- 2 = Could be improved
- 3 = Needs action

To profile these statements, place a dot in the Unit Profile next to the heading and under the number that corresponds to the number you circled under that statement below and on reverse. To form a profile, connect the dots with a line.

For example, in the category titled "Leadership," a nearly ideal situation would be indicated by circling the "1" next to "Meeting had several adults involved in a smooth operation," and a dot in column 1 on the "Leadership" line of the Unit Profile.

Check the ways you intend to help by dating the appropriate boxes (bottom half of this page and reverse).

Keep this form with the unit roster.

UNIT PROFILE			
	1	2	3
Leadership			
Webelos dens			
Advancement			
Youth attendance			
Membership			
Family attendance			
Den participation			
Meeting operation			
Den chiefs			
Tiger Cub dens			

### LEADERSHIP

- Pack meeting had several adults involved in a smooth operation.
- Several people involved but lacked coordination.
- Cubmaster ran the entire meeting.

#### Some Ways to Help

- Coach Cubmaster in the value of delegating jobs.
- Ask for time at the next leaders' meeting to help coordinate jobs.
- Contact pack committee chairman about more adult leaders.
- Review adult responsibilities in the *Cub Scout Leader Book*.
- Convince Cubmaster of the value of training for pack leaders.

#### Literature Reference

*Cub Scout Leader Book*, "Leadership" chapter

### DEN OPERATION

- Dens meet separately, each with a trained leader who has a good planned program.
- Dens meet separately but with little preplanning.
- Dens do not meet separately.

#### Some Ways to Help

- Help pack form dens that meet separately.
- Urge pack trainer to get all den leaders trained.
- Guide leaders to use Cub Scout den meeting program sheets.
- Be sure every new boy is quickly assigned to a den.
- Discuss with pack leaders the kinds of den activities that are fun and exciting for boys.
- Be sure all den leaders and the Cubmaster are using *Cub Scout Program Helps*.

#### Literature Reference

*Cub Scout Leader Book*, "Cub Scout Organization" chapter

### ADVANCEMENT

- Awards made with parent(s) or guardian(s) participating in impressive ceremonies.
- Awards to boys without parent(s) involved, with minimal ceremony.
- No evidence of advancement.

#### Some Ways to Help

- Convince leaders to take training.
- Ask pack committee to appoint an advancement committee member.
- Discuss with pack leaders the use of advancement report forms.
- Help leaders plan an exciting ceremony using Cub Scout resource books.
- Encourage family involvement in presenting awards.

#### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* "Advancement" chapter and *Ceremonies for Dens and Packs*

## YOUTH ATTENDANCE

1. More than 80 percent.
2. More than 60 percent.
3. Less than 60 percent.

### Some Ways to Help

- Urge den leaders to contact families before pack meetings.
- Determine if weak leadership must be strengthened or replaced.
- Note parent participation as this affects boy attendance.
- Help leaders put more life into pack meetings.

### Literature Reference

*Cub Scout Leader Book*, “Boys,” “Program Planning,” and “Family Involvement” chapters

## MEMBERSHIP

1. New boys are inducted regularly.
2. An occasional new boy inducted.
3. No new boys.

### Some Ways to Help

- Conduct a membership inventory as outlined in the *Cub Scout Leader Book*.
- Ask pack committee to appoint a membership committee member.
- Encourage Cubmaster to stage induction ceremonies.
- Help create new dens to allow for growth.
- Stress the importance of year-round recruiting.

### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* “Leadership,” “Resources,” and “Den and Pack Management” chapters

## ADULT ATTENDANCE

1. More adults than boys at meeting.
2. About the same number of adults as boys.
3. Only a few adults at meeting.

### Some Ways to Help

- Explain the importance of activity for parents.
- Promote the idea of a rotating trophy for den attendance.
- Recommend pack meetings at the same time and place each month.
- Ask the pack committee to actively promote attendance.

### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* “Family Involvement” chapter. Parents’ guide in *Cub Scout books*.

## DEN PARTICIPATION

1. All dens active at pack meeting.
2. All dens participate to some extent.
3. Weak den participation.

### Some Ways to Help

- Encourage Cubmaster to get den chiefs trained.
- Urge the use of planning sheets to involve all dens.
- Encourage use of tables for each den’s exhibits.
- Suggest that boys and families be seated by dens.

### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* “Cub Scout Activities” and “Program Planning” chapters, *Cub Scout Program Helps*, and *Webelos Leader Guide*

## MEETING OPERATION

1. Orderly meeting ran without delays, using written program.
2. Good meeting but some confusion.
3. Disorderly meeting.

### Some Ways to Help

- Coach Cubmaster on need for advance planning.
- Take leaders to next roundtable.
- Urge use of a written agenda showing everyone’s duties.
- At next leaders’ meeting discuss timing of a good pack meeting.

### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* “Program Planning” chapter, *Cub Scout Program Helps*, and *Webelos Leader Guide*

## DEN CHIEFS

1. All Cub Scout and Webelos Scout dens have active den chiefs.
2. Some den chiefs at meeting.
3. No den chiefs.

### Some Ways to Help

- Meet with pack leaders and sell the den chief idea.
- Meet with Cubmaster and a Scoutmaster or crew Advisor to set up den chief recruiting.
- Meet with Cubmaster to set up den chief recruiting.
- Help pack trainer set up a den chief training plan.

### Literature References

*Cub Scout Leader Book* “Leadership” chapter and *Den Chief Handbook*.

## TIGER CUB DENS

1. There are one or more Tiger Cub dens, each with a trained Tiger Cub den leader.
2. Tiger Cub dens have little interaction with the pack.
3. There are no Tiger Cub dens.

### Some Ways to Help

- Help pack leaders organize a Tiger Cub den.
- Urge pack leaders to get a Tiger Cub den leader trained.
- Help pack leaders understand the unique nature of the Tiger Cub program.
- Suggest five to nine partner teams per den.

### Literature References

*Tiger Cub Handbook* and Tiger Cub chapter in *Cub Scout Leader Book*



# UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEET (TROOP)

FOR USE AFTER VISITING A MEETING OF TROOP NO.

Please don't use this worksheet during the troop meeting. You are not grading the troop's performance. You are only looking for ways to help. The form suggests how you might address any deficiencies. Plan your strategy before discussing it with the Scoutmaster or others in the troop. **Remember you are the troop's friend and your job is to help them to be successful.**

Under each category, circle the number of the statement that most closely resembles the troop meeting.

- 1 = An ideal situation
- 2 = Typical unit or could be improved
- 3 = Weak situation or needs action

To profile these statements on the Unit Profile, place a dot under the number you circled for each category. To form a profile, connect the dots with a line.

Check the ways you intend to help by dating the appropriate boxes (bottom half of this page and reverse).

Keep this form with the unit roster.

UNIT PROFILE			
	1	2	3
Meeting operation			
Boy leadership			
Skills instruction presentation			
Skills instruction levels			
Membership			
Budget plan			
Attendance			
Patrol activity			
Adult assistance			
Outdoor program			

## MEETING OPERATION

- Orderly meeting ran without delays using planned program and good format.
- Good meeting with planning, but some confusion.
- Disorderly or confusing meeting—no planning evident.

### Some Ways to Help

- Take leaders to next roundtable.
- Encourage the Scoutmaster to attend Basic Leader training.
- Review the Troop Program Planning chapter in the *Scoutmaster Handbook* with the Scoutmaster and set a date for the annual program planning conference.
- Help Scoutmaster set up monthly patrol leaders' council meeting.
- Review *Troop Program Features* with the Scoutmaster.

## BOY LEADERSHIP

- Boys ran the meeting with adults in advisory capacity.
- Some boy leadership with most activities run by adults.
- Meeting was run entirely by adults.

### Some Ways to Help

- Convince Scoutmaster to set up a monthly patrol leaders' council meeting.
- Review the Scoutmaster's Youth Leader Training Kit with Scoutmaster.
- Review the *Patrol Leader Handbook* with the Scoutmaster.
- Point out sections of the *Scoutmaster Handbook* that refer to the role of youth leadership in the troop.
- Remind Scoutmaster that Scouting includes leadership development.

## SKILLS INSTRUCTION PRESENTATION

- Scouts "learned by doing"; lots of hands-on learning experiences were provided.
- Skills were presented in a classroom setting with some hands-on learning opportunities.
- Classroom presentation was the only method of skills instruction.

