

# ADMINISTRATION OF **COMMISSIONER SERVICE**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

# ADMINISTRATION OF COMMISSIONER SERVICE

This manual was revised in January 2011. It originally combined the following three manuals into one:  
*Commissioner Administration of Unit Service*, No. 34128; *Commissioner Basic Training Manual*, No. 33613;  
and *Continuing Education for Commissioners*, No. 33615.

# Welcome to Commissioner Administration

You've accepted a position as an administrative commissioner. You're a district commissioner, council commissioner, assistant district commissioner, or assistant council commissioner. The key is understanding your new role and how it's going to work and how it relates with those unit commissioners you are now supervising. Unit commissioners are in charge of quality control of the unit. As a district commissioner or a council commissioner, you're in charge of quality control of your commissioners.

You need to be their Scout leader. You need to be their Cubmaster, their Scoutmaster, their Varsity Coach, or their Crew Advisor. You need to make certain they are trained, they are attending their unit meetings, and they are doing what needs to be done to succeed. You're not involved at the unit level; you are in charge of your unit of commissioners.

This manual will help guide you through the learning of the managerial skills, the diplomatic skills, the technical skills, and the administrative skills to assure your success in this administrative role. Thank you for accepting this most important role in Scouting. Keep on providing quality commissioner service to our youth through support of the units in your district or council.

## The Commissioner Concept

The commissioner is the liaison between the local council and Scouting units. The commissioner's mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency, maintain regular contact with unit leaders, coach leaders on where to find assistance, note weaknesses in programs, and suggest remedies. The commissioner is successful when units effectively deliver the ideals of Scouting to their members.

Few organizations have such an abundant reservoir of manuals, guidebooks, pamphlets, and training tools available for their leaders as does the Boy Scouts of America. Years of experience by millions of volunteers and professionals have provided invaluable plans, procedures, and methods for every Scouting role. However, for a new administrative commissioner, this amazing supply of helps presents a problem—WHERE DO YOU START?

Use this guidebook for details as you give leadership to a plan of successful unit service.

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# Chapter 1—Unit Service—The Plan and the People

Unit service is one of four important functions of every local council, the others being membership, finance, and program.

Youth experience Scouting in units. Generally, the “healthier” the unit, the more wonderful things will happen for youth in Scouting. To help make this occur, the Boy Scouts of America provides a program called unit service in which the commissioner is the key figure. The commissioner helps chartered organizations and the leaders of their units achieve the objectives of Scouting. The primary objective is to make good Scouting happen in the lives of youth members.

Perhaps the best way to approach Scouting’s goals as they relate to youth is to recognize how programs of character building, citizenship training, and skills development reach them. These programs reach our youth under the direct influence of the unit leader. In Cub Scouting, the unit leader is the Cubmaster, who shares the responsibility with den leaders. In Boy Scouting, it is the Scoutmaster and assistants. In Varsity Scouting, it is the Coach and assistants. In Venturing, it is the Advisor and associates. Every resource of the district and council should be made available to these key leaders, and this is generally achieved through the commissioner.

There are three types of commissioners:

**Administrative commissioners** include the council commissioner, assistant council commissioners, district commissioners, and assistant district commissioners.

**Their primary responsibilities are recruiting, training, guiding, and evaluating the commissioner staff.**

**Unit commissioners** are assigned to one or more units, which they coach and mentor to ensure unit success.

**Roundtable commissioners** provide resources such as program skills and other help for unit personnel at regularly scheduled roundtables or program forums.

The unit service program is invaluable, both to chartered organizations and the local council, when thoroughly understood and wisely administered. Only the finest type of community leader should be considered for a commissioner’s role. That person should be a “people person” capable of working with the key personnel of chartered organizations, unit committee people, and unit leaders as well as district and council Scouters.

The unit commissioner’s service is based on a philosophy of friendship and coaching. Roundtable commissioners should have a good background in Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturing skills as well as a lively teaching ability.

To measure the effectiveness of a commissioner, one need only look at the record of the units served. Are the objectives of Scouting being carried out? Is there strong, competent unit leadership? Do unit committees meet regularly? Is there growth in youth membership? Do units take an active part in district and council activities? Is there a positive relationship between the chartered organization and its unit leaders? If the answer to these questions is “yes,” the commissioner is successful.

# Chapter 2—The Chartered Organization Concept

Since the beginning of the movement, the Boy Scouts of America has offered its unique program of character building, citizenship training, and personal fitness to the youth of our nation on a cooperative basis. Our chartered organizations are the religious, educational, civic, business, military, and labor organizations of America. They use the Scouting program to enrich the lives of children and young adults.

The chartered organization concept, when properly carried out, can extend Scouting to every young person in the nation who wants to join. Churches, schools, and other organizations in every community have men and women available for leadership as well as meeting facilities in which the Scouting program can be extended to those who wish to belong.

Through local councils, volunteer and professional help is available and dedicated to providing chartered organizations with the training, skills, and organization needed to put the program into action.

The key person on Scouting's side of the relationship is the commissioner, while the key person in the chartered organization is the chartered organization representative. These two work together to guide and support unit leaders. *Selecting, training, supporting, and encouraging unit leaders are the most important responsibilities of both the commissioner and the chartered organization representative.*

An example of the cooperative concept in action is the case of selecting a new Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Coach, or Advisor for a unit. The chartered organization representative and unit committee personnel meet with council representatives, usually the unit commissioner and a professional staff member. Together they discuss the steps to be taken to provide the unit with a new leader and the type of person needed. Together they make any contacts necessary for recruiting and enlisting the best possible person for the position.

# Chapter 3—Putting a Council Unit Service Plan Into Action

Local councils have carried out programs of helping units since the early days of the movement. Some of these service programs are effective, while others may need reassessment and change. The suggestions offered in this book are gathered from hundreds of successful situations.

Every council should take inventory of its unit service program and adjust its procedures and methods to provide all units in the council with adequate service.

Start with an inventory that includes the following:

- Take an accurate inventory of active commissioner personnel, district by district, using known criteria to determine the effectiveness of those serving.
- Determine the actual number of units being served by *unit commissioners*.
- List all units being served by commissioner personnel *other than* unit commissioners.
- List any units not being served by *any* commissioner.

After you carefully study this data, district by district, then:

- Present the facts to key commissioner and professional leaders.
- Assign a small group to use facts and suggestions discussed at the meeting of key personnel to prepare a program of action.
- Present the program of action at a special meeting in which each district commissioner and district executive meet to apply the program of action to their own districts.
- The council commissioner and Scout executive make a statement in support of the plan at this meeting.
- Prepare a schedule of progress checkpoints for each district. District commissioners report monthly progress, and the council commissioner reports results periodically to the executive board. (Note: Progress reports should indicate the success in recruiting commissioner personnel, the percentage of units served by unit commissioners, the numbers and types of commissioner training conducted, etc.)

As the plan of action progresses, you will need to accelerate, revise, or initiate commissioner-related activities. Among them will certainly be “Commissioner Recruiting,” Chapter 9; “Commissioner Training,” Chapter 10; “Commissioner Meetings,” Chapter 11; and “Commissioner Evaluation,” Chapter 13.

## Six Major Tasks for Volunteer Success

Commissioner leaders and professionals strengthen commissioner staffs with six major tasks—the six things they must do to make a volunteer system work.

**1. Define Responsibilities.** Commissioners must know what is expected for them to be successful. Carefully define, in writing, the responsibilities for each position. Use Commissioner Volunteer Duties Cards, No. 34265D; and Chapters 5 and 7 of this section to assist you.

**2. Select and Recruit.** Fit the right person to the role. Consider each prospect’s skills, interests, and other relevant factors. Consider the variety of motivating factors for people getting involved in Scouting. Use all the prescribed steps in recruiting district volunteers and use the recruiting resources of the BSA. Helpful recruiting resources include Selecting District People, No. 34512A; and Chapter 9 of this section.

**3. Orient and Train.** Provide each person with prompt orientation on his or her individual assignment and with adequate training to be successful. Use the second and third sections of this manual—“Commissioner Basic Training” and “Continuing Education for Commissioners”—and Chapter 10 of this section.

**4. Coach Volunteers.** Provide ongoing coaching as needed. Build a volunteer’s confidence and self-esteem. Help conserve a volunteer’s time. The appropriate commissioner leader or professional should provide coaching.

**5. Recognize Achievement.** Prompt volunteer recognition has an important impact on the tenure and quality of service in the district. Recognition must be sincere, timely, and earned. Use the great variety of formal BSA recognition items, but also be creative with frequent locally devised thank-yous. Even more effective may be the personal “pat on the back” for a job well done. Recognize volunteers on a face-to-face basis, preferably in front of their peers.

**6. Evaluate Performance.** Help commissioners regularly evaluate how they’re doing. Use the Self-Evaluation for Unit Commissioners in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621.

# National/Regional/Area Support to Local Councils

At all levels of the organization, there are commissioners available to support the delivery of a quality program experience through units to the youth they serve. The role of the national, regional, and area commissioners is to provide direct support to councils in their understanding and delivery of service to units.

## National Commissioner

The national commissioner is an officer of the national council and a member of the National Executive Board whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council. The national commissioner provides leadership to all regional commissioners in the areas of membership, unit charter renewal, and training in support of commissioner service. The role of the national commissioner is to serve as the morale officer of the program.

The national commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the National Key 3.
- Work closely with all regional commissioners in providing quality commissioner service throughout the country in support of local councils.
- Supervise the activities of commissioner service, give leadership to regional commissioners, and preside at any meetings of the regional commissioners.
- Support the efforts to recruit commissioners at all levels of the organization in support of local councils.
- Encourage communications between regional, area, and council commissioners to ensure that all councils provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.
- Support councils in improving unit-to-commissioner ratios, monthly unit visits, retention of youth and units, and progress toward achieving Journey to Excellence Performance Award status.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all national policies.
- Provide direction and support to regional commissioners working with local councils especially related to the membership validation process, unit charter renewal.
- Conduct and track unit visits, counsel support related to how to handle particular situations, recruit and train a full staff of commissioners, and support the annual commitment and achievement of the Journey to Excellence Performance Award by regions, areas, and councils.
- Work with the National Council president to secure the help of national, regional, and area committees in meeting local council needs.

The national commissioner reports on the status of commissioner service to the National Executive Board regularly:

- Inspirational stories about successes in local councils.
- Status of each council in qualifying as a Journey to Excellence Performance Award Council, as it relates to unit visits by commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of units to date, by council and area.
- Retention percentage of youth and units, by council and area.
- Current ratio of units to registered unit commissioners by council.

## Regional Commissioner

The regional commissioner is an officer of the region and a member of the regional board, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council, and provides leadership to all area commissioners in the areas of membership, unit charter renewal and training in support of commissioner service. The regional commissioner is appointed annually by the regional president for a one-year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms, with the concurrence of the regional director.

The regional commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the Regional Key 3.
- Work closely with the national commissioner, regional president and regional director in providing quality commissioner service throughout the region and the areas in support of local councils.
- Supervise the activities of commissioner service, give leadership to area commissioners, and preside at any meetings of area commissioners. All meetings of the region commissioners will be held in conjunction with existing meetings within the region. The region commissioners are to support council or joint-council commissioner training courses but are not to conduct region/area courses.
- Support the efforts to recruit area commissioners to provide continuing and effective commissioner service in support of each council.
- Encourage communications between the area and council commissioners to ensure that councils provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.
- Support councils in improving unit to commissioner ratios, monthly unit visits, retention of youth and units, and progress toward achieving Journey to Excellence Performance Award status.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all national policies.

- Provide direction and support to area commissioners working with local councils especially related to the membership validation process; unit charter renewal; conducting and tracking unit visits; counseling support related to how to handle particular situations; recruiting and training a full staff of commissioners; and supporting the annual commitment and achievement of the Journey to Excellence Performance Award by the region, the areas, and the councils.
- Work with the regional president to secure the help of regional and area committees in meeting local council needs.

The regional commissioner reports on the status of commissioner service to the regional executive board regularly:

- Inspirational stories about successes in local councils.
- Status of each council in qualifying as a Excellence Performance Award, as it relates to unit visits by commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of units to date, by council and area.
- Retention percentage of youth and units, by council and area.
- Current ratio of units to registered unit commissioners by council.

## Area Commissioner

The area commissioner, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council, provides support to all council commissioners in the areas of membership, unit charter renewal, and training in support of commissioner service. The area commissioner is appointed annually for a one-year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms, by the regional president upon recommendation of the area president and regional commissioner. The area commissioner reports to the area president while working closely with the regional commissioner.

The area commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the Area Key 3.
- Work closely with the regional commissioner, area president, and area director in providing quality commissioner service throughout his or her area in support of local councils.
- Supervise the activities of commissioner service and preside at any area meetings where council commissioners are in attendance. All meetings of the area commissioners will be held in conjunction with existing meetings within the region/areas.
- Support council or joint-council commissioner training courses but are not to conduct separate area courses.
- Encourage communications between the area and council commissioners to ensure that councils provide

opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.

- Support councils in improving unit to commissioner ratios, monthly unit visits, retention of youth and units, and progress toward achieving Journey to Excellence Performance Award status.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all national policies.
- Provide direction and support to council commissioners especially related to the membership validation process, unit charter renewal, conducting and tracking unit visits, counseling support related to how to handle particular situations, recruiting and training a full staff of commissioners, and supporting the annual commitment and achievement of the Journey to Excellence Performance Award.
- Work with the area president to secure the help of area committees in meeting local council needs.

The area commissioner reports on the status of commissioner service to the area regularly:

- Inspirational stories about successes in local councils.
- Status of each council in qualifying as a Journey to Excellence Performance Award Council, as it relates to unit visits by commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of units to date, by council and area.
- Retention percentage of youth and units, by council and area.
- Current ratio of units to registered unit commissioners by council.



# Chapter 4—Administrative Commissioners

Administrative commissioners give all commissioners a vision of what it means to provide exceptional commissioner service to Scout units throughout the council.

People need a vision of the great things that they can accomplish. Good commissioner leadership provides such a vision.

## Council Commissioners

Leading all commissioner personnel is the council commissioner, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the local council. The council commissioner is elected at the annual meeting of the local council and serves as a member of the council Key 3. The council commissioner also serves as an officer of the local council, a member of the executive board, a member of the council executive committee, and a National Council representative.

Working in close cooperation with the council Scout executive, the council commissioner shall:

- Supervise the activities of the commissioner staff and preside at regular meetings of district commissioners. (This is sometimes referred to as the Council Commissioner Cabinet.)
- Implement and monitor the annual service plan of commissioner service.
- Lead efforts to recruit an adequate commissioner staff to provide continuing and effective commissioner service for each unit (a ratio of one commissioner for every three units and one assistant district commissioner for every five unit commissioners). Join with the Scout executive to hold district commissioners and district executives accountable for adequate recruiting.
- Be sure that districts provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation through online Fast Start, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.
- Assist district nominating committees in selecting district commissioners as needed. Serve on a district nominating committee in those districts where the council president believes you could help the district replace its district commissioner.
- Conduct an annual council commissioner conference. Be sure that the conference includes the best in training sessions, fellowship, inspiration, and information on the latest in Scouting. Do everything possible to make it easy for everyone to attend (e.g., attractive setting and close to home).
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America, uphold national policies, promote good uniforming, and lead efforts to hold regular roundtable programs in the districts.
- Be concerned with proper recognition of unit leaders. Maintain their morale, periodically reporting unit conditions to the executive board.
- Help the district commissioners maintain a good working relationship with their respective district executives.
- Maintain procedures to assure maximum on-time unit charter renewal by district commissioner staffs.
- Work with the council president to secure the help of committees in meeting unit needs.
- Develop a no-lapse/no-drop commitment in the council and each of its districts. Be sure each district has a commitment and a strategy to provide prompt, intensive, and persistent care when major problems occur that could threaten the life of a unit.

The council commissioner is all-important to the council's unit service program. Because unit service is one of the four key functions of every council, the council commissioner and assistants are automatically placed in positions of high responsibility that demand active leadership.

The council commissioner is accountable for the unit service program and responsible for its outcome. The commissioner reports on the program's progress to the council executive board, including the following:

- A couple of very short inspirational items about what's going on in units. Keep board members excited about how their service on the board is impacting the lives of kids. The work of the board is quite a distance from the real world of the unit, and you should help bridge the distance.
- Commissioners do a unit analysis to identify units that have problems or need major improvement. Share specific success stories in which a commissioner has helped turn around a unit to better serve youth.
- Where the council and districts stand in the percentage of units to date that have qualified as Journey to Excellence Performance Award Units.
- The percentage of units that have rechartered to date.
- The current ratio of units to active, registered unit commissioners.

Keep your report short, factual, and inspirational, and deal with the basics of why we are here.

## Assistant Council Commissioners

Successful council commissioners know they cannot succeed alone. Council commissioners surveyed had an average of three to five assistants.



Appointed by the council commissioner, assistant council commissioners may play the following roles:

- **A “stand-in.”** Like the vice president of an organization, an assistant council commissioner can be appointed by the council commissioner to act as a substitute when he or she is temporarily unable to serve (e.g., being out of town, ill, etc.).
- **A “copilot.”** A good assistant does more than wait for emergency action. An assistant should share the weight of leadership as determined by the council commissioner. There are many ways that the assistant can help: for example, by handling topics at the council commissioner’s cabinet meetings, or helping to guide a new district commissioner.
- **On “special assignment.”** The council commissioner might ask assistants to do special ongoing assignments. This is the most popular role of the assistant. Five are listed in order of popularity.

**1. Training.** The assistant council commissioner for training coordinates commissioner training in the council, sees that basic training is available somewhere in the council during all parts of the year, trains district trainers, and sees that the concept of “continuing education for commissioners” really works.

**2. Geographic service area.** Councils with eight or more districts often have assistants who provide special support as needed for clusters of districts in various parts of the council. The assistants are careful to give district commissioners their rightful direct responsibility for operation in their districts. Council assistants make themselves available for guidance and help where needed.

**3. Roundtables.** Many councils have assistants to help in training district roundtable personnel by bringing them together twice a year to exchange ideas, share new ways of promoting attendance, creating active program features, and handling good roundtable logistics.

**4. Program.** Some councils have program assistants for Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Exploring.

**5. Commissioner conference.** Some councils have assistants who lead the team that runs the annual council commissioner conference (college or non-college type of conference).

**6. Diversity.** Some councils have an assistant who works with the districts to encourage diversity of commissioners on their staffs, as well as helping to serve the emerging markets of their respective districts.

**7. New-unit service.** Some councils have created an assistant to coordinate the efforts in working with new units to provide a more focused emphasis on their first year of operation.

Build the team that best fits your council, and then lead that team to a winning performance.

## District Commissioners

This leader is approved and appointed by the council executive board, with the concurrence of the Scout executive, on the recommendation of the district nominating committee. Working with the district executive, he or she recruits, trains, guides, and evaluates the required commissioner personnel of the district. Specific responsibilities include:

- Identify and recruit enough of the right people as commissioners so that all Scouting units in the district receive regular, helpful service.
- Provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation through online Fast Start, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.
- Supervise and motivate unit commissioners to visit each unit regularly, identify unit needs, and make plans to meet unit needs.
- Administer the annual commissioner service plan, which gives specific purposes for commissioner contact with units at designated times of the year.
- Oversee the unit charter renewal plan so that each unit reregisters on time and with optimum membership.
- Guide roundtable commissioners to ensure that monthly roundtables and program forums are well-attended, and provide practical and exciting unit program ideas.
- Plan and preside at monthly meetings of the district commissioner staff.
- Work with the district chair and district executive to stimulate and coordinate the work of the district.
- Help meet district goals.
- Represent the district as a member of the council commissioner cabinet.
- Support local and national Scouting policy, procedures, and practices.
- Attend district committee meetings to report on conditions of units and to secure specialized help for units.

The district commissioner must be a proven leader capable of enlisting other effective persons to serve. The district commissioner, or DC, is the chief morale officer of the district: upbeat, personable, determined, and a role model for Scouting ideals. He or she is passionate about the benefits of Scouting and is a champion of the unit to make Scouting happen in the lives of young people.

The DC understands and communicates the best skills available in unit service: how to counsel, coach, and inspire unit volunteers; how to enrich the unit program; and how to help units solve problems before problems sink the unit.

Above all, the DC is the builder of a complete team of commissioners for the district. If this individual fails to do that, all the counseling, coaching, and unit service skills in the world will be lost. Like a professional football coach who does not have the ability to select and recruit a team, all the knowledge of great plays and team strategies is lost.

District commissioners measure their success by the progress of other commissioners on their staff, as they in turn make good Scouting happen in their assigned units. They are “can-do” people who are interested in results rather than in procedure.

**Note:** Official district election procedures stipulate that the council president must approve the members of a district nominating committee. The president has the discretion to add a member from the council executive board. In the event of a vacancy in the office of district commissioner or when there is the need for a change, the president may appoint the council commissioner as a member of that district’s nominating committee. The council commissioner can then help them understand the kind of person needed and guide them in selecting a high-caliber person who has the right qualities for the position.

## Assistant District Commissioners

Assistant district commissioners, or ADCs, can make or break a district’s ability to see that every unit receives competent commissioner service. Even the best district commissioner in the council cannot personally train and guide all unit commissioners in the district (in a 60-unit district that is at least 20 people). So, ADCs are assigned certain units in the district, and they supervise the unit commissioners who serve those units.

ADCs are appointed by the district commissioners.

A good staff has one ADC for every 15 units. That is one ADC for every five unit commissioners needed. That provides one unit commissioner for every three units.

Good ADCs have good people skills and they:

- Help recruit the right people.
- Provide clear instructions and specific ideas for their staff.
- Listen to what people say and feel.
- Never play favorites.
- Coach unit commissioners through real unit problem-solving situations.
- Treat all Scouters with courtesy and dignity.
- Praise each commissioner often for specific achievements.
- Do not try to take over for their staff but always are ready to support or help them to be successful.

ADCs work closely with the district commissioner and district executive. This team must have a vision of effective Scouting, and they must communicate that vision—through unit commissioners—to every unit leader in the district.

When a unit commissioner resigns, or cannot adequately fulfill the responsibilities of the position, the assistant district commissioner *temporarily* assumes the vacant position. However, immediate action must be taken to provide a replacement. Administrative commissioners are *not* unit commissioners. Their responsibility is to *find* unit commissioners.

Assistant district commissioners measure people’s progress, not in the number of meetings those people attend but in the way they handle their responsibilities.

The ADC’s role is accomplished largely on a personalized basis. At monthly district commissioner staff meetings, they help their unit commissioners plan how to help meet priority needs of units. They hold their staff accountable for the previous months’ plans and assignments.

# Chapter 5—Unit Commissioners

Unit commissioners help units succeed with a good program that attracts and retains youth members.

Perhaps no other members of the unit service team have a more important or demanding responsibility. As friends, coaches, and counselors of unit leaders, unit commissioners operate quietly, generally in the background. They are effective communicators, providing the resources of the district and council to the units they serve. They aid the chartered organizations that operate the units through charters from the Boy Scouts of America.

Occasionally, unit commissioners find it necessary to recommend changes in personnel or in the way a unit is operating. Such action is taken with good judgment and tact and involves the chartered organization. Units are people. To help units succeed, today's commissioners must be people-oriented more than procedures-oriented. They are truly a council's front-line diplomats. Because *Scouting operates mostly by persuasion rather than by legislation*, commissioners must exercise the highest degree of diplomacy.

## What are the qualities of Scouting's diplomat?

Perhaps no single description fits all situations. So, consider the following qualities, and apply them as you recruit and assign commissioners to fit the needs of your district and its units.

- Be an effective communicator.
- Be a good listener.
- Have sound judgment.
- Be tactful.
- Have a Scouting background or be a fast-track learner.
- Be persistent and patient.
- Be adaptable.
- Know and practice Scouting ideals.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Fulfill promises.
- Be a team player.
- Be a coach.

## Unit Commissioner Responsibilities

Unit commissioners go about their duties in many ways. Their methods of service vary from telephone contacts to group meetings, from "hit-and-run" visits to planned personal conferences. All are important avenues that lead to the fulfillment of their mission, but the main "freeway" to successful service is the personal conference.

Much has been written and said about the role of unit commissioners, and no list can encompass all the tasks they may be called to perform. The following services, however, are top priority:

- Maintain a close liaison with the chartered organization of the units they serve. This requires a working relationship with the chartered organization representative to strengthen Scouting's chartered organization concept.
- Work to assure effective and active unit committees.
- Facilitate the on-time annual charter renewal of all assigned units.
- Help select and recruit unit leaders. Though the actual appointment is approved by the chartered organization representative and the unit committee, the unit commissioner plays a key role in the process, making certain that proper techniques are used to locate and enlist the best possible leaders. Because unit leaders are the key people through which Scouting objectives are carried out, commissioners must recognize the important qualities that make up successful unit leaders. Simply said, a good unit leader is a person of quality, high moral standards, dedication, and enthusiasm, a person who is well-informed and who understands and puts into action the objectives of Scouting. The process by which such a person is selected and the care with which we help that person be successful are unquestionably the most important responsibilities of the commissioner.
- See that unit leadership gets adequate training.
- Cultivate and maintain the best possible ongoing relationship with the unit leader.

See the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* for a complete list of responsibilities.

## Recruiting Cautions

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

**Please don't assign unit commissioners to their own units or chartered organizations.** A commissioner needs an objective view as an arm of the district and council. Avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Commissioners may be currently registered in only one commissioner position.

**Please don't ask units to provide their own commissioner.** Commissioners must be selected by the district on the basis of qualities needed to adequately represent the district and council.

## Commissioner Priorities

Unit commissioners should not fall into the trap of doing everything except their appointed responsibility—unit service. Because of the many programs and activities of Scouting, unit commissioners might find themselves promoting projects, carrying messages, acting as judges, running Friends of Scouting campaigns, etc. While all these activities are unquestionably important, they are not the primary responsibilities of unit commissioners. *Unit commissioners are expected to cooperate with other Scouting personnel related to specific programs but should not be responsible for them. Their role is to help units succeed!*

Unit commissioners should never feel that “all is well” simply because they have casually contacted their units since the last report meeting. When units are moving steadily toward completing the BSA criteria for Journey to Excellence Performance Award units, the unit service plan is successful.

The total job of the unit commissioner is described in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

# Chapter 6—Considerations in Assigning Unit Commissioners

Assigning unit commissioners to units is an important task for the district commissioner and district executive. The national standard for a unit commissioner to unit ratio has been ideally a 1-to-3 ratio. However, there are some important things to consider as you establish what goal you want your council or district to set.

Consider these options:

- **By Geography.** Often, it's wise to assign several units in the same neighborhood to a nearby unit commissioner. How far is it practical for a commissioner to drive? In large, sparsely populated rural areas, this is a prime consideration. Geography may also be especially important in some low-income urban districts. If a commissioner can't comfortably get to his or her units, those units probably won't get served. Another advantage is that the commissioner is more likely to know the resources and characteristics of the community that may affect the unit.
- **By Chartered Organization.** In many situations, the best plan may be to assign all units of a given chartered organization to the same unit commissioner. This could be a 1-to-4 ratio of unit commissioner to units. The advantage is that a single commissioner can provide more coordinated service to the organization and its units, which often have at least a few of the same people. This option can also best help in the transition of youth from program to program.
- **By Program Type.** There are some situations where this may be best for a new commissioner with great experience in one program but absolutely no knowledge of the other two. It might also be the best match to assign a commissioner with great Cub Scouting knowledge to three packs that have a maximum need for Cub Scouting program help. It may be most productive to have a commissioner with good Venturing experience assigned to three totally new Venturing crews.
- **By Condition of the Unit.** Review the special needs of the unit. Badly troubled units may need a commissioner with special skills—organization and mediation skills. A great unit may be a good match for a sharp new commissioner with very limited unit program experience. It is always good for a commissioner to have unit programs to compare to. Make sure they have programs that are providing a quality experience in order to know what a good program looks like. In some cases where a unit has a need for some focused effort, it might be necessary to have a one-on-one ratio with them working to help develop the program.
- **By People Chemistry.** Probably the single most important criterion is assigning a commissioner based on how well he or she will mesh with the personalities, needs, and background of a unit's adults.  
**Example 1:** Do not assign a unit with an easily intimidated, inexperienced leader in a troubled neighborhood to a commissioner who wears 20 patches on his uniform. A showy display of expertise with an "I did it the right way, why can't you" attitude will quickly chill a critical relationship and discourage the unit leader who is not sure he is right for the position.  
**Example 2:** A pack and troop are in conflict with their Catholic chartered organization. Assign a commissioner who is a respected Catholic layperson who understands how to relate effectively to a Catholic priest.
- **By Assistant District Team.** A district might want to consider the personnel they have engaged by helping to make sure every assistant district commissioner team has someone on the team who has the knowledge base of all programs—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing. Then make the assignments of all units on that team, with the program knowledge experts assisting unit commissioners in providing the needed support of their assigned units. In some cases, you might have more than one person supporting a specific unit's needs, but all units have their primary unit commissioner as a resource.
- **By Experience of Commissioners.** As part of a new unit commissioner's assignment, they may only feel comfortable or have the time to adequately serve only one or two units initially. You would have to make sure that the commissioners are working closely together to ensure a seamless transition from one program to the other.

Consider the strengths and weaknesses of both unit commissioners and units. It takes some astuteness on behalf of the district commissioner and district executive, and the help of their assistant district commissioners. You can't be arbitrary. You must be flexible. Each match should be made on the basis of the particular unit situation and individual commissioner characteristics.

The art of matching unit commissioners with the right units is a topic for discussion with the district executive, district commissioner, and ADCs. The right match of units to commissioners can greatly increase the effectiveness of commissioner service in the district.

# Chapter 7—Roundtable Commissioners

These important Scouters are an invaluable arm of the unit service team. They create action events called roundtables or “program forums for Venturing” to present methods, skills, and ideas to help unit leaders provide interesting, fun-filled, and purposeful programs.

Roundtable commissioners are generally good planners, able recruiters, and capable performers. They must be good “program” people. They are congenial and enthusiastic motivators who can put their program skills into action.

Their responsibility starts with annual planning, using such aids as roundtable planning guides, Cub Scout and Boy Scout leader program notebooks, and council and district calendars. Finding and recruiting people as presenters at roundtable sessions demands a special talent, while conducting monthly meetings requires leadership ability.

The annual roundtable planning meeting is where council and district personnel map out the schedule of long-range programs upon which the year’s roundtable activities are based. From such plans stem detailed monthly district roundtable programs.

Key roundtable personnel meet at least quarterly to appraise progress, learn up-to-date information on coming activities, and exchange successful experiences. At least one administrative commissioner from each district attends these meetings so that roundtable promotional needs can be determined and relayed to the entire district commissioner staff.

How well roundtables are attended depends largely on two factors: the quality of the roundtable program and the promotional efforts of unit commissioners and others. If the roundtable program is the “best show in town,” word gets around and Scouters attend in good numbers.

However, a quality roundtable promotion does not always bring out many who are desperately in need of help. Leaders who are overburdened with problems and discouraged because of lack of progress are usually unaware of the assistance available through roundtables. It is in these cases that unit commissioners, confident that the roundtable provides valuable help, see that unit leaders get there.

Much of the talent for good roundtables comes from successful Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews as well as from leaders of district and council committees. Such participation encourages Scouters to put program ideas into action in their own units on the basis that, “If Pack XXX can do it, so can we.”

Some say that good attendance at roundtables is the best hallmark of roundtable success. While this is generally true, a careful look should be given to those who never attend. Do the people who attend represent a high percentage of the total number of units in the district, or are they from a small number? It could be that roundtables are attended by only an enthusiastic and contented minority of units.

For more details on successful roundtables, see the roundtable training sessions in section three of this manual, “Continuing Education for Commissioners.”



# Chapter 8—A Guide for Commissioners on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships

Since the early days of Scouting in the United States, good volunteer-professional relationships have been one of the special hallmarks of the Boy Scouts of America. Today, this special partnership between volunteers and professionals is the core of its success at a council/district level. When the partnership thrives, the Scouting movement thrives. If the partnership is not working well, Scouting suffers.

The BSA trains Scout professionals on their responsibility for developing good working relationships with volunteers. However, both volunteers and professionals share responsibility for building good working relationships in Scouting. No matter what your role in the district or council, skill in working effectively with your professional staff adviser is important.

Both commissioner and professional must work to build the partnership. They both share the wreath of service.

## Qualities of a Good Relationship

Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other's role and competency. When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth). In Scout districts, for example, mutual dependence results because district executives know they cannot possibly do all the work that needs to be done, and district volunteers know they need the coaching and experience of full-time professionals.

If partners have complete confidence in each other, they will seek each other's counsel. Neither partner has a monopoly on wisdom, judgment, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision-making, the combination is unbeatable.

Your professional is a Scouting friend, coach, and counselor. Working together is more effective when volunteers and professionals enjoy each other's company. Professionals do not work for volunteers, but with them as partners on behalf of youth. The unselfish service and common dedication manifested breeds mutual respect and a feeling of kinship. One test of the relationship is whether the two parties think of each other as friends.

Occasionally, a volunteer will say to a professional, "Remember, you get paid for this, and I don't." But that is not the significant difference between volunteers and professionals. The significant difference is that volunteers

are able to give only a portion of their time to Scouting, while professionals give their full time, and then some.