### Some Ways to Help

- Review *Troop Program Features* with the Scoutmaster.
- Share Tenderfoot-to-First Class advancement requirements with Scoutmaster and explain that these are designed to be experienced, not taught.
- Review the portion of advancement video that deals with teaching skills.
- Suggest use of Troop Advancement Wall Chart at meetings.

## SKILLS INSTRUCTION LEVELS

1. Skills were taught for new Scouts, for experienced Scouts, and for older Scouts.
2. Skills were taught for new and experienced Scouts.
3. Only one level of skills was taught.

### Some Ways to Help

- Encourage the Scoutmaster to attend Basic Leader training.
- Help the Scoutmaster identify a troop guide and assistant Scoutmaster to work with the new-Scout patrol.
- Help the Scoutmaster and troop committee identify assistant Scoutmasters to work with experienced and older Scouts.
- Help the Scoutmaster identify youth instructors.
- Help the Scoutmaster identify community resources to assist with program presentations or to serve as consultants for a Venture patrol.

## MEMBERSHIP

1. Systematic recruiting evident.
2. Recruiting seems hit or miss.
3. No boys have joined recently.

### Some Ways to Help

- Conduct an inventory to show the need for recruiting.
- Suggest that Scoutmaster assign an assistant Scoutmaster with new Scout responsibility.
- Help the assistant Scoutmaster for new Scouts establish a relationship with a local Cub Scout pack.
- Conduct a boy-fact survey in local schools and help the troop develop a plan to contact prospective members.
- Explain to the Scoutmaster the reasons for having a new-Scout patrol.

## BUDGET PLAN

1. Dues collected regularly. Equipment, supplies adequate.
2. Dues collection spotty. Need essential equipment, supplies.
3. No dues collected. Very little equipment.

### Some Ways to Help

- Ask troop leaders to use *Troop/Team Record Book*.
- Encourage troop committee to build budget based on annual program.
- Convince troop treasurer to train patrol scribes.

## ATTENDANCE

1. Eighty-five percent or better.
2. Seventy-five percent or better.
3. Sixty percent.

### Some Ways to Help

- Discuss the problem with troop committee. Ask them to follow up with parents of absentees.
- Ask Scoutmaster to help patrol leaders build interpatrol competition.
- Help organize a patrol point system to promote attendance.
- Check program. Is it planned, exciting?

## PATROL ACTIVITY

1. Effective patrol operation with strong patrol spirit and a new-Scout patrol.
2. Patrols organized with little patrol activity.
3. No patrol operation.

### Some Ways to Help

- Suggest that specific program assignments be given patrols before each meeting.
- Remind leaders that patrols under trained boy leaders are the key to troop success.
- Help Scoutmaster understand the youth leader training program.

## ADULT ASSISTANCE

1. Each of the three skill levels (new Scout, experienced Scout, Venture) had an assigned assistant Scoutmaster.
2. Scoutmaster and assistant present.
3. Only Scoutmaster present at meeting.

### Some Ways to Help

- Help conduct troop resources survey with parents of Scouts.
- Assist the Scoutmaster and troop committee in selecting and recruiting assistant Scoutmasters. Use the video and brochure *Selecting Quality Leaders*.
- Encourage using adults for short-term, task-specific assignments.
- Explain to the troop committee that two-deep leadership is required for all trips and outings.
- Train leaders in youth protection.

## OUTDOOR PROGRAM

1. The program is planned to lead to outdoor activity.
2. Outdoor activity is scheduled, but the outdoor program is not planned.
3. No outdoor activity is scheduled.

### Some Ways to Help

- Encourage the Scoutmaster to attend the next Basic Leader training.
- Review the Troop Program Planning chapter in the *Scoutmaster Handbook* with the Scoutmaster and set a date for an annual program planning conference.
- Seek help from the campmaster corps and district camping committee.
- Help the troop committee develop ways to secure camping equipment.
- Guide leaders in locating hiking and camping areas.

## References

*Boy Scout Advancement* (video)  
*Boy Scout Handbook*

*Scoutmaster Handbook*  
*Selecting Quality Leaders* (brochure and video)

*Troop Committee Guidebook*  
[www.thescoutzone.org](http://www.thescoutzone.org)  
*Early Rank Requirements* video on  
[www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)



VENTURING® BSA

# UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEET (CREW)

FOR USE AFTER VISITING A MEETING OF CREW NO.

Under each heading (bottom half of this page and reverse), circle the number of the statement that most closely resembles the crew's situation.