This means professionals are dependent upon the Scouting movement for the material things of life, but it does not mean professionals look upon Scouting differently than volunteers. Both are dedicated to the same principles, and both are trying to live out those principles in their lives and in their work. Many professionals could pursue careers outside Scouting and make more money, but they choose to stay in Scouting because of their commitment to youth and their belief in the program.

The fact that professionals give all their time means their experience is broader and deepens more quickly. Their training is more intensive and continues throughout their professional careers. This makes their coaching more valuable to volunteers. So seek out the guidance of your professional coach.

## Tips for Better Relationships

Here are a few tips on how good council commissioners work with their professional staff advisers:

- Intentionally begin to build a good relationship with your professional from your very first visit. Be positive. Be enthusiastic. Be well prepared. Think in advance about the impression you want to make as one of the trusted volunteers of the district or council.
- Be accessible to your professional adviser. Exchange phone numbers, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, etc. Avoid the impression that you are too busy or annoyed when he or she calls. Return his or her calls. Set up regularly scheduled visits and/or phone dates. You may need to talk weekly, monthly, or less frequently, depending on your responsibility.
- Create a welcome environment for the new professional and plan ways to incorporate him or her into the team. Remember, it's easy for a group to turn inward and make newcomers feel awkward or unwelcome. Send a letter of introduction to appropriate volunteers from a person in authority (council president, Scout executive, etc.). This helps a person feel good about joining the district or council. It also helps volunteers get acquainted with the new professional.
- A professional will try to make efficient use of volunteers' time and, as best they can, plan visits and meetings at times that are best for volunteers. Commissioners and professionals should 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 for troubleshooting.



Help create the kind of relationship in which you are comfortable asking for help.

- There will inevitably be some professionals you don't like as much as others. That's human nature. However, part of being a good Scouter is working with all kinds of people, even when the human chemistry isn't just perfect. Feel free to talk with your professional partner about how you are working together.
- While you obviously want to form a Scouting relationship, it is nevertheless important to get to know your professional as a whole person. Most of us will feel more comfortable working with someone who is interested in other aspects of our lives as well as our Scouting responsibilities. Keep in mind that Scouting is not a person's only priority in life. They will have family priorities and may be active in religious and other activities.
- Let your professional adviser know if you plan to have your spouse, assistant, or work associate assist you with a Scouting task, and how the pro can be helpful to that person.
- Develop good communications in which you and your professional really listen to and understand each other.
- In some instances the function of guiding other volunteers is shared between you and a professional. For example, both the council commissioner and district executives have a direct working relationship with district commissioners. Unit commissioners work with both their district executive and their ADC. You and the professional should be careful to avoid confusion for volunteers and to ensure that they receive consistent messages and have a compatible relationship with both their volunteer leader and the professional.

Here are just a few examples of the relationship that should prevail:

- **Agenda planning.** When the council or district commissioner has an agenda to plan, it seems natural to begin with a conversation with the professional adviser. He or she can contribute his knowledge of the total needs of the district. The executive often brings a pencil draft of the agenda, but the final agenda should be the volunteer's.

- **Recruiting volunteers.** Perhaps the district commissioner wishes to recruit an assistant or a unit commissioner. The district commissioner and district executive together consider the best people available for the position.
- **Coaching in committee meetings.** The volunteer always presides. The executive is usually seated beside the commissioner leader so they will have easy access to each other.
- **Evaluating meetings.** After a meeting, the commissioner and the executive usually discuss what happened and the steps needed to follow up.
- **Setting goals.** The setting of goals results in commitments for both commissioner leaders and the executive, so both participate in the process.
- **Helping units.** The district executive wants to keep in touch with unit leaders, but commissioners provide unit service. When special problems arise in units, commissioners ask the district executive to help.
- **Organizing units.** For each new unit, an organizer, trainer, and commissioner are needed. The district executive gives overall support to this effort.

## A Closing Note

Historically, Scouting's great success has resulted because of volunteer talent and the professionals who guide and support talented volunteers.

The best relationships between professional and volunteer are those that include trust, friendship, mutual respect, recognition of each other's skills, and a further recognition created when those skills are combined.

The continuing greatness of Scouting as a volunteer movement is in your capable hands as you and your volunteer team effectively use the resource of your professional adviser.

# Chapter 9—Commissioner Recruiting

Your favorite NFL team didn't win the Super Bowl with an incomplete team on the field. Or, consider this: If, as a college coach, you walked up to the college president and said, "I'm going to field a team Saturday, but I won't have a left end and one halfback will be missing," how long do you think you'd have a job?

## Fielding a Complete Team

If you believe in what commissioner service does for America's youth, then you must also believe that the only way to provide quality unit service is through a complete team of commissioners in every district. Don't be satisfied with too few players on any district gridiron.

The council commissioner sets the pace. The greatest single measure of their success is having a dynamic and effective district commissioner in every district. Make no exceptions! Then, they inspire their district commissioners to believe that their priority is to identify and recruit enough of the right people so that all Scouting units in the district receive regular, helpful service.

Know the standard. Provide a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units, or whatever ratio you have determined works best in your council. A good staff also has one assistant district commissioner for every five unit commissioners, plus adequate roundtable commissioners and staff. You may also have other administrative and support commissioners to support the special emphasis you want to have in order to deliver the best possible program of support.

A quality program flourishes and membership grows in a Scouting district when there is a complete team of quality commissioners. These quality commissioners are not just numbers of how many you have, but how many are actually visiting and supporting units. This also avoids overloading the same few volunteers who rarely say no, but who may find it easier to drop out of Scouting than to complain, "That's enough! I can't do any more!" Also keep in mind that fielding a complete team is more than one step. You must identify, recruit, and engage those commissioners you need to succeed.

## Recruiting Commissioners—Step by Step

1. Determine what commissioner positions are needed.

- Assess the effectiveness of existing volunteers.
- Define the responsibilities of the position and write a brief position description.
- List the qualities the person most likely will need.

2. Determine the best prospects for the position.

- Consider many sources for prospects.
- List possible prospects for each position.
- Consider their qualities.
- Prioritize prospects based on who has the qualities that best fit the position.

3. Research the prospects at the top of your list.

- Learn what their interests, abilities, and motivations are.
- Tailor your approach to their interests.
- Determine who can make the best approach. You need someone to open the door who has enough influence with the prospect to gain his or her interest. Perhaps that's you.
- Anticipate questions or objections. Decide in advance how you will answer them.
- Develop specific information on what you want the prospect to do. A few well-written, attractive pieces of paper can explain commissioner service and your district, and outline a position description. Develop this sales tool around the results you want, tailoring it to the prospect's interests and skills. Keep it simple; the prospect doesn't need every detail on commissioner service and probably will not read more than a few pages.

4. Make an appointment.

- Do not recruit over the phone, and do not let the prospect say no over the phone. Ask for an appointment to discuss a community matter. Try not to give too much information about what it is.
- Determine the best time and the most appropriate place. If possible, avoid office pressures. Try for a lunch or other time away from daily distractions. If you recruit at home, make sure the prospect's spouse is there so you can sell both of them on the idea.
- Make sure that someone the prospect respects or who has influence with the prospect goes with you. Never recruit alone. One person listens while the other talks.

5. Make the sale.

- Introduce everyone. Be sure the prospect understands what each of you does in Scouting.
- Make small talk about the prospect's interests, family, and achievements, based on your research.
- Sell the sizzle. Deliver an exciting, enthusiastic, and brief pitch on commissioner service and youth. Don't dwell on details. Talk about the purposes in serving units that will most interest the prospect.
- Describe the role you want the prospect to fill, its importance to youth, and to the community. Be specific.
- Remind the prospect that he or she is the best person for the position.

- Ask for questions. Be sure the prospect understands what is expected. Be prepared to overcome objections. Answer the prospect's questions briefly and positively.
  - Listen for comments from the prospect that may help sell him or her on the position.
  - Know when to close the sale. Don't keep selling if you think the prospect is not interested or if the prospect is sold. Don't oversell the position. Don't give too much detail. Make the position seem important, fun, and worthwhile. And don't undersell the position. Be sure the prospect knows exactly what is expected and is willing to do it.
  - Recognize that people work for people. Stress the participation of persons who are of interest to the prospect. Don't overlook the friendship and fellowship that will evolve.
6. Ask for a commitment.
- You need this person—say so. Be patient. Wait for an answer.
7. Have a fall-back position in mind.
- Don't let the prospect off the hook. Leave the prospect something. Get his or her help in recruiting others. In any event, the prospect will be flattered and will know more about Scouting. If you are turned down, keep the door open for a later decision.
8. Follow up.
- After the prospect says yes, give the new recruit the details of how and where to go online to access the Unit Commissioner Fast Start. Provide a reference to the website ([www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)) for additional details about the role of a commissioner, but don't let them be overwhelmed by all they see there. It can work as a reference to other resources available to them in the future as they begin their new position.
  - Formally acknowledge the commitment with a letter and a copy of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.
  - Invite and take the person to the next commissioner meeting.
  - Prepare an appropriate news release or announcement in the council newsletter.
  - Within a week or two, follow up with specific orientation and an assignment.
  - Ensure the new commissioner is offered and receives Commissioner Basic Training within two months of accepting the position.

## Group Recruiting

Group recruiting is a special and exciting approach for a district. It involves bringing three or more people together to hear about Scouting and then asking them to serve in some capacity. Key administrative commissioners and the district executive meet to plan and accept assignments for the group recruiting event.

Group recruiting has several advantages:

- This approach can bring your commissioner staff up to strength quickly.
- If 10 or 15 people are asked to accept a challenge that can be handled by 10 or 15 people, each person figures that if others will accept, he or she will, too. No one fears being saddled with an overwhelming task.
- People seek association with others. If the group includes the right people, their reaction is positive. In many group recruiting situations, nearly 100 percent agree to serve.
- When a whole staff is recruited together, they can be trained together. As a complete team, they can build team spirit and promptly begin to function effectively.

Heed these cautions:

- Group recruiting is a more involved process and may require considerable advance planning and preparation.
- Group recruiting does not take the place of good one-by-one recruiting, which is still necessary to fill some vacancies such as a roundtable commissioner or where only one or two additional people are needed.

There are two types of group recruiting:

- **Leadership conference.** This is best used when there are only a few existing commissioners. Decide on the date, time, place, and nature of the event. Develop a list of many prospects at an informal gathering of community leaders. Select a host who can attract the prospects. The host invites prospects to his or her club, office, living room, barbecue, or other attractive or prestigious location. A luncheon is an appropriate setting. The program inspires, tells the Scouting story, presents the need, and asks for a commitment.
- **Group recruiting in a single company or organization.** The company president or other organization leader is asked to list and bring together highly selected employees, often working through company department managers or the personnel director. The meeting, usually held on company time, informs, inspires, asks, and gets commitments. District leaders match people to positions and follow up immediately. A company may be asked to "adopt" and fill the entire staff.

A suggested agenda might include:

- Welcome and introductions
- Social event or food
- Program of the BSA
- What are councils and districts?
- Role of the commissioner
- Why we picked you
- Motivating speaker, dignitary, or youth member
- Your commitment to serve
- Plans for immediate orientation and assignments
- Each administrative commissioner takes one or more new commissioners under his or her wing

<b>Agenda for Recruiting Event</b>	
<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>	<i>Host or District Commissioner</i>
<b>Meal or Refreshments</b>	
<b>How Scouting Serves</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Units and their chartered organizations</li> <li>• The council</li> <li>• The district</li> </ul>	<i>Key Council Scouter</i>
<b>Facts About Our District</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display large map of district</li> <li>• Youth served/potential youth to serve</li> <li>• Four functions—membership, finance, program, and unit service</li> <li>• Number of commissioners needed</li> </ul>	<i>District Executive</i>
<b>Role of the Unit Commissioner</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute personalized presentation of position</li> </ul>	<i>District Commissioner</i>
<b>Questions from Participants</b>	
<b>Personal Testimony</b>	<i>Boy Scout, Unit Leader, or Unit Commissioner</i>
<b>Challenge and Commitment to Serve</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute talent and interest cards</li> <li>• Challenge to serve/to complete card</li> </ul>	<i>Host or District Commissioner</i>
<b>Table Discussions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete cards or registration forms</li> </ul>	<i>Led by Active Commissioners</i>
<b>Closing</b>	<i>Host or District Commissioner</i>

## Where Do You Find Them?

Wonderful people are available for commissioner service. Begin a prospect inventory of index cards listing potential commissioners. Jot down information such as occupation, hobbies, children, volunteer experience, membership in organizations, interests, and the right person to help recruit them. Don't say no for anyone.

You also can reference the podcast on the commissioner website ([www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)) that provides a process to recruit adults from unit rosters through ScoutNET. This has been tried successfully throughout Scouting to engage or reengage parents or former leaders as commissioners.

Develop a presentation for a council commissioner meeting on possible sources for new commissioners. Use interactive teaching methods such as a buddy team contest to list sources. Then challenge each district to try out new sources and report back at the next meeting. Have a staff adviser do the same at a professional staff meeting.

Be sure these sources are included:

- Your friends, associates, and business contacts.
- Chamber of commerce listings of organizations, major employers, boards of directors, and labor unions.
- Service club membership rosters.
- Educators, real estate brokers, shopkeepers, government employees, and other business, professional, and service people. Consider people whose activity causes them to travel through your district as well as those who are permanently located in the district.
- Eagle Scouts. Recruit National Eagle Scout Association members to serve as commissioners.
- Eagle Scout parents. Parents of Eagle Scouts who may have discontinued their association with Scouting after their son achieved Eagle, and were no longer active with Scouting.
- BSA Alumni Connection data through the website [www.bsaalumni.org](http://www.bsaalumni.org).
- Order of the Arrow adults who are active in their local lodge but are not primary unit leaders in their units.
- Check boy applications for parents with previous Scouting experience.
- Former successful Scouters.
- Check Friends of Scouting donor lists for people with special people skills.
- Neighborhood association leaders and other local opinion setters.

- Former Scouts. Review past unit and district rosters with your district executive for names of former Scouts who are not now involved.
- Current Scouters. (But don't steal unit leaders—that's the most important role in Scouting!)
- Former Jaycees. Concentrate on people who are no longer eligible for Jaycee membership because of the age limit of 40.
- Employees. Check with local presidents, managers, personnel directors, and owners for employees whose qualities match those you are looking for.
- Make a list of other sources of commissioner prospects in your community.

## Recruiting Resources

For more details on effective recruiting, see the pamphlet *Selecting District People*, No. 34512A, and the video *Recruiting District Volunteers*, AV-06DVD08.

Podcasts are available on [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners) for steps to success in identifying and recruiting.

## Roster

District commissioners may use photocopies of the roster in appendix F of this section to record their entire staff.

## Removing a Volunteer

For ideas on removing an ineffective volunteer, the person who just isn't working out, see Chapter 17 of this section.

## A 49 Percent Growth in Commissioners

A 49 percent annual growth in commissioners is a major success story in almost anybody's book. That's exactly what took place recently in a seven-council pilot commissioner recruiting project. Starting the year with only 463 commissioners, these councils ended the year with 690 commissioners. Non-pilot councils as a group experienced a 4 percent loss in commissioners.

Refined to fit any council in the country, here is the pilot project's simple plan:

**Phase 1: Review roster.** Because some active unit commissioners might not be registered, each district commissioner/district executive team compares its staff list with a list of registered unit commissioners provided by the council registrar. The registrar also indicates the number of unit commissioners needed to achieve the 1-per-3 unit ratio and the number of new commissioners needed. Any of those not registered are then registered by the districts (paid or multiple).

**Phase 2: Recruitment.** Some districts will still have vacancies. The council commissioner and Scout executive then challenge the districts to adopt a recruiting plan to achieve a 1-per-3 unit ratio as well as provide a couple of trainees to fill future vacancies. Set a deadline for completion. Use ideas in this manual as a resource for individual recruiting, group recruiting, recruiting resources, and sources for commissioners. Districts report results at monthly commissioner meetings and council staff meetings. Prominently display current status in the council service center.

**Phase 3: Recognition.** Recognize district commissioner/district executive teams for meeting their recruiting goals. Also recognize other commissioners who assisted in the recruiting process.



# Chapter 10—Commissioner Training and Recognition

One of the council commissioner's principal responsibilities is to see that a complete program is in place to train every commissioner in the council. District commissioners are responsible to see that every member of their staff receives adequate training.

Councils may appoint an assistant council commissioner for training. This person is responsible for the annual commissioner training conference/College of Commissioner Science, ongoing training opportunities, training recognitions, and promotion of the annual Philmont Training Center courses.

A dynamic quality of today's society is the need for learning as a lifetime activity. Commissioners should therefore view learning as an important part of their entire Scouting lives.

Commissioner training has the following seven elements to be carried out in a timely manner:

1. Online Unit Commissioner Fast Start
2. Personal coaching/orientation within two weeks
3. Commissioner Basic Training within two months
4. Continuing education (monthly and annually)
5. Arrowhead Honor within one year
6. Commissioner Key after three years
7. Distinguished Commissioner Service Award (after five years)

Nationally developed courses, resource material, and training recognition provide the structure for good commissioner training. It is the local council's mission, however, to provide the fun, the sparkle, the motivation, and a schedule of frequent training opportunities so that commissioners will learn good unit service skills.