- 1 = An ideal situation
- 2 = Typical unit or could be improved
- 3 = Weak situation or needs action

To profile these statements, place a dot in the Unit Profile next to the heading and under the number that corresponds to the number you circled under that statement below and on reverse. Form the profile by connecting the dots with a line.

For example, in the category titled "Adult leadership," a nearly ideal situation would be indicated by circling the "1" next to "Activity has at least two adults involved who train, guide, and coach youth with a minimum of directing or ordering"; and placing a dot in column 1 on the "Adult leadership" line of the Unit Profile.

UNIT PROFILE			
	1	2	3
Adult Advisors			
Elected officers			
Planned program			
Adult assistance			
Membership			
Meeting operation			
Service projects			
Program capability inventory			

Check the ways you intend to help by dating the appropriate boxes (bottom half of this page and reverse).

Keep this form with the unit roster.

## ADULT ADVISORS

- Activity has at least two adults involved who train, guide, and coach youth with a minimum of directing or ordering.
- Adults give a lot of direction with elected officers only moderately involved.
- No adults are present, or adults dominate the meeting with little youth involvement.

### Some Ways to Help

- Be sure Advisors get training—Venturing Fast Start immediately following selection and Venturing Leader Specific Training as soon as possible.
- Coach Advisors and crew committee members on the values of having elected officers run the crew.
- Review the job of the crew Advisor.
- Congratulate the Advisor as you see elected officers taking more initiative in running the crew.

## ELECTED OFFICERS

- Elected youth officers are involved in decision making and share with adult Advisors in planning program.
- Youth officers have been elected but adults do much of the crew program planning.
- No youth officers and/or adults run the show.

### Some Ways to Help

- Convince the Advisor to have a monthly crew officers' meeting chaired by the crew president.
- Point out places in the *Venturing Leader Manual* that refer to elected youth officers.
- Help the Advisor run the crew officers' seminar.
- Discuss the advantages of elected officers as a key method of Venturing.

## PLANNED PROGRAM

- Crew has a year's program outline based on both the program capability inventory (PCI) and Venturing interest survey, planned at the elected officers' seminar with activity details planned in advance.
- Specific meetings and activities are planned on a month-by-month basis.
- There is little or no advance planning.

### Some Ways to Help

- Help the Advisor run the crew elected officers' seminar.
- Help the Advisor use the Venturing interest survey and PCI, available in *Venturing Fast Start*.
- Review with Advisors the steps in good program planning.
- Congratulate officers on planning steps they have taken.

## ADULT ASSISTANCE

1. The Advisor, associate Advisor, crew committee, and consultants are involved with the crew.
2. The crew has only an Advisor and associate Advisor.
3. The crew has only one adult leader.

### Some Ways to Help

- Help develop specific assignments for adults.
- Suggest appropriate ways for adults to help youth leaders.
- Encourage the use of consultants to help with the Bronze, Gold, Silver, Quest, TRUST, and Ranger award programs.
- Be sure coed crews have both men and women as Advisors or associate Advisors.
- Help recruit additional adults.
- Help adults get trained.

## MEMBERSHIP

1. Systematic recruiting is evident, including an annual open house.
2. Recruiting seems hit or miss.
3. No new youth have joined recently.

### Some Ways to Help

- Show Advisors how to conduct an open house.
- Suggest that the Advisor have elected officers devise a recruiting plan.
- Help Advisor chart age groupings to show potential vacancies.
- Encourage leaders to have crew members recruit their friends.
- Talk with your professional staff about the council hobby interest survey.

## MEETING OPERATION

1. Crew meetings are run by elected officers, business items are handled quickly, and a major portion of meetings is devoted to a well-planned activity.
2. Business items take much time and the activity is weak.
3. Meetings lack planning and seem poorly run.

### Some Ways to Help

- Visit monthly crew officers' meeting to review the steps in good program planning.
- Help the Advisor determine the interests of crew members and plan hands-on activities.
- Encourage crew officers to plan details so crew meetings have a minimum of business and a maximum of activities.
- Take the Advisor and crew president to visit a good meeting in another crew.

## PROGRAM CAPABILITY INVENTORY

1. The crew has a program capability inventory (PCI) and uses it for planning meetings and activities.
2. The crew has a PCI but seldom uses it.
3. The crew does not have a PCI.