Occasionally the National Council will receive a proposal for more elaborate commissioner training systems, but national training has been kept simple and easy to administer. Local councils may add additional structure as needed.

See that your council provides all of the basic opportunities for commissioners to learn and to grow in their effectiveness. Remember the old saying, "Training delayed is program denied."

**Important:** To assist units in their efforts to achieve the Journey to Excellence Unit Performance Recognition Award, get trained using UVTS 2.0.

## Seven Elements of Good Commissioner Training

### 1. Online Unit Commissioner Fast Start

Within 48 hours of being recruited, have each new unit commissioner go online to take the Unit Commissioner Fast Start. Set a date for a personal coaching/orientation session by the assistant district or district commissioner. This course should be taken by administrative commissioners as well so they are aware of its content.

### 2. Personal Coaching/Orientation

Within two weeks, new commissioners should have an orientation session with their district commissioner or ADC, discuss the online Fast Start course, then cover the orientation projects listed in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. Group orientation is outlined in appendix A. It is most efficient with a large group of new people. Individual coaching with their commissioner leader may, however, be even better. It helps develop good communication that extends far beyond training and can be personalized to the person's specific unit assignments.

After a new unit commissioner has made his or her first unit visit, present them with a commissioner name tag, commissioner neckerchief, or other personal recognition.

Council commissioner orientation is usually conducted by the Scout executive or a designee. District commissioner orientation is usually conducted by the district executive.

### 3. Commissioner Basic Training

Within two months, a new person must have basic training. The three-session course involves actual supervised visits to units. Some councils and districts run all three sessions in one day with the supervised unit visits taking place just before and shortly after the formal training.

After completion of basic training, the Trained Leader emblem may be worn on the uniform. The new commissioner may now be presented with the commission (No. 33713A) in an appropriate ceremony (see appendix H of this section).

Trainers use the "Commissioner Basic Training Manual," section two of this manual.

See that basic training is available somewhere in the council at least every other month.

## 4. Continuing Education

This includes a variety of learning experiences to provide added knowledge and current information useful to commissioners. It includes a short training topic **at every monthly district and council commissioner meeting**. Review the suggested topics in appendix C. Select topics based on current learning needs. A session can be led by an appropriate commissioner, a professional, a member of a district or council committee, or even some talented person outside Scouting.

The **annual council commissioner conference** or a **College of Commissioner Science** is the best opportunity for you and your staff to directly influence the quality of training.

The conference is a high-morale event with a wide variety of training topics related to unit service. It is also a time to learn about the latest Scouting developments and plans for the year ahead. Many councils hold two-day or weekend conferences to provide time to pursue topics in depth and to better develop important commissioner fellowship.

Other councils run one-day events to conserve time, simplify arrangements, and reduce costs. A council might set up an optional Friday evening overnight fellowship activity with all day Saturday for training and other program features. Travel distances, geography, and the tradition of successful events will help determine which conference pattern is best for your council.

One form of commissioner conference that has recently been popular in some councils is the “College of Commissioner Science.” This type of conference is modeled after college courses and degrees.

Some conferences are held on a council cluster basis, with two or more councils planning and running a joint event. The joint event works best when councils are in the same metropolitan area. *A conference that covers a wide area is likely to reduce attendance because of distance and travel time.* The majority of people in attendance might only be more experienced commissioners.

**Councils should place the highest priority on attracting all unit commissioners and new ADCs—this is usually best accomplished close to home in a single council. A single-council conference also best develops a healthy bond between unit commissioners and their own commissioner leaders and professional advisers.**

“Continuing Education for Commissioners,” section three of this manual, is a valuable resource for commissioner training. It contains several nearly complete outlines for one- to two-hour training sessions. Many of these outlines can be subdivided into dozens of shorter training topics. These outlines could be used in a variety of settings:

- As training topics for district commissioner staff meetings
- As training topics for council commissioner staff meetings
- As training sessions for the annual commissioner conference

- As courses for the College of Commissioner Science
- In personal coaching of district Scouters
- At any other setting where you might include training for commissioners

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.

**Summer Philmont Training Center conferences** provide mountaintop training experiences for you and members of your staff. These courses may vary from year to year, but include special courses for unit commissioners, administrative commissioners, as well as council and district Key 3s. The course you attend is designed for the newest to the most-experienced commissioner at all levels. Once you have attended Philmont for one course, you will want to go back again. You must be approved by your council in order to receive an invitation from Philmont to attend one of these courses.

## 5. Arrowhead Honor

Only commissioners may wear the arrowhead emblem after completing Commissioner Basic Training and a series of performance projects. It is a visible sign of competence. Successful completion is the result of performance and the ability to put training into practice.

Commissioners assuming a new commissioner position are encouraged to complete the Arrowhead Honor projects for the new position.

Performance projects are as follows:

- **Council commissioner and assistant council commissioners (Field Service):** (1) With your Scout executive or other staff adviser, evaluate all district commissioners in the council. (2) Have an active, effective district commissioner in every district of the council. (3) Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan throughout the council. (4) Achieve a ratio in the council of one unit commissioner for every three units or a ratio approved by your council commissioner and your council’s commissioner service adviser. (5) Chair or actively take part in six council commissioner meetings. (6) Give leadership to a council commissioner conference or other major event approved by your council. (7) In consultation with the Scout executive or council commissioner, select and carry out a major project in the council.
- **Assistant council commissioners (Administrative):** (1) Create a position description for the ACC role and obtain approval of the council commissioner (includes positions of ACC for training and recognition, unit health, new unit support, administration, conference/college, diversity, etc.). (2) Develop a work plan for your position that covers the program year. (3) Implement the



work plan with continuous evaluation throughout the program year. (4) Report on work plan progress at council commissioner meetings. (5) Chair or actively take part in six council commissioner meetings. (6) Give leadership to a council commissioner conference or other major event. (7) In consultation with the Scout executive or council commissioner, select and carry out a major project in the council.

- **District commissioner and assistants:** (1) Work with your district executive to evaluate all commissioners you supervise. (2) Achieve a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units in the district or service area, or an approved ratio agreed upon by the council commissioner and the council adviser to commissioner service. (3) Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan. (4) Chair or actively take part in six district commissioner staff meetings. (5) Attend six district committee meetings (not required for assistants). (6) Attend a council commissioner conference or College of Commissioner Science with a majority of your staff. (7) Provide personal coaching for the commissioners you supervise. (8) Put in action a plan to track and hold your unit commissioners accountable for unit visits.
- **Unit commissioner:** (1) Visit each assigned unit eight or more times throughout the year. (2) Fill in and follow up on Commissioner Worksheets (pack, No. 34125C; troop, No. 34126A; crew, No. 33660B; post, No. 33619B) or use the Unit Self-Assessment Tool with 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 resulting in on-time unit reregistration. (6) Participate in a charter presentation. (7) Attend a council commissioner conference or College of Commissioner Science. (8) Help a unit resolve a specific problem or improve some aspect of their operations.
- **Roundtable commissioner:** (1) Review all material in the current *Venturing Monthly Program Forum*, No. 34342; current *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 511-942WB; or current *Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 34410(a). (2) Review all material in *Troop Program Resources* and *Troop Program Features* (volumes 1–3), or *Cub Scout Program Helps*. (3) Recruit a roundtable staff. (4) Lead staff in preparing a one-year roundtable outline. (5) Supervise the staff in conducting these roundtables. (6) With the district commissioner and district executive, develop and use an attendance promotion plan. (7) Attend a council commissioner conference, roundtable planning conference, or College of Commissioner Science.

## 6. Commissioner Key

The Commissioner Key is an important training award for completing Commissioner Basic Training, the

Arrowhead Honor projects, and three years' tenure as a registered commissioner within a five-year period. Roundtable commissioners also must complete basic training for Cub Scout or Boy Scout roundtable commissioners. See appendix E for training award progress record cards. (Note: Roundtable staff members are not commissioners. They earn the Scouter's Training Award and wear the miniature device for their respective program level.)

## 7. Distinguished Commissioner Service Award

The Distinguished Commissioner Service Award is designed to help upgrade commissioner service throughout your council, recognize commissioners who provide quality unit service, and help units succeed. The requirements to earn the award are for currently active council commissioners, assistant council commissioners, district commissioners, assistant district commissioners, and unit commissioners. The requirements are:

Complete training as outlined by the local council, including earning the Commissioner's Key.

Serve as an active commissioner for five consecutive years and be currently registered with the Boy Scouts of America.

Recharter at least 90 percent of the units in your area of service for a minimum of the past two consecutive years.

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 requirements for roundtable/program forum commissioners are: 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/program forums per year for the past two consecutive years.

Recognitions are available through Supply Group for councils to order in recognition of those who have qualified. There is no application for this award. Each council monitors and requires the proper notification by the recipient as to their meeting the qualifications. Available recognitions include: 1) Distinguished Service Award plaque (approximately 6 x 8 inches), 2) Distinguished Service Award bolo ties, 3) Award square knots for the uniform—For council commissioner and assistant council commissioner—silver plaque, No. 17610; bolo tie, No. 00747. For district commissioner, assistant district commissioner, and roundtable commissioner—gold plaque, No. 17609; bolo tie, No. 00748. For unit commissioner—bronze plaque, No. 17608; bolo tie, No. 00749; embroidered square knot, No. 05019 (silver knot on red background).

# Chapter 11—Commissioner Meetings

Much of the business of the Boy Scouts of America is conducted in meetings. For commissioners, these meetings include council commissioner cabinet meetings, district Key 3 meetings, district commissioner staff meetings, training sessions, district roundtables, and the always-important unit and unit committee meetings.

## Commissioner Cabinet Meetings

These meetings are the nerve center of the council's commissioner operation. The major purpose of the meeting is to motivate and support district commissioners and to maintain a high level of unit service in the districts. The council commissioner presides. This important body also includes district commissioners, assistant council commissioners, and the Scout executive (or the Scout executive's representative). The meeting generally occurs monthly or quarterly for the purpose of planning, training, and reporting. Assistant council commissioners can be assigned specific responsibilities such as roundtables, training, conferences, diversity, new unit service, etc.

Cabinet meeting agendas might include:

- A timely training topic (see section three in this manual, "Continuing Education for Commissioners").
- A district-by-district review of such items as commissioner recruiting, Journey to Excellence Performance Award unit status, unit rechartering, and unit visits. This is a time to hold districts accountable.
- Discussion of future council activities such as the Friends of Scouting campaign, summer camp promotions, Scouting show, and other special projects.
- Opportunity for district commissioners to report briefly on the health of their units, a specific statement on unit coverage, special unit service projects, and major needs of the district.
- Roundtable activities and attendance, commissioner training programs, and other special commissioner-related business.
- A review of potential dropped units needing high-priority commissioner lifesaving.
- Problem solving. At least once a year, make a list of problems that have been confronted by district commissioners. Select a problem for each monthly meeting. Break participants into work groups of three to six persons to devise solutions for the problems. After 15 to 20 minutes, reassemble and have groups share their solutions. The staff adviser includes a comprehensive list of solutions in the meeting minutes.

## District Key 3 Meetings

On a regular basis (often weekly or every other week) the district chair, district commissioner, and district executive meet to coordinate their respective roles and to plan and implement district operations. The Key 3 share successes and failures, welcome each other's suggestions, and support each other's plans and projects. For more details, see *District Key 3*, No. 513-630, *A Handbook for District Operations*, and *District Key 3 Orientation* videotape, AV-06V005.

## District Commissioner Staff Meetings

The action at **monthly** commissioner meetings sets the stage for how unit commissioners and ADCs perform as star actors in the drama of unit service.

Will the unit commissioner be perceived as a hawk of council projects and requests, or as a friend of the unit who helps unit adults provide a better program for youth? Your district commissioner staff meetings will set the stage.

Will the fellowship of commissioners be inward looking, or will it be an outward flow of Scouting spirit directed at motivating unit leaders and helping them to feel good about their units? Effective meetings will set the tone.

Commissioners need to meet **monthly** to plan and review all the needed unit service tasks to ensure good unit program and stable unit operation. Anything less loses momentum, shortchanges the ongoing training required, and prevents you and your district commissioner from ensuring that dynamic unit service is happening!

Consider these ingredients for effective district commissioner staff meetings:

- Be sure the meeting is sharply focused on the needs of individual units, not a preoccupation with district/council needs and projects. **Include time for assistant district commissioners and their respective unit commissioners to review the health of each unit.**

Be sure to allow time for breakout sessions of ADCs and their respective teams of unit commissioners to review the health of each unit by:

- Sharing important observations from recent visits with units.
- Giving priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit.
- Identifying specific ways to help each unit improve its program.
- Determining who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually, this is the assigned unit com-

missioner, but more challenging situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member, or even the district commissioner.

- Checking the progress on last month's assignments.

**This is perhaps the most important 60 minutes each month in the district.**

During these team meetings, the district commissioner and district executive will each sit in on the ADC group where their direct input is needed the most.

- Devote part of each meeting to a **brief training topic**. Training is a continuous process for commissioners. The district commissioner and district executive should select a topic each month that matches current skill needs of their commissioners. The course outlines in "Continuing Education for Commissioners," section three of this manual, provide ready-made training topics for district as well as council commissioner meetings.
- Weave the meeting together with lots of good fun, fellowship, and inspiration. Provide frequent recognition for good examples of unit service by staff members.
- Use the meeting to help everyone be alert to changes in units, changes in the district, and changes in the community. Get people to feel that they will really miss out on things if they skip the meeting.
- **Keep the meeting moving.** No meeting should run over two hours. Ninety minutes is usually better.
- Consult the sample agenda at the end of this section.
- **The two most important events of the meeting are the training topic and the ADC breakout sessions to review and address unit needs.** This meeting is 100 percent focused on individual units, rather than district or council needs and projects.

The meeting is chaired by the district commissioner with the professional guidance of the district executive. This is a uniformed meeting to build enthusiasm for carrying out the district's unit service responsibilities. Helping units succeed is at the heart of everything that occurs at the meeting.

**Caution: DO NOT hold district commissioner staff meetings and district committee meetings on the same night.** That's a real no-no! Holding commissioner meetings in conjunction with other meetings of the district shortchanges the unit service function and prevents the district commissioner and district executive from giving adequate attention to individual commissioner issues. Their hands-on involvement is the key to success. For example, they often need to sit in on the essential ADC work groups where their direct input may be needed. The district commissioner and district executive play somewhat different roles at the district committee meeting where their *full-time attention* is also needed.

## E-Mail Networks

Good communication is important to an effective commissioner staff. Some councils have networked their

commissioners by e-mail. District commissioners and district executives are networked with all their district commissioner staff members. The council commissioner and his/her staff adviser are networked with their assistants and district commissioners.

Note: Include e-mail addresses on commissioner rosters. Keep the quality of e-mail high, every word geared to helping units succeed.

Caution: Don't let e-mail substitute for effective group interaction and the instant two-way interaction of phone calls.

## Unit Meetings

Unit commissioners can best see unit leaders in action at unit meetings. Although the visit may occasionally be a "drop-in," common courtesy suggests that advance notice be given. The visit should always be to help, not hinder, the operation of the unit. A unit leader who conducts the unit's activities by a planned program does not appreciate an unscheduled "time out." Commissioners don't disrupt the meeting; they stay on the sidelines observing, without appearing to snoop. Whatever prompts the commissioner's visit, the visit should be made at an acceptable time to the unit. "Hit-and-run visits" by unit commissioners are rarely appreciated by unit leaders.

After the visit, the unit commissioner uses the Commissioner Worksheet, No. 34125C, 34126A, 33660B, or 33619B, to record observations made at the unit visit and then compares them with previous appraisals. The Unit Self-Assessment Tool can also be used with unit leadership to gauge their vision and progress toward providing a quality program. This will also allow for some direct interaction between the commissioner and the unit's leadership. This becomes the basis for actions that might be considered to help the unit improve its operation and program.

## Unit Committee Meetings

This gathering is often the best time and place to informally help a unit improve its operation. An active unit committee has resources to solve most unit problems. The committee usually is composed of concerned parents. Working with the chartered organization representative and committee chairman, the unit committee is an unequaled resource for aid—except when the unit is led by a "solo" operator who professes to have "enough trouble with the boys, so why be bothered with the trials and tribulations of a bunch of adults?"

The wise unit commissioner sees the danger of a solo enterprise, with its constant possibility of the loss of the leader, the lack of immediate help, and no one to look to in the event of trouble. The commissioner makes certain that an active unit committee is set up, informed, and in full operation. It is sometimes necessary to convince the unit leader of the advantages an active unit committee provides.

# Chapter 12—Coaching Others

No commissioner responsibility demands more skill than that of coaching others. Often, those who need direction are not aware of this need and may resent “interference” from those who offer help. Special skill is required to deal with these situations effectively.

Administrative commissioners guide unit commissioners, and because they have the common goal of unit service, there seldom is conflict. However, for the unit commissioner who sees the need for a unit leader to change direction or adopt another course of action in the unit, the situation is different. Thus, a good counseling or coaching approach of unit commissioners toward unit leaders is all-important.

The unit commissioner’s first contact with a unit leader will set the tone for this relationship. If in the first meeting a unit leader feels “directed” by “supervisors” who know all the answers, the relationship is off to a poor start.

How, then, might the commissioner get acquainted? Here’s one way: Suppose that a troop has been operating without a unit commissioner. A commissioner is recruited and designated to serve the troop. The assistant district commissioner responsible for the troop contacts the unit leader, indicating that a new Scouter has joined the commissioner staff. The assistant district commissioner makes arrangements to bring the new commissioner by to meet the Scoutmaster. (The time and place for the meeting should provide informality in a relaxed atmosphere.)

The new commissioner expresses sincere interest in the troop and listens a lot. During the get-together, the new commissioner finds something about which to compliment the Scoutmaster, being careful not to give the impression of snooping, judging, or advising. Before leaving, the new commissioner seeks the unit leader’s suggestion about the next time they will get together, perhaps at an informal meeting after a troop meeting.

Through the weeks and months, a friendly understanding is established, and both the unit leader and the unit commissioner agree upon a pattern of association that will result in greater help to the unit and better Scouting

for boys. This includes such activities as meetings with the unit committee, participation in roundtables, and personal visits between the unit leader and commissioner.

To further strengthen the relationship, unit commissioners find ways in which they can demonstrate their willingness to be friends, coaches, and counselors. Here are a few suggestions:

- When the unit leader successfully completes a particular project, the unit leader’s spouse is told of this achievement in some special way, such as a telephone call, a note, etc., in the name of the district.
- When the time approaches for the council’s or district’s annual recognition program, the unit commissioner suggests to the unit committee and the chartered organization that a nice way to say “thank you” would be to invite the unit leader and his or her spouse to the gathering as guests of the chartered organization.
- To encourage the unit to go to summer camp, the employer of the unit leader could be urged to see that the unit leader be given time off, with pay, to be with the unit at camp. This provides recognition for outstanding community leadership and also reflects favorably upon the employer. (Note: Be sure to carefully research such a procedure before attempting it.)
- If unit leaders have a particular talent or skill that could be helpful to others, arrange an invitation for them to display this talent at a roundtable or training course.

Should situations then arise in which a change should be made, a different direction taken, or a problem faced head-on, the chance that a productive outcome will result is far more likely. The commissioner always coaches leaders in a way that protects those leaders’ pride. The commissioner provides solutions that fit the unit and the community situation.

Take time at staff meetings to review good counseling skills. Use role-playing. Review the counseling suggestions from the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.



# Chapter 13—Commissioner Evaluation

## Self-Evaluation Questions for Council Commissioners

As council commissioner, what do I do to help my districts meet or surpass the 1-to-3 ratio of commissioners to units or achieve the agreed upon ratio?

The number of units is the key to membership growth and commissioners play a major role in preventing dropped units. How does my council prepare unit commissioners to help units that have life-threatening problems?

What role do I play when a district commissioner needs to be replaced?

Unit commissioners guide units to meet the requirements for the Journey to Excellence Performance Award. As council commissioner, what do I do to motivate my districts to help units become Journey to Excellence Performance Award units?

New commissioners should view the online Fast Start within 48 hours of being recruited and complete basic training within two months. How does my council ensure that new commissioners receive Fast Start, orientation and basic training within this timeframe?

“Continuing education for commissioners” is a concept that says a person must be involved in training as long as they are registered as a commissioner. What do I do to be sure that continuing education is happening for commissioners in my council?

As council commissioner, how do I personally guide and motivate my district commissioners?

What are the most important things that district executives do to ensure success of the commissioners in my districts?

What are the most important things that my Scout executive, director of field service, and/or field directors do to ensure success of commissioners in my districts?

## Self-Evaluation Questions for District Commissioners

Does my district have a 1-to-3 ratio of commissioners to units or the approved ratio for my district? And a 1-to-5 ratio of ADCs to unit commissioners?

What percent of units in my district are national Journey to Excellence Performance Award units?

What percent of units rechartered on time?

Do I hold my commissioners accountable to respond promptly to important unit needs and problems?

Have at least 90 percent of my staff completed Commissioner Basic Training?

Are at least 70 percent of our units represented at roundtables?

What role do I play when a commissioner on my staff needs to be replaced?

What do I do to ensure that new commissioners view the online Fast Start within 48 hours of being recruited?

How do I personally guide and motivate my commissioners?

## Unit Commissioner Evaluation

Administrative commissioners measure both their own and their unit commissioners’ effectiveness by asking these questions about their units:

Do my units have effective unit leaders?

Do my units have youth enthusiastically involved in a good unit program?

Do my units have active unit committees?

Do my chartered organizations feel a sense of ownership for their units, and do unit volunteers have good relationships with their chartered organizations?

Do all units reregister on time?

Do units show membership increases?

Are my unit leaders happy to see me visit, or are they counting the minutes until I leave?

Are my units reasonably active in district events?

Have my units met the Journey to Excellence Performance Award criteria?

Ask these questions about each unit commissioner: How well does the unit commissioner relate to people in general? How well does he or she relate to people in specific units to which he or she is assigned? How dependable is the commissioner in carrying out responsibilities? Is the commissioner growing in his or her knowledge and skills?

A good “yardstick” that provides commissioners with specific checkpoints of their effectiveness is the Self-Evaluation for Unit Commissioners sheet, in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. This one-page form has more than 20 areas to rate as “outstanding,” “satisfactory,” or “needs improvement.”

One way to use this evaluation is to pass out copies to a small group of unit commissioners. Indicate that it is a self-appraisal form; allow time for the unit commissioners to fill it out; and then have the group discuss the form point-by-point. This form might also be used by an assistant district commissioner in coaching a unit commissioner.

Unit commissioners evaluate the success of their units. An exceptionally fine evaluation tool used by the unit commissioner is the Commissioner Worksheet—No. 34125C for Cub Scout packs, No. 34126A for Boy Scout troops, and No. 33660B for Venturing crews. Teach your staff how to use these worksheets:

- *Never* show this form at a unit meeting.
- Unit commissioners acquaint themselves with the form before the meeting.
- Nine general areas are listed, but not all will be observed at every meeting.
- Immediately after the visit, the commissioner privately checks the worksheet.
- For each area of the worksheet, the commissioner selects specific ways to help from a suggested list.

**Two notes of caution:** First, it's probably best not to design a highly sophisticated evaluation for a formal standard of appraisal. In many cases, such a tool becomes a burden for volunteer commissioners. Most volunteers will respond better to a few easy-to-use criteria as contained in the worksheets described above.

Second, be careful *how* you use unit success “yardsticks” to evaluate unit commissioners. We often say that our unit commissioner’s best work needs to be done with our weakest units. But if we unfairly compare commissioners by the progress of their units, no one will want to be assigned to a weak or problem unit.

Another tool to use in measuring the success of a unit is the Unit Self-Assessment Tool. It is a form to use as 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 and the unit leader and the 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 that can help with its accomplishment.

*The fairest use of unit data is to measure a unit commissioner by the improvement in the unit from the time the commissioner was first assigned the unit or by specific problems the commissioner helped that unit solve. The commissioner who helps a unit progress from “weak” to “weak but fairly good” has probably made as important a contribution as the commissioner who helps a “super” unit earn one more accolade than it did the year before.*

## Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0

The Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0 is an updated and enhanced tool for those in commissioner service to record and review information about their contact with the units they serve.

With regular and consistent use, this system can provide each commissioner an at-a-glance overview of recent visits and a history of communications with each unit, providing timely and consistent support.

The Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0 is connected to MyScouting (the volunteer website). To access MyScouting, go to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) and create an account. To access the tracking system, you will need to be a registered commissioner. Use your registration membership ID in your MyScouting account.

### Steps to successfully using the system are:

**Step 1)** All personnel, volunteers, and employees must be registered in selected positions as a member of the Boy Scouts of America in order to log in to the system.

**Step 2)** Councils need to first assign unit commissioners to units in ScoutNET. The approved, council-designated representative needs to assign the commissioner to a unit, open the Unit Record, then select the More Information tab. Click the down arrow at the Unit Commissioner field and select a commissioner from the resulting list.

**Step 3)** Access to the UVTS 2.0 must be done through the website: [www.scouting.org/myscouting](http://www.scouting.org/myscouting). To view the system, you must have a MyScouting account with a member ID that carries the commissioner registration. If you already have a MyScouting account, you will need to log in. If you do not have an account, you will need to create a new account in MyScouting. Once you are logged in to your account, please follow these instructions: Click on My Profile, Modify Profile, make sure Unit Visit Tracking 2.0 is marked, then click Submit.

**Step 4)** There are two sets of instructions for using the UVTS 2.0.

### Instructions for using the UVTS 2.0 as a commissioner—

Once you have access into the UVTS 2.0, you can obtain support by clicking on the HELP tab, which is part of the Unit Visitation Tracking System online and contains the necessary information for commissioners who have questions about how the UVTS 2.0 operates.

### Instructions for using the UVTS 2.0 by a local

**COUNCIL to support commissioners**—The ScoutNET Support Site has been updated to include documents on council implementation. To view these, go to MyBSA user login, click on ScoutNET, and select Support. Click on Support Site, then Internet Unit Services Home and scroll to the Unit Visit Tracking 2.0 section.

**Additional Support**—For volunteers who have difficulties with these four steps—please send an e-mail to [myscouting@netbsa.org](mailto:myscouting@netbsa.org) with your log-on e-mail address and contact information. Please include your council name and headquarters city. The MyScouting log-on includes a help document and brief video presentation on MyScouting accounts. A commissioner-only UVTS 2.0 hotline is available at 972-672-4389.

# Chapter 14—Early Warning Signals

Airplanes, police cars, and ships at sea all have built-in radar systems to provide early warning of things just over the horizon. Commissioners also have built-in radar of sorts to get advance signals of good and bad conditions in every unit. Alert unit commissioners to check these indicators constantly—using them to head off disaster if the signals are bad and to commend unit people if the signals are good. Here are a few signals you might build into your staff's early-warning radar:

Good Signals	Danger Signals
Meetings well-attended	Irregular meetings
Program planned in advance	No written program
Good advancement	Little advancement
Fully uniformed unit	Few in uniform
Good participation in council-district events	Seldom seen outside their unit
Frequent outdoor activities	Little outdoor program, no camping
Support FOS program	No FOS participation
Attend roundtables	Never attend roundtables
Constant membership growth	No new members
Strong unit committee	Unit leaders work alone
Excellent parent support	No parent involvement
Unit recharters on time	Unit charter lapses
Strong boy leadership	Unit leader does all the leading
Good relationship with chartered organization	Mistrust between chartered organization and its unit Scouters
Assistant unit leader (and den leaders in packs)	Only one active leader

## Good Signals

Having fun

Unit leader always available

Leader trained

## Danger Signals

Lack of discipline

Unit leader hard to find

Very little leader training

Unit commissioners are not the only ones with radar. Those they serve, unit leaders, have some signals of their own about commissioners. Here are a few:

## Good Signals

They are always there if needed

They keep their word

They can get help for me anytime

They keep me posted

We get good ideas from them

They are great help at unit committee meetings

“Great guy, Bill . . . don’t know what I’d do without him.”

## Danger Signals

Commissioners? What’s a commissioner?

They always want something

They interrupt my meetings

They are never there when you need them

I can’t depend on them

All they do is wear red jackets and drink coffee

“I wish that guy’d get off my back. . . .”

Help your commissioners check signals on themselves. To the above, add signals you learn from your own experience. You might not “hear” what your associates say, but their actions usually speak louder than their words.



# Chapter 15—The Annual Commissioner Service Plan

This plan gives specific purposes for regular and supportive contact with units by the commissioner staff, usually by the unit commissioner. This plan encourages commissioner visits and guides unit activities toward being Journey to Excellence Performance Award units.

The recommended commissioner service plan follows the natural flow of adding new members, purchasing uniforms, preparing for summer camp, unit program planning, and replacing adult leadership.

The plan includes the following commissioner functions:

- **Membership inventory.** Conducted in December and again two months before the unit's annual charter renewal meeting.
- **Uniform inspection.** Held for Cub Scout packs in the fall and for Boy Scout troops in the spring and fall. The commissioner helps pack and troop leaders; lends dignity to a high-morale event; encourages uniforms for all new members; and develops unit pride.
- **Journey to Excellence Performance Award unit measurement.** Conducted by the commissioner annually. 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.
- **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?
- **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 the unit meeting). Make it a special occasion.
- **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.
- **Youth Protection training visit.** The commissioner explains and promotes the latest training, booklets, and videos on BSA Youth Protection at a fall meeting of unit adults, usually in November.
- **Other commissioner functions.** Ongoing—help units solve problems and improve unit meetings, promote roundtables, and provide other help as needed.

## Key Commissioner Service Dates

Use this chart as a handy reference to key service dates for commissioners. There is also a podcast available to provide some guidance on how to integrate the Annual Service Plan into your council's plan of service.

ACTION	WHO	CYCLE
<b>■ CHARTER RENEWAL</b> — Executive officer visit — Membership inventory — Charter renewal meeting — Submit to council service center	District executive and head of the chartered organization Commissioner and unit committee Commissioner and unit committee chairman Commissioner or unit committee	Ninety days prior to the charter renewal date Prior to the charter renewal meeting Forty-five days prior to the charter renewal date Fifteen days prior to the charter renewal date
<b>■ COMMISSIONER SERVICE PLAN</b> — Charter presentation — Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit measurement	Commissioner and chartered organization representative Commissioner and unit leader	Thirty days after the charter renewal The unit charter renewal meeting
— Membership inventory	Commissioner and unit committee	J   F   M   A   M   J   J   A   S   O   N   D
— Unit leadership inventory	Commissioner and unit committee	
— Troop uniform inspection	Unit leader and commissioner	X
— Unit program planning	Commissioner with unit leader	X
— Pack and troop uniform inspection	Unit leader and commissioner	X
— Youth protection training	Commissioner	X

# Chapter 16—Commissioner Lifesaving

**Commissioner lifesaving is the prompt, intensive, and often persistent care given by a commissioner when there is a problem that could threaten the life of the unit.**

A good commissioner becomes a “lifesaving commissioner.” Council and district commissioners may even help put together “lifesaving teams” for their districts. 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 a commissioner or a team of lifesavers, such a unit could become a “terminal case” and stop serving kids.

Dead units, obviously, provide no help to youth. Perhaps district volunteers have made a pact not to lose another unit. Perhaps council commissioners have made a commitment never to lose a unit. In either case, major problems will require prompt, intensive, and persistent care.

Train your commissioners to be lifesaving commissioners. Have them use the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621, especially the sections titled “Providing Unit Service,” “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner,” and “Counseling.”

Start by training your administrative commissioners. Be sure they understand the lifesaving concept. Obtain their commitment to carry the idea into their districts. See the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* for details. Accent the training with unit success stories in your council.

District commissioners set dates for training their staffs and report results at a future council commissioner meeting. Have a district commissioner/district executive team make a presentation on successful unit lifesaving in their district.

Commissioner lifesaving may be an excellent topic for your council commissioner conference, but don’t wait for the conference. Introduce it now through all your districts. “Continuing Education for Commissioners,” section three of this manual, has three session outlines on commissioner lifesaving.

Urban and rural low-income areas may have a higher percentage of fragile, precarious units. The need for unit lifesaving is greater. Methods may vary. Even the way unit service volunteers in the district are structured may be different. Consult the *Local Council Guidebook on Serving Low-Income Urban Communities*, No. 11-176, or the *Local Council Guidebook on Serving Rural Communities*, No. 11-177.

## Lifesaving Steps

A good unit commissioner is prepared to respond quickly when a unit has a life-threatening emergency—what Boy Scout first aid guides call the “hurry cases.”

- **Watch the vital signs.** Just as paramedics and other medical caregivers check vital signs, so does a good commissioner. He or she watches the vital signs of a unit. Any one or a group of bad signs may indicate a life-threatening situation.
- **Go into action fast.** Teach commissioners not to wait until next month’s commissioner staff meeting. Don’t let them wait for someone else to suggest the perfect solution. Help them go into action immediately. A commissioner may be tempted to give the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Paramedics don’t do that. Neither do lifesaving commissioners. Establish a troubled unit as a *priority unit*. Priority units receive your commissioners’ most careful attention.
- **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. Teach your commissioners to 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 may 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*, No. 33618, to continue normal unit care.

## The Lifesaving Team Approach

Individuals can save lives, but paramedic teams are often better. Some districts may use a lifesaving team approach to save the most distressed or highest priority units.