### Some Ways to Help

- Supply PCI forms and encourage the chartered organization to use them. See PCI in *Venturing Fast Start* or *Venturing Leader Manual*.
- Explain to crew officers how the PCI brings together adults and youth with similar interests.
- Show the Advisor and crew committee how to screen and organize the items on the completed PCI for use in program planning.
- Congratulate the Advisor when you see ideas from the PCI being put to use.

## SERVICE PROJECTS

1. The crew's program has frequent service projects for the community, its chartered organization, and/or a pack or troop.
2. The crew seldom carries out a service project.
3. The crew never has a service project.

### Some Ways to Help

- Help crew leaders brainstorm a list of community needs.
- Share a list of service project ideas from the *Activities and Civic Service Committee Guide* or the *Venturing Leader Manual*.
- Share the seven criteria for selecting a project from the *Activities and Civic Service Committee Guide*.
- Encourage crews to report their community service projects on the Good Turn for America Web site.

# 19—GUIDELINES FOR UNIT ACTION PLANNING MEETING

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## Guidelines for Unit Self-Assessment and Action Planning Meeting

**Present at meeting:** Unit Leader—Unit Committee Chair—Unit Commissioner

**Purpose of meeting (Use as the agenda for the meeting.):**

- To evaluate the unit's progress toward achieving the Centennial Quality Unit Award
- To review the unit's goals, successes, and vision for the coming year
- To identify any areas of improvement—leadership, program, and membership
- To determine any specific actions needing to be taken to assist with unit improvements and determine who will follow up on those actions
- To schedule any necessary follow-up to monitor progress

**When to conduct meeting:**

- After the unit commissioner has visited the unit for the first time
- Annually to review strengths and areas of improvement to help provide direction for needed support, preferably six months prior to the annual charter renewal
- As needed when a problem arises
- When unit leadership changes

**How should the arrangements for this meeting be set up?**

- The unit commissioner speaks to the unit leader during the first unit visit to schedule the meeting date, time, and location.
- The dialog should include:
  - Approaching the unit leader after the meeting and requesting that a second meeting be set up with the unit leader and the unit committee chair.
  - Setting the meeting, preferably at the leader's or the chair's home.
  - Asking them to complete the unit self-assessment form prior to the meeting.
  - Letting them know the visit will include a discussion of the self-assessment form and how the goals and vision of their unit's program can be supported.

**Why only the unit commissioner, unit leader, and unit chair?**

- It provides a small group to openly analyze the program, their unit's needs, and steps to be taken to help resolve any issues.
- It helps open a dialog between the unit and the district. Once they meet and determine what needs to be done, others can be involved in helping determine which direction to go and any potential improvements that can be identified.

**What preparation should be made prior to the action planning meeting?**

- Review the statistics of the unit available from the local council and the district team, especially looking at:
  - Quality Unit status
  - Outdoor program participation
  - Advancement reports
  - Trained leadership status
  - Youth Protection training
  - Participation in district and council events
  - Roundtable attendance
- Complete the unit self-assessment form after the visit to analyze observations and review the statistics gathered from the council/district prior to the action planning meeting. (The self-assessment form is designed to take the place of the commissioner worksheet previously used by commissioners.)



# 20—UNIT SELF-ASSESSMENT FORMS



## Pack Self-Assessment

Pack Number: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Review Meeting Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Quality Criteria

	Doing a Great Job	Would Like Improvement	Need Help	Comments and Needs
I. Pack Leadership				
A. An active committee meets monthly.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Assistant leaders are in place for pack and dens.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Adult leaders are registered and Fast Start and Basic Training are completed.	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. All dens have active den chiefs.	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. An active pack trainer is on the pack committee.	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. At least one adult is trained in BALOO (Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation).	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. All adults are trained in Youth Protection.	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. Webelos leaders have been trained in Outdoor Leader Skills for Webelos leaders.	_____	_____	_____	_____
II. Program				
A. We develop an annual program calendar and share it with our families.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. We operate under the annual budget plan.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We conduct monthly pack leader meetings to plan den and pack meetings.	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Den and pack leaders attend roundtables.	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. We review our program routinely with our chartered organization representative.	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. We develop an active outdoor program to involve our families.	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. A good percentage of our youth earn advancement awards regularly.	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. We conduct a monthly summertime program.	_____	_____	_____	_____
I. Our unit is 100% <i>Boys' Life</i> with all families.	_____	_____	_____	_____
J. We conduct at least one service project annually.	_____	_____	_____	_____
III. Membership/Attendance				
A. We have dens of all ages involved.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Our weekly den meetings are strongly attended by our members.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We have good participation from youth and parents at pack meetings.	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Our youth and leaders wear their uniforms to den and pack meetings and on outings.	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. We have an annual plan to recruit new youth members.	_____	_____	_____	_____
IV. Quality Pack Award Standards				
A. We annually recharter on time.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. We earned the Quality pack award last year.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.	_____	_____	_____	_____