It’s usually best not to organize lifesaving teams until a district’s basic commissioner structure is in place. Organize the commissioner staff first, then the lifesaving team. (But don’t wait to train individual commissioners in the lifesaving techniques described in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. Most commissioners should still be qualified as individual lifesavers.)

There are two kinds of lifesaving teams: the strictly ad hoc or temporary team and the permanent lifesaving team.

## The Temporary Team

This is a lifesaving team of two or more persons selected by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive, solely for the short-term goal of helping a high-priority unit through a life-threatening situation. The selection of this ad hoc team is made on the basis of a single question: Who are the best people in the district to assist a particular unit during a particular crisis? It may involve:

- The unit commissioner
- An assistant district commissioner
- A member of a district operating committee with special skills
- A person in the community with special influence with the unit and its chartered organization
- A key member of the chartered organization, perhaps the head of the organization
- Another unit leader
- Anyone who has the ability to help

The unit commissioner may head the team. In some cases, however, it may be best for someone other than the unit commissioner to give team leadership. It depends on the situation and the people.

## The Permanent Team

A permanent lifesaving team works within the district to provide “Scouting CPR” and operate the district’s intensive care operation. Appointment is made by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive.

They select one person who heads the permanent team as his or her ongoing Scouting role. The team leader wears the badge of an assistant district commissioner. There may be a couple of people who serve only on the team as troubleshooting commissioners; they wear the unit commissioner badge. There may be other Scouters with other Scouting positions who also serve on the team.

Units are assigned to the team by the district commissioner. The team assists the unit until its life-threatening crisis is over. The unit is then reassigned to a regular unit commissioner.

## The Decision

These different approaches are partly a matter of the philosophy of district leadership. One Key 3 does not want a hit team, a SWAT team, or any other kind of special team permanently set up by the commissioner. Another Key 3 thinks a permanent team is a great idea. Some districts do well with individual lifesaving commissioners.

Decide what plan best fits each district. What is indisputably important is that the council has some plan of action in every district to give special help to priority units with crisis needs. Council and district commissioners are the key players in the game of Scouting to virtually stop dropped units in the council. The decision is yours.

# Chapter 17—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:

- **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.
- **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.
- **Bad performance.** 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 load.
- 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 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 other key unit Scouter make the change.

In the case of an elected officer, the local council may decide to go through the nominating committee process.

## 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 responsibilities 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 success.



# Chapter 18—Resources

Perhaps no other organization in America has as many helps available for its leaders as Scouting. These resources take many shapes, ranging from single sheets to the *Boy Scout Handbook*. *Scouting's Library of Literature*, available online, lists most of them.

For commissioners, the following special items are available:

<b><i>A Handbook for District Operations</i></b> , No. 34739	Provides insight into every aspect of the four functions of a district and council, including job descriptions for all commissioners.
<b><i>Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service</i></b> , No. 33621	Invaluable to every commissioner.
<b><i>Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews</i></b> , No. 33618	Suggests specific unit commissioner actions to help units meet specific standards and program objectives.
<b><i>Scouting's Library of Literature</i></b> , No. 70-080 (available for download online)	The best source of information for most literature and publications of the BSA.
<b><i>Unit Commissioner Worksheets</i></b> : packs, No. 34125C; troops, No. 34126A; crews, No. 33660B; (available for download on the commissioner website)	For use after visiting a unit.
<b><i>Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i></b> , No. 34410(a)	Contains roundtable outlines for each month of the program year.
<b><i>Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner and Staff Basic Training Manual</i></b> (available to download online on the commissioner website)	A one-day course best conducted on a council basis but also used by districts.
<b><i>Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i></b> , No. 511-942WB	A workbook based on possible program features and special feature topics.

***Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training***, No. 34256 (available to download from the commissioner website)

A four-hour course best conducted on a council basis.

***Venturing Program Forum Guide***, No. 34342

Contains program forum activities, games, program features, and “how to” topics.

***Selecting District People***, No. 34512A

A must for the important job of recruiting a full staff.

***Commissioner Volunteer Duties Cards***, No. 34265D

Wallet-size description cards for all commissioner jobs (online only).

***Unit Commissioner Program Notebook***, No. 331-013

A handy pocket calendar and commissioner resource guide provided annually by *Boys' Life* magazine.

***The Commissioner newsletter***, No. 522-975

Distributed periodically during the year to council commissioners and Scout executives. Also available on the commissioner website to download by any commissioner.

The commissioner website at [www.scouting.org/](http://www.scouting.org/) includes a number of resources, including past issues of *The Commissioner* newsletter, current podcasts, roundtable resources, and PowerPoint presentations of previous subjects of interest to all commissioners. Also note the select line of saleable items to increase commissioner identity. They may be ordered at your council Scout shop or by calling 800-323-0732.

Helpful DVDs available include:

- ***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*** DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- ***The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*** DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- ***Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners*** DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- ***Meetings of the District***, DVD, No. AV-06DVD07

# Chapter 19—Uniform, Badges, and Awards

The commissioner maintains the standards of the Boy Scouts of America, upholds national policies, promotes good uniforming, and the correct wearing of insignia. Help your 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 Journey to Excellence Performance Award Council or District emblem, but good taste might dictate that they refrain from wearing the Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit emblem simply because they serve on the troop committee of their son’s Journey to Excellence Performance Award troop.

Properly and proudly worn by a commissioner, the uniform becomes a hallmark of friendly service to unit leaders and the example of a “good Scout” to the youth membership of their units. Its value must never be underestimated.

Awards and badges are an important part of Scouting. Boys can earn badges of rank, badges of office, merit badges, and various awards. Adult leader recognition centers primarily on the successful completion of training experiences. Commissioner awards and the requirements to earn them are listed in full detail in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

# Appendix A—Orientation Meeting for New Unit Commissioners

The new commissioner's future effectiveness can be determined by what happens at his or her first orientation meeting. It is encouraged that all new commissioners, in whatever role they are registered, go online and take the Unit Commissioner Fast Start training. The district should assign an experienced commissioner to serve as the new commissioner's mentor and coach or trainer. This person would work with the new commissioner prior to or during the online Fast Start session.

A special "trainer" carefully plans and conducts this brief, relaxed, information meeting. This could be conducted as a one-on-one session or as a group session. Here are some guidelines:

- Help new commissioners feel genuinely welcome.
- Help them feel comfortable with the person or persons who are there to help them. Keep the meeting informal, and provide ample opportunity for questions and answers.
- Ask everyone present to tell something about themselves and their background.
- Talk about the satisfaction this responsibility will bring them and the importance of Scouting for the youth of their communities.
- Use a map to show the territory of the local council and its districts. If units have been selected where commissioners will serve, indicate their locations on a district map.
- Distribute copies of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. Review the orientation items at the beginning of this manual.
- Refer to the chart comparing the several phases of the Scouting program, but do not read it in detail. Rather, suggest that they cover it at their leisure.
- Carefully read the "Commissioner Concept" pages. Encourage discussion of this important subject. Briefly explain the roles of the unit commissioner.
- Discuss where unit commissioners get help to do their jobs.
- Be sure each person knows the commissioner who will be their coach or to whom they will report. Refer to the orientation projects to be completed with the help of their ADC.
- Be sure each person knows they are expected to complete Commissioner Basic Training within two months, and advise them of the time and place of the training.
- Be sure each person knows of the meetings they are expected to attend, including the monthly district commissioner meetings and roundtable.
- Before adjourning, be sure that each person present knows exactly what their next step will be—meet with their ADC? Participation in a formal training event? A visit to one of the units they will serve? Attendance at a roundtable meeting? Above all, make it absolutely clear how and where that activity will take place and who will accompany them there.
- (Optional) Discuss what was presented during the online Unit Commissioner Fast Start session. Some councils still show the orientation video, *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*, AV-04V001R.
- Adjourn in time to take part in the closing portion of the regular commissioner meeting, where, once again, the newcomers are welcomed.

# Appendix B—Orientation for New District Commissioners

Prior to this session, if a district commissioner is new to commissioner work, have him or her take the online Unit Commissioner Fast Start course as an overview of what a commissioner does.

- **Learning Objectives.** After completing this session, each participant should:

- Know the process used to determine the commissioner needs of the district.
- Know and understand the roles and responsibilities of various commissioner and professional positions.
- Know how to get results through the assistance of others.

- **Instruction.**

- New district commissioners and their assistants must first have the facts related to their particular district. They review the total number of units to be served, the geographic areas in which they are located, and the personnel required for their role to be effective (for the ADC, the portion of the total number of units, their location, and the unit commissioners required to serve them).
- Use a map of the district with the location of existing units, potential units, etc. If it is a large district, consider how communities or areas can be assigned to assistant district commissioners.
- List the standing meetings district commissioners are expected to lead or attend, including the monthly district commissioner meeting, roundtable, district committee meeting, district key 3 meeting, and the council-level commissioners cabinet.
- Discuss problems related to serving the units in the district (distances; barriers such as freeways, mountains, or rivers; differences in philosophies, customs, income levels; etc.).
- Hold a frank discussion of the condition of existing units and the strength of the commissioner personnel.

- List the number and location of units not being served. Consider parts of the district where youth surveys indicate the need for new units.
- Calculate total needs: one unit commissioner for every three units (or the ratio approved by the council for their district or area); one ADC for every five unit commissioners.
- Plan a recruiting effort to fill vacancies on the commissioner staff.
- Review the role of the district executive.
- Getting results through the work of others is a test of leadership.
  1. Have clear understandable goals.
  2. Establish deadlines to reach these goals.
  3. Call the plays.
  4. Provide adequate coaching of your staff.
  5. Show the right attitude and spirit.
  6. Provide simple, effective ways to measure progress.
- Know where to get help.
  1. The council commissioner, assistant council commissioners, and through meetings of their own district commissioner staff.
  2. The council professional staff, including your district executive.
  3. At regular district Key 3 meetings.
  4. Commissioner training courses in the council.
  5. Annual council commissioner conferences or college of commissioner service.
  6. National courses at the Philmont Training Center.
  7. Literature of the Boy Scouts of America: commissioner manuals, pamphlets related to district and unit operation, council calendars, newsletters, and other mailings.

# Appendix C—Training Topics for Commissioner Staff Meetings

Use the following topics at monthly commissioner meetings or as part of other informal training events. Select topics that are timely and that meet the special needs of your staff. You might want to distribute this list at a staff meeting and have commissioners check off the three to five topics they think are most needed.

Refer to “Continuing Education for Commissioners,” section three of this manual, for dozens of instructor outlines.

- How to renew unit charters
- Unit membership inventory—how to help a unit
- How to hold a uniform inspection
- How to present a unit charter
- Unit leadership inventory
- Youth Protection training—What is it?
- Journey to Excellence Performance Award—all units
- Filling out the charter renewal form—online and paper method
- Counseling skills
- Different styles of leadership
- Meeting low-income, urban unit needs (see *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Low-Income Urban Communities*)
- Meeting rural unit needs (see *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities*)
- How to use unit commissioner worksheets
- How to use unit self-assessment tools
- Scouting resources for commissioners—a hands-on session with a variety of commissioner and key Scouting unit literature
- How to properly use the adult application
- The proper steps in serving a new unit leader
- Problem-solving clinic—practical ways to deal with such problems as:
  - What about a unit that never adds new youth?
  - How do I help a leader take a new course of action?
  - What do I do when it is necessary to replace a unit leader?
  - What about the troop that never goes camping?
  - What do I do when a unit stops meeting?
  - The Cubmaster just quit!
  - The troop has no troop committee!
  - All the boys do is play basketball!Use one or two problem scenarios from the *Unit Problem Solving for Commissioners* video.
- How to help build a better relationship between a unit and its chartered organization
- How do the Scouting objectives—character building, citizenship training, and personal fitness—translate into program features for packs, troops, teams, or crews?
- How do I plan my time and set my priorities as a commissioner?
- Webelos-to-Scout plan from pack to troop
- Boy Scout summer camp
- Cub Scout camping



# Appendix D—Lone Scout Commissioner

## Volunteer Duties

As a member of a district commissioner staff, the Lone Scout commissioner promotes the Lone Scout plan and serves as a liaison between the district and the district's Lone Scouts and their counselors.

Specific duties of a Lone Scout commissioner include:

- Promote the Lone Scout plan in situations where boys are unable to join a pack or troop.
  - Use the Lone Scout folder, No. 14-422, as well as local promotional materials.
  - Place notices in utility bills, selected schools, doctors' offices, store bulletin boards, and with others who know of youth who are unable to join a pack or troop.
  - Be sure that each counselor has a copy of the *Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook*, No. 511-420. (This manual is also available in Spanish.)
- See that Lone Scouts and counselors are reregistered annually.
- Promote Cub Scout and Boy Scout resident camp for every Lone Scout.
- Plan, promote, and conduct an annual gathering of all Lone Scouts and counselors of the district. This might be in conjunction with the council Scouting show. Include a meal together and a special Lone Scout meeting.
- Answer inquiries from Lone Scouts, their counselor, and others who want to join.
- Help other district Scouters understand the Lone Scout plan.
- Encourage Lone Scouts to communicate with other Scouts (pen pals, fax, e-mail, and radio).
- Be aware of the possibility for a Lone Scout and counselor to become the nucleus for a new Cub Scout pack or Boy Scout troop.

## Who Can Become a Lone Scout?

Boys who cannot attend regular meetings of packs and troops are eligible to become Lone Cub Scouts or Lone Boy Scouts. This might include:




- Boys being home schooled.
- Children of American citizens who live abroad.
- Exchange students away from the United States for a year or more.
- Boys with disabilities that may prevent them from attending regular meetings of packs and troops.
- Boys in rural communities who live far from a Scouting unit.
- Sons of migratory farm workers.
- Boys who attend special schools, night schools, or boarding schools.
- Boys who have jobs that conflict with troop meetings.
- Boys whose families frequently travel, such as circus families, families who live on boats, and so on.
- Boys who alternate living arrangements with parents who live in different communities.
- Boys who are unable to attend unit meetings because of life-threatening communicable diseases.
- Boys whose parents believe their child might be endangered in getting to Scout unit meetings.

# Appendix E—Commissioner Progress Records

## DISTRICT AND ASSISTANT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD

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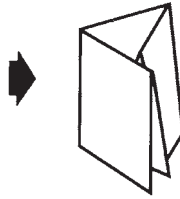






<p style="text-align: right;">Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>2. Achieve a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units in the district or service area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>1. Work with your district executive to evaluate all commissioners you supervise.</p> <p>_____ Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Council _____ District</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>ARROWHEAD HONOR RECORD</b></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: right;">Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award.</p> <p>From _____ To _____ From _____ To _____ From _____ To _____</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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TENURE</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete Commissioner Basic Training.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRAINING</b></p>
<p><b>Arrowhead Honor (cont.)</b></p> <p>3. Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>4. Chair or take part actively in six district commissioner staff meetings.</p> <p>_____ _____ _____</p> <p>5. Attend six district committee meetings (not required for assistants).</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Attend a council commissioner conference or planning conference with a majority of your staff.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. Provide personal coaching for the commissioners you supervise.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>8. Develop and implement a plan to track and hold your unit commissioners accountable for monthly unit visits.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>Check One</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistant district commissioner</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <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.</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DISTRICT AND ASSISTANT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Council _____</p> <p>District _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p>

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# ROUNDTABLE COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE ARROWHEAD HONOR/COMMISSIONER KEY

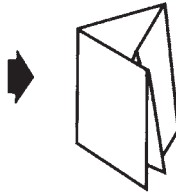
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<p><b>ARROWHEAD HONOR RECORD</b></p>  <p>1. Review all material in the current <i>Venturing Program Forum Guide</i>, current <i>Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i>, current <i>Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i>, or the current <i>Varsity Scout Roundtable Guide</i>.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>2. Review all material in the <i>Troop Program Features</i>, <i>Cub Scout Program Helps</i>, <i>Varsity Scout Game Plan</i>, or <i>Venturing Leader Manual</i>.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>3. Recruit a roundtable staff.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>COMMITTEE ACTION</b></p> <p>The leadership training committee has reviewed this application and accepts the certifications as the award is approved.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Venturing program forum commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Varsity Scout roundtable commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scout roundtable commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cub Scout roundtable commissioner</p> <p><b>Check One</b></p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award.</p>	<p><b>COMMISSIONER'S KEY RECORD</b></p>  <p><b>TRAINING</b></p> <p>Complete basic training for Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Venturing roundtable commissioners.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete the 3-session training program outlined in <i>Commissioner Basic Training Manual</i>.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete personal coaching assignments.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><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.</p> <p>From _____ To _____</p> <p>From _____ To _____</p> <p>From _____ To _____</p>
<p><b>Arrowhead Honor Record (cont.)</b></p> <p>4. Lead staff in preparing a 1-year roundtable outline.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>5. Supervise the staff in conducting these roundtables.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. With the district commissioner and district executive, develop and use an attendance promotion plan.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. Attend a council commissioner conference, roundtable, or planning conference.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p>When completed, clip Arrowhead Honor portion and send to council service center.</p> 	<p><b>ROUNDTABLE COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p>  <p><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Council _____</p> <p>District _____</p> <p><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p> <p>2007 Printing</p>

# ROUNDTABLE STAFF PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE SCOUTER'S TRAINING AWARD

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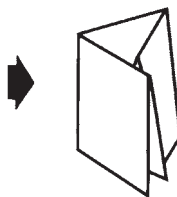





<p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Do the following</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>1. Participate in six roundtable staff meetings.</p> <p>2. Actively assist in six roundtables.</p> <p>3. Conduct a successful roundtable attendance promotion project.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>TENURE</b></p> <p>Complete 2 years as a registered roundtable staff member. Tenure for one award cannot be used for other training awards.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><b>Basic Training</b></p> <p>Complete basic training for Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity roundtable, or Venturing program forum commissioners.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>TRAINING</b></p> <p><b>Orientation</b></p> <p>Review with the roundtable commissioner orientation material in the current <i>Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i>, <i>Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i>, or <i>Venturing program forum Planning Guide</i>.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><i>Program Features, or Varsity Scout Game Plan.</i></p> <p>Review all material in the current <i>Cub Scout Program Helps/Webelos Leader Guide</i>, <i>Troop</i></p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>
<p><b>PERFORMANCE (cont.)</b></p> <p>4. Develop and exhibit a display related to the theme at one roundtable.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>5. Conduct an opening activity and an opening ceremony.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Conduct or be responsible for a major project, presentation, or demonstration at one roundtable.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>Check One</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cub Scout roundtable staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scout roundtable staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Varsity Scout roundtable staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Venturing program forum staff</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><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 Scouter's Training Award is approved.</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROUNDTABLE STAFF PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCOUTER'S TRAINING AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Council _____</p> <p>District _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p>

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# COUNCIL AND ASSISTANT COUNCIL COMMISSIONER (ADMINISTRATIVE) PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD

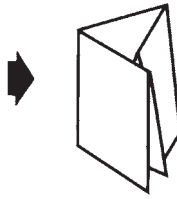
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<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>2. Develop a work plan for your position that covers the program year.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>1. Create a position description for the assistant council commissioner role and obtain approval of the council commissioner.</p> <p>_____ Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Council _____ District</p> <p><b>ARROWHEAD HONOR RECORD</b></p> 	<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award for your position.</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>From _____ To _____</p> <p>From _____ To _____</p> <p>From _____ To _____</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.</p> <p><b>TENURE</b></p> <p>When completed, clip Arrowhead Honor portion and send to council service center.</p>	<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete personal coaching orientation, including the orientation projects.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete Commissioner Basic Training.</p> <p><b>TRAINING</b></p>
<p><b>Arrowhead Honor (cont.)</b></p> <p>3. Implement the work plan with continuous evaluation throughout the program year.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>4. Chair or actively take part in six council commissioner staff meetings.</p> <p>_____ _____ _____</p> <p>5. Report on work plan progress at council commissioner staff meetings.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Give leadership to a council commissioner conference or other major event.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. In consultation with the council commissioner, select and carry out a major project in the council.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>Check One</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Council commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistant council commissioner (administrative)</p> <p></p> <p><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.</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>COUNCIL AND ASSISTANT COUNCIL COMMISSIONER (ADMINISTRATIVE) PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p> <p></p> <p><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Council _____</p> <p>District _____</p> <p><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p> <p>2008 Printing</p>

# COUNCIL AND ASSISTANT COUNCIL COMMISSIONER (FIELD SERVICE) PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD

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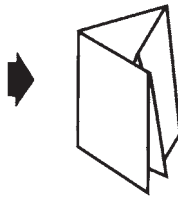





<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>2. Achieve a ratio in the council of one unit commissioner for every three or a ratio approved by your staff adviser.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>1. Work with your Scout executive or staff adviser to evaluate all district commissioners in the council.</p> <p>_____ District _____ Council _____ City _____ Address _____ Name</p> <p><b>ARROWHEAD HONOR RECORD</b></p> 	<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award for your position.</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>From _____ To _____ From _____ To _____ From _____ To _____</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.</p> <p><b>TENURE</b></p>	<p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete personal coaching orientation, including the orientation projects.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>Complete Commissioner Basic Training.</p> <p><b>TRAINING</b></p>
<p><b>Arrowhead Honor (cont.)</b></p> <p>3. Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan throughout the council.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>4. Chair or actively take part in six council commissioner staff meetings.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>5. Have an active, effective district commissioner in every district of the council.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Give leadership to a council commissioner conference or other major event.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. In consultation with the Scout executive/staff adviser, select and carry out a major project in the council.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>Check One</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Council commissioner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistant council commissioner (field service)</p> <p>When completed, clip Arrowhead Honor portion and send to council service center.</p>  <p><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.</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>COUNCIL AND ASSISTANT COUNCIL COMMISSIONER (FIELD SERVICE) PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p>  <p><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>Council _____</p> <p>District _____</p> <p><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p> <p>2008 Printing</p>



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

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<p><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><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.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>Earn the Arrowhead Honor Award.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p><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.</p> <p>Chairman _____ Date _____</p>	<p><b>TRAINING</b></p> <p>Complete the three-session training program outlined in <i>Commissioner Basic Training Manual</i>.</p> <p>Date and Initial _____</p> <p>"Why Commissioners?" First visitation _____ "Units: The Commissioner's Greatest Priority" Second visitation _____ Third visitation _____ "How to Help a Unit" Complete personal coaching orientation including orientation projects.</p> <p>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>_____ _____ _____</p> <p>5. Participate in a charter renewal meeting that results in on-time unit reregistration.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>6. Participate in a charter presentation.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>7. Attend a council commissioner conference or planning conference, or actively participate in a major council event.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p>	<p>8. Help a unit resolve a specific problem or improve some aspect of their unit operations.</p> <p>Approved _____ Date _____</p> <p>When completed, clip Arrowhead Honor portion and send to council service center.</p> 	<p><b>UNIT COMMISSIONER PROGRESS RECORD FOR THE</b></p>  <p><b>COMMISSIONER KEY/ ARROWHEAD HONOR AWARD</b></p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Council _____ District _____</p> <p><b>BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA</b></p> <p>2007 Printing</p>

# Arrowhead Honor Requirements

## Regional Commissioners

1. Work with your designated staff adviser to evaluate the performance of the area commissioners at least twice annually.
2. Establish regular communication with each area commissioner, taking advantage of resources provided by the national and regional support structures.
3. Chair at least four area commissioner meetings—either in person or by conference call—and include an evaluation on the progress of the following:
  - Area and council development, and implementation of a suitable recruiting and retention plan.
  - Conduct unit commissioner membership ratio evaluations with the stated goal of improving our ratios by specified amounts.
  - Develop and execute a plan for training and use of the Unit Visitation Tracking System in each area.
  - Discuss on a regular basis how to expand the role of the commissioner in an effective Key 3 relationship.
4. Visit at least three councils in your region during the calendar year.
5. Participate with or serve on the faculty of a commissioner conference or College of Commissioner Science.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Completion date \_\_\_\_\_

## Area Commissioners

1. Work with your area director or other designated staff adviser to evaluate the performance of the council commissioners at least twice annually.
2. Establish regular communication with each council commissioner in the area, taking advantage of resources provided by the national and regional support structures.
3. Chair at least four council commissioner meetings annually—either in person or by conference call—and include an evaluation on the progress of the following:
  - Develop and put into action a suitable recruiting and retention plan for the councils in the area.
  - Conduct unit commissioner membership ratio evaluations with the stated goal of improving our ratios by specified amounts.
  - Develop a plan for training and use of the Unit Visitation Tracking System 2.0 in the councils.
  - Discuss on a regular basis how to expand the role of the commissioner in an effective Key 3 relationship.
  - Promote the national training opportunities for the commissioner corps, including those at the Philmont Training Center.
4. Visit at least three councils in your area during the calendar year.
5. Participate with or serve on the faculty of a commissioner conference or College of Commissioner Science.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Completion date \_\_\_\_\_

## Commissioner Key Requirements

### Area and Regional Commissioners

The Commissioner Key is an important training award for completing Commissioner Basic Training, the Arrowhead Honor projects, and three years' tenure as a registered commissioner within a five-year period.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Completion date \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix F—Commissioner Staff Roster

## DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAFF ROSTER

**District Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**District Executive** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Council Service Center** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Venturing Roundtable Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assistant District Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone (Bus.)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Home)** \_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Unit Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Unit Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Assistant District Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

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**Assistant District Commissioner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** **Bus.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
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Unit Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Bus.) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Appendix G—District Commissioner Work Plan

District \_\_\_\_\_ Council \_\_\_\_\_



## District Commissioner Work Plan

(Sample Monthly Meeting Agenda)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

District commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

**Assigned to**

I. Welcome and introductions  
New commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_

II. Opening ceremony

\_\_\_\_\_

III. **Commissioner training topic**

\_\_\_\_\_

IV. **Assistant district commissioners meet with their unit commissioners to review unit needs**

A. Unit health/unit visit reports

Unit No.    Date of Visit

Key Observation

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Assigned to**

V. Reports from ADCs

\_\_\_\_\_

VI. Awards and recognitions

\_\_\_\_\_

VII. Announcements

\_\_\_\_\_

VIII. Closing



# Appendix H—Commissioning Ceremony— For New Commissioners Who Have Been Duly Selected, Properly Oriented, and Trained in Commissioner Basic Training

Commissioning ceremonies should take place throughout the year so that a new commissioner receives his or her commission promptly after completing Commissioner Basic Training. While one ceremony may take place at the annual council commissioner conference or other council event, commissioning should also take place as needed at district and council commissioner staff meetings, or even in front of unit leaders at a district roundtable.

The ceremony is conducted by an administrative commissioner, usually a district commissioner or assistant district commissioner. The commissioning of a new district commissioner may be conducted by the council commissioner or assistant.

## Suggested Script

*Administrative Commissioner:*

(Facing audience) The acceptance of a commission to provide effective service to Scouting units is one of the most important obligations made by an adult in the Boy Scouts of America. We are privileged today to present commissions to several new persons who will undertake this obligation.

(Facing candidates) You have been duly selected and oriented to serve as a commissioner in the Boy Scouts of America. You have also completed the important Commissioner Basic Training course. You have undertaken a leadership role in the council and district to help units succeed. You succeed only when the units that you serve succeed.

Let me now ask you three questions. Please raise your hand(s) in the Scout sign.

1. Do you promise, by example in your daily life, to make the Scout Oath and Scout Law a vital force in the lives of the youth and unit adults you serve? If so, say, “I do.”

*Candidates:* I do.

*Administrative Commissioner:*

2. Do you promise to help make the program of the units you serve the best that can be given, rich in fun and adventure for youth and full of opportunities for their personal growth and service to others in the community?

*Candidates:* I do.

*Administrative Commissioner:*

3. Will you commit your top priority Scouting time to identifying unit needs and helping unit adults to meet those needs? Will you achieve this by doing such things as:

- Observing unit program
- Coaching unit leaders
- Guiding unit committees, and
- Extending the Scouting hand of friendship through at least monthly contact with the unit?

If so, say, “I will.”

*Candidates:* I will.

*Administrative Commissioner:*

It is now my privilege and honor, on behalf of the Boy Scouts of America, to present your commissions.

(Now for each individual:

- Call out his/her name.
- Present the commission, No. 34773.
- Shake their hand.)

# Appendix I—Sample Role Descriptions for Assistant Council Commissioners

Use these as examples of types of assistant council commissioner positions to provide more support to your council and districts.

## Responsibilities of the ACC for Administration of Commissioner Service

### Objective

On behalf of the council commissioner, emphasize “commissioner service” to the commissioner staff while facilitating streamlined administrative oversight of all commissioner levels (i.e., unit commissioners, assistant district commissioners [ADCs], roundtable commissioners [RTCs], district commissioners [DCs], and assistant council commissioners [ACCs]).

### Responsibilities

- Serve at the request of the council commissioner.
- Attend ACC meetings regularly. Support the activities of the council commissioner and commissioner staff.
- *Internet Charter Renewal Handbook*. Serve as primary commissioner liaison and facilitator for the charter renewal effort councilwide. Accept inputs, updates, and lessons learned from commissioners councilwide, and then submit recommended draft documents to the council for their publication or posting on the council website.
- Commissioners’ section of council website. Coordinate with council staff members, council commissioner, and fellow ACCs to keep information current and relevant.
- Commissioner reporting. Seek to improve commissioner reporting processes and commissioner oversight tools and procedures for the council commissioner staff.
- Serve as the liaison to the National Council regarding administrative issues. Work with National Council on potentially improving commissioner reporting systems and procedures.
- Assist geographic ACCs to efficiently collect and analyze commissioner reports:
  - Unit health reporting
  - Journey to Excellence Performance Award
  - End-of-month reports
  - Unit commissioner [pack/troop/team/crew/ship] visit worksheets

- Online unit visit reporting process
- Develop procedures and instructions on how to properly submit, use, and archive commissioner reports.

## Responsibilities of ACC—College of Commissioner Science

- Provide timely and accurate information regarding the College of Commissioner Science, or commissioner conference, to the council commissioner to assist the council commissioner in reporting to the council president and serving as an officer of the local council.
- Assist the council commissioner in achieving those national-and-council-level goals and objectives that are related to the College of Commissioner Science.
- Assist the council commissioner by overseeing and providing leadership to all aspects of the annual College of Commissioner Science, including:
  - Recruitment of key staff (to include program deans)
  - Development of curriculum
  - Publicity
  - Selection of facility, including all required logistics
  - Subsequent analysis of submitted critiques for continued improvement of the College of Commissioner Science
- Recruit the dean of instruction and curriculum and individual program deans for the bachelor, master, and doctoral programs.
- Working with college deans, annually review and refine offered curriculum.
- Ensure that national syllabus courses are reviewed and considered for inclusion.
- Review and consider recommendations for locally developed courses.
- Determine date and location for college.
- Determine make-up of other key staff positions and recruit appropriate personnel.
  - Including, but not limited to: logistics, registrar, and publicity.

- Consult with council commissioner on appropriate guest speakers and obtain support as needed in invitational process.
- Work with staff adviser on budget development, submission, and execution.
- Ensure program deans recruit appropriate and qualified instructors for offered curriculum.
- Work with council professionals as needed on website development, publicity, and registration process in time to commence registration at least two months prior to the event.
- After completion of College of Commissioner Science, provide thorough review process for continued improvement.

## Responsibilities of the ACC for Diversity

### Objective

To promote diversity in both the actions and beliefs of every Scout and Scouter in the council. Give leadership to the council's commissioner staff (CC, ACC, DC, ADC, UC, RTC, RT staff) to increase awareness and sensitivity to all aspects of diversity.

### Responsibilities

- Manage and support the council commissioner's strategic diversity initiatives.
- Work with the council commissioner to develop, implement, and assess strategies, activities, and programs that are designed to increase and enhance the commissioner staff's diversity at all levels, with a particular focus on inclusion, as well as enhancing understanding, appreciation, and respect for differences such as race, gender, ethnicity, finance, culture, mental and physical disabilities, etc.
- Promote the recruitment of a commissioner staff that reflects the diverse community served by the council.
- Develop and deliver training programs on diversity issues for commissioners that promote sensitivity and respect for all aspects of diversity.

## Responsibilities of the ACC—Field Service Area

- Provide timely and accurate information to the council commissioner to assist the council commissioner in reporting to the council president and serving as an officer of the local council.

- Provide timely and accurate information to the council commissioner to assist the council commissioner in keeping the president and executive board apprised of the condition of units.
- Serve as a member of the service area Key 3, working in close cooperation with the area vice president and field service executive.
- Be responsible for unit service function of his or her service area.
- Ensure that districts within his or her service area provide opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation, frequent basic training courses, and training topics at all monthly commissioner meetings.
- Assist the council commissioner in planning and conducting an annual commissioner conference for training, recognition, and morale.
- Assist the council commissioner in identifying candidates for appointment as assistant council commissioners.
- Assist district nominating committees within his or her service area in selecting district commissioners as needed.
- Guide district commissioners within his or her service area in recruiting full staffs.
- Verify that proper techniques are used to select and recruit unit leaders within the districts of his or her service area.
- Maintain, assess, and improve procedures to ensure maximum on-time unit charter renewal by district commissioner staffs within his/her service area.
- Ensure that each district within his/her service area has a commitment and strategy to provide prompt, intensive, and persistent care when major problems occur that could threaten the life of a unit.
- Maintain Boy Scouts of America standards of uniforming, wearing of insignia, use of the program, and other policies and procedures within the districts of his or her service area.
- Promote the Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit as a standard of performance and ensure, through the district commissioner within his or her service area, recognition of unit leaders and units achieving this standard.