# Troop/Team Self-Assessment

Troop/Team Number: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Review Meeting Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Quality Criteria	Doing a Great Job		Would Like Improvement		Need Help		Comments and Needs
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
I. Troop/Team Leadership	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A. An active adult committee meets monthly.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Assistant adult leaders are involved in the troop/team.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Adult leaders are registered and Fast Start and Basic Training are completed.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. The unit provides a pack with active den chiefs.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. An adult leader coordinates training for all adults.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. An adult leader is trained in Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. An adult leader coordinates Youth Protection training. Everyone is trained.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. Youth leaders are elected by youth twice per year and are provided training.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
II. Program	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A. We develop an annual program calendar and share it with our families.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. We operate under the annual budget plan.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We conduct monthly troop/team youth leader meetings to plan unit meetings and outings.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. We have adult leaders attend roundtables.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. We review program routinely with our chartered organization representative.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. We have a strong outdoor program and go on at least one outdoor trip monthly/regularly.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. A good percentage of our youth earn advancement/recognition awards regularly.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. Our troop attends summer camp . . .	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
OR	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
I. . . . our team plans a major activity annually.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
J. Our unit is 100% <i>Boys' Life</i> with all families.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
K. We conduct at least one service project annually.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
III. Membership/Attendance	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A. We have youth of all ages involved.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Our weekly unit meetings are strongly attended by our members.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We have good participation from youth and parents at quarterly courts of honor/recognition meetings.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Our youth and leaders wear their uniforms to unit meetings and on outings.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. We have an annual plan to recruit new youth members, including graduating Webelos Scouts.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
IV. Quality Troop/Team Award Standards	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A. We annually recharter on time.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. We earned the Quality troop or team award last year.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

 **Crew/Ship Self-Assessment**

Crew/Ship Number: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Review Meeting Held: \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>Doing a Great Job</u>	<u>Would Like Improvement</u>	<u>Need Help</u>	<u>Comments and Needs</u>
<u>Quality Criteria</u>				
I. Crew/Ship Leadership				
A. An active committee with at least three members meets at least four times a year.				
B. Assistant adult leaders are involved in the unit. The unit has coed leadership (if the crew is coed).				
C. Adult leaders are registered and Fast Start and Basic Training are completed.				
D. An adult leader coordinates training for all adults.				
E. An adult leader is trained in Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat (if aquatic activities are planned).				
F. An adult leader coordinates Youth Protection training. Everyone is trained.				
G. Youth leaders are elected by youth annually and are trained at a crew officers' seminar.				
H. Meetings and activities involve youth chairs and youth officers with adult guidance.				
II. Program				
A. We develop an annual program calendar and share it with our families.				
B. We operate under the annual budget plan.				
C. We conduct monthly unit officer/leader meetings to plan unit meetings and activities.				
D. We have adult leaders attend roundtables and Teen Leaders' Council meetings (if held).				
E. We review our program routinely with our chartered organization representative.				
F. We have a strong program and go on at least one activity per month.				
G. We use the advancement/recognition awards programs to encourage personal development.				
H. We attend special council/district events.				
I. We plan a major activity annually.				
J. We conduct at least one service project annually.				
K. We support a pack or troop annually.				
L. We participate in a Venturing Leadership Skills Course annually.				
M. We conduct a minimum of two meetings or activities each month.				
III. Membership/Attendance				
A. Our unit meetings are attended by at least 50 percent of our members regularly.				
B. Our youth and leaders wear their uniforms to unit meetings and on outings (if applicable).				
C. Our unit has an annual plan to recruit new youth members.				
IV. Quality Crew/Ship Award Standards				
A. We annually recharter on time.				
B. We earned the Quality crew or ship award last year.				
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.				



# COMMISSIONER NOTES



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