## Responsibilities of the ACC for New Unit Service

### Objective

To increase the likelihood that new units will become successful in "delivering the promise" to the Scouts and Scouters of new units through the early involvement of the commissioner. Give leadership to the council's commissioner staff (CC, ACC, DC, ADC, UC, RTC,

and RT staff) to increase the level of involvement both before a new unit is formed and during the first two to three years after a new unit has been formed.

## Responsibilities

- Report to the council commissioner.
- Work with district commissioners to ensure a member of the commissioner staff is assigned to support new unit organization teams.
- Monitor the health assessments and action plans developed for new units, and coordinate council support where needed.
- Working with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners, maintain statistics for first two complete “Scout years” (24–35 months) on new unit health.
- Cooperate with the program office to see that new unit leaders receive a “welcome aboard” letter from the council.
- Cooperate with the program office to conduct a new unit seminar as required.
- Cooperate with the training chair to monitor direct contact leader training status for new units.
- Work with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners to see that new or reorganized units are under the care of a member of the commissioner staff prior to the formal establishment of the unit.
- Work with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners to see that a unit commissioner visits new units with extra frequency.
- Work with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners to see that new unit leaders are promptly trained, especially in program planning.
- Work with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners to see that new units develop a strong outdoor and activities program.
- Work with field assistant council commissioners and district commissioners to see that new units complete unit self-assessments and Journey to Excellence Performance Award commitment forms.
- Cooperate with membership committee to see that new units have a year-round recruiting plan.
- Cooperate with membership committee to see that new units are considered in Webelos-to-Scout transition plans.
- Cooperate with membership committee to monitor new units membership growth, and coordinate council support where needed.

- Work with other assistant council commissioners (field and roundtable) and district commissioners to see that new unit leaders attend the monthly roundtable.
- Work with other assistant council commissioners (field and roundtable) and district commissioners to ensure monthly roundtables include specific training appropriate for new units.

## Responsibilities of ACC—Roundtables Position Description

- Provide timely and accurate information on the status and performance of district roundtables to the council commissioner and commissioner cabinet.
- Provide service and support to roundtable commissioners like a unit commissioner provides service and support to unit leaders.
- Conduct regular visits to district roundtables under the invitation of the district commissioner.
- Ensure that districts have opportunities for roundtable commissioner orientation, training courses for roundtable staff, and roundtable updates at all monthly commissioner meetings.
- Assist the council commissioners in planning and conducting an annual commissioner conference for training on roundtables, recognition, and morale.
- Assist the council commissioner in identifying candidates for appointment as assistant council commissioners.
- Guide district commissioners in recruiting roundtable commissioners and roundtable staff.
- Ensure that each district has developed and uses a year-long roundtable program plan.
- Set the example by maintaining Boy Scouts of America standards of uniforming, wearing of insignia, use of the program, and other policies and procedures within the council.
- Provides resources and expertise to help roundtables promote the Journey to Excellence Performance Award program.
- Be responsible, through the assistant council commissioners supporting field service areas, for program resources and support to help sustain effective district roundtables.
- Provide training and information to help roundtable commissioners understand the role of attendance at roundtable as a warning sign for potential unit health problems.
- Educate and assist district commissioners in the importance and ownership of roundtables as a unit service function within the districts.

- Plan and chair the regular tri-monthly roundtable commissioner meetings of the council.
- Be regular in attendance and participation at monthly assistant council commissioner meetings, commissioner cabinet meetings, and council Key 3 meetings.

## Responsibilities of ACC— Training and Recognition

- Provide timely and accurate information regarding training and recognition to the council commissioner to assist the council commissioner in reporting to the council president and serving as an officer of the local council.
- Promote the completion of Commissioner Basic Training by all newly appointed commissioners within two months of appointment, and completion of advanced commissioner training as soon as practical thereafter.
- Ensure that Commissioner Basic Training is offered somewhere in the council no less frequently than every two months, and that the availability of such training is widely advertised across all districts in the council.
- Ensure that training offered follows the national syllabus and is of consistently high quality across the council.
- Promote the commissioner recognition programs, including the Arrowhead Honor, Commissioner's Key, Distinguished Commissioner Awards, District Awards of Merit, and Silver Beaver nominations, within the districts of his or her service area.
- Assist districts and service areas in planning and conducting Commissioner Basic Training.
- Assist the council commissioner in planning and conducting an annual commissioner conference and/or retreat for training, recognition, and morale.
- Promote the completion of advanced training for commissioners at the College of Commissioner Science, commissioner retreats and conferences, the Philmont Training Center, and other opportunities.
- Gather and maintain records of Commissioner Basic Training planned by districts and completed by commissioner position within districts. Report this information monthly to the council commissioner and the ACCs.
- Encourage districts and service areas to establish year-long Commissioner Basic Training programs to include placing Commissioner Basic Training dates on the council calendar as part of the annual council calendar development process.
- Be regular in attendance and participation at monthly assistant council commissioner meetings, tri-monthly commissioner cabinet meetings, tri-monthly council Key 3 meetings, and the annual business meeting of the council.
- Strive to become recognized as the council resource on all matters pertaining to commissioner training and recognition.
- Serve as the commissioner service liaison to the council training committee in matters pertaining to commissioner support of mandatory training of direct contact leaders.

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# Chapter 1—Training Plans and Methods

## You, the Trainer

Congratulations! You have been selected to train unit commissioners in unit service. You have an opportunity to share your knowledge and enthusiasm in building a more capable commissioner staff. Plan to participate in your council's Trainer Development Conference before you conduct this training.

Participants will come to training with various levels of knowledge about Scouting. Be on guard not to use terminology that is unfamiliar to them. Do not use abbreviations or initials. Establish the kind of relationship with the trainees that leaves you approachable when they seek knowledge after the training is completed.

## Why We Train Unit Commissioners

Everyone needs training for a new job. Even the greatest unit leaders in the world will probably not be good commissioners until they are trained.

Commissioner service is unique in that the commissioner does not direct—he or she can only offer to help. Successful commissioners establish a good relationship with those served. They act as friend, coach, mentor, and resource, and know where to get help when it is needed. Your responsibility is to help make unit commissioners successful. You provide the tools they need to fulfill their role.

## How We Train Commissioners

Training may be conducted for a group, by personal coaching, online, or through self-study.

### Group Training

Training groups is the most common and the most effective approach. It provides fun and fellowship while building Scouting spirit. These ingredients are as essential in Scouting training as is the knowledge imparted. Group training builds a team spirit in a group of commissioners dedicated to quality Scouting.

### Personal Coaching

Personal coaching may be used in a one-on-one situation or with an instructor and a small group of learners. It is normally used to provide orientation for new commissioners, as they will not be effective without it. Sufficient training is given by this method to get them started, but they need to attend a complete basic training course when it is available.

### Online

Online training may be used to support volunteers for an immediate awareness of what their new position requires of them. By itself, it does not prepare a volunteer to carry out their new responsibilities. Proper coaching is critical for them to grasp the full benefit of their new position as well as understanding what they have seen online. It is a great way to introduce them to their new position, as well as allow them to go back at their leisure and review specific aspects of their position.

### Self-Study

The least desirable method, self-study should be used only when group training is not available and personal coaching is not possible. Self-study consists of reading assignments, etc., but must include contact with an instructor or coach, even if only by telephone.

## Planning the Basic Training Experience

This section of the manual covers the series of basic training sessions designed to give specific job-related information to commissioners. The primary goal of the instructor is to meet the learning objectives established for each session of this conference.

Adapt planning steps such as staff selection and training, facility selection, budget, schedule, and promotion to best fit commissioner training in your geographical area.

Commissioner Basic Training can be conducted in three separate sessions of approximately two hours each; as a one-day course; or in a series of online modules, with personal coaching sessions and hands-on practical sessions in between the modules.

Training is often conducted in three separate sessions, about a week apart, so participants can absorb the new material and put it into practice between sessions. This schedule allows sufficient time for unit visits between training sessions.

The one-day course is often conducted when persons must travel great distances or would prefer a Saturday all-day course.

Be sure all participants are formally invited. Send a letter of invitation (see the sample letter in appendix A), and follow up with a phone call.

## Morale Building

One of the purposes of this training is to build morale and Scouting spirit. A moderate sprinkling of morale-building features is essential in a group training experience. See *Group Meeting Sparklers*, No. 33122.

## After the Basic Course

Remember that commissioner training is continuous; it never stops.

Encourage participants to continue their self-development after basic training. At the end of this course, they should know that training will be continuous and that they can always get other help if they need it.

Podcasts are available on the commissioners website ([www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners)) as training features at staff meetings or as topics of interest for ongoing training.

The recognition of leaders for their training is the responsibility of the council leadership training committee and is carried out within the policies set forth by the Boy Scouts of America. Interpretation of the requirements for the various awards is also the responsibility of the council training committee.

Credit for performance is certified by administrative commissioners unless otherwise stated in the detailed information on the awards.

For requirements and other details on all volunteer training awards, see *Leadership Training Committee Guide—Plans, Procedures, Materials*, No. 34169.

## Progress Records for Scouter Recognitions

Progress records enable Scouters to keep track of the training, tenure, and performance requirements for the Arrowhead Honor and Commissioner's Key. Separate pre-printed progress record cards may be reproduced locally from *Leadership Training Committee Guide—Plans, Procedures, Materials*, No. 34169, or from this manual.

# Chapter 2—Elements of Good Commissioner Training

Review the following with your district commissioner and council field staff:

## Online Unit Commissioner Fast Start or Orientation Video/DVD

Within 48 hours of their being recruited, have each new commissioner go online to view the Unit Commissioner Fast Start. There is also a video, *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation—Helping Units Succeed*, AV-04V001R. (This video is now a part of a DVD, *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support*, AV-06DVD06.) Also set a date for a personal orientation session.

The online Fast Start is designed to help a unit commissioner understand the role's responsibilities and how to ensure success at being a unit commissioner. Commissioners at all levels should take this course and use it periodically as a refresher.

You can access the online Fast Start course by going to [olc.scouting.org](http://olc.scouting.org).

## Personal Coaching/Orientation

Within two weeks, new commissioners should have an orientation session with their district commissioner or assistant district commissioner, discuss the Fast Start or video, and then cover the orientation projects listed in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, pages 2–5.

Group orientation is outlined in the appendix of section one of this manual, “Commissioner Administration of Unit Service.” It's most efficient with a large group of new people. Individual coaching with their commissioner leader might, however, be even better. It helps develop good communication that extends far beyond training and can be personalized to the person's specific unit assignments.

District commissioner orientation is usually conducted by the district executive or the assistant council commissioner for training.

## Commissioner Basic Training

Within two months, a new person must have basic training. The three-session course involves actual supervised visits to units. Some councils and districts run all three sessions in one day with the supervised unit visits taking place just before and shortly after the formal training.

After completion of basic training, the Trained Leader Emblem, No. 00280, may be worn below the badge of office.

The commissioner may now be presented with a commission, No. 34773, at an appropriate ceremony.

**Note:** The Trained Leader emblem may be worn only in connection with the emblem of office for which basic training has been completed.



## Continuing Education

This includes a variety of learning experiences to provide added knowledge and current information useful to commissioners. It includes a short training topic at every monthly district and council commissioner meeting. Review the suggested topics in appendix C of the first section of this manual, “Commissioner Administration of Unit Service.” Select topics based on current learning needs. A session can be led by an appropriate commissioner, a professional, a member of a district or council committee, or even some talented person outside Scouting.

Podcasts are available to support details on specific topics of interest in support of quality commissioner service.

The **annual council commissioner conference** is the best opportunity for you and your staff to directly influence the quality of training.

The conference is a high-morale event with a wide variety of training topics related to unit service. It is also a time to learn about the latest Scouting developments and plans for the year ahead. Many councils hold two-day or weekend conferences to provide time to pursue topics in depth and to better develop important commissioner fellowship. Other councils run one-day events to conserve time, simplify arrangements, and reduce costs. A council might set up an optional Friday evening overnight fellowship activity with all day Saturday for training and other program features. Travel distances, geography, and the tradition of successful events will help determine which conference pattern is best for your council.

One form of a commissioner conference that is popular in some councils is the “College of Commissioner Science.” This type of conference is modeled after college courses and degrees.

Some conferences are held on a council cluster basis, with two or more councils planning and running a joint event. The joint event works best when councils are in the same metropolitan area. A conference that covers a wide area is likely to reduce attendance because of distance and travel time. The majority of people in attendance might only be more experienced commissioners. Councils should place the highest priority on attracting all unit commissioners and new ADCs—this is usually best accomplished close to home in a single council. A single-council conference also best develops a healthy bond between unit commissioners and their own commissioner leaders and professional advisers.

The third section of this manual, “Continuing Education for Commissioners,” is a valuable resource for commissioner training. It contains more than 40 complete outlines for one- to two-hour training sessions. Many of these outlines can be subdivided into dozens of shorter training topics. These outlines could be used in a variety of settings:

- As training topics for district commissioner staff meetings.
- As training topics for council commissioner staff meetings.
- As training sessions for the annual commissioner conference.
- As courses for the College of Commissioner Science.
- In personal coaching of district Scouters.
- At any other setting where you might include training for commissioners.

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.

**Summer Philmont Training Center conferences** provide mountaintop training experiences for you and members of your staff. There are different weeks each summer when commissioner courses are provided at the Philmont Training Center. They are designed for new and experienced commissioners. This is also an opportunity for a commissioner to bring the entire family, since there are programs planned for spouses and children of all ages. A volunteer must have his or her name submitted to Philmont by the council in order to have an invitation extended.

## Arrowhead Honor

Only commissioners may wear the Arrowhead. It is a symbol of competence. Successful completion is the result of performance and the ability to put training into practice. Commissioners are encouraged to complete the Arrowhead projects **within one year** of taking office.

Requirements for unit commissioners are found in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. Requirements for council commissioners and assistants, district

commissioners, assistant district commissioners, and roundtable commissioners are found in the “Commissioner Administration of Unit Service” section of this manual.

## Commissioner’s Key

The Commissioner’s Key is an important training award for completing Commissioner Basic Training, the Arrowhead Honor projects, and **three years’ tenure** as a registered commissioner within a five-year period. Roundtable commissioners also must complete Fast Start and basic training for Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout roundtable commissioners, or Venturing program forum (formerly Venturing roundtable).

## Online Learning Center

A variety of courses are available by connecting to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) to access the BSA Online Learning Center. You will need to set up a MyScouting account to access the courses and have them posted to your volunteer record of training. They are designed to provide immediate training to all volunteers in the comfort of their home or office. They also can be accessed at the local library or other locations where computers are available for public use. These courses should not take the place of face-to-face group or one-on-one training, but can serve to give you a Fast Start or a refresher course for topics of interest.

## Other Courses Commissioners Are Encouraged to Take

Commissioners are encouraged to take the New Leader Essentials course or its equivalent, “This Is Scouting,” which is part of the basic training program for adult leaders involved with units (packs, troops, teams, and crews). As of this manual’s printing, an online version is being developed and will be released soon. It will help with a basic understanding of the aims and methods of Scouting. If your commissioners take this course as a prerequisite for basic training, then you would not need to complete the “Aims and Methods of Scouting” section in the first session of this course.

## Youth Protection Training

All commissioners are required to take Youth Protection training.

You can access this training online by going to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org). You are required to retake this course every two years.



# Chapter 3—Materials and Equipment

Be sure the listed materials and equipment are assembled and ready to use well in advance of the first basic training session.

All catalog items will change from time to time based on the latest printing.

## For General Display

Arrowhead Honor certificate, No. 33750

*Boys' Life* magazines (sample past issues)

*Administration of Commissioner Service*, No. 34501

“Continuing Education for Commissioners” (section three of this manual)

*Commissioner's Key Award*, No. 00924 with No. 00871

*Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*, No. 33618

Commissioner Volunteer Duties Cards, No. 34265D

*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621

*The Council*, No. 33071

*The District*, No. 33070

Female Leader Uniform Inspection Sheet, No. 34281

*Group Meeting Sparklers*, No. 33122

*Insignia Guide*, No. 33066 (Also available online on [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org))

*Leadership Training Committee Guide—Plans, Procedures, and Materials*, No. 34169

Male Leader Uniform Inspection Sheet, No. 34284

*Scouting* magazine (sample past issues)

*Scouting's Library of Literature*, No. 70-080

Training Course Pocket Certificate, No. 33767

*Unit Commissioner Program Notebook*, No. 331-013

*Your Flag*, No. 33188

Unit Commissioner Worksheets: No. 34125C (pack), No. 34126A (troop), and No. 33660B (crew) (printable from the commissioner website)

*Cub Scout Leader Training Youth Protection* handout, No. 46-150

Be sure to highlight a display with the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, *Unit Commissioner Program Notebook*, and *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

**Resource Kit.** Referred to in the explanation of the second visit, these kits should be made up prior to that session, one for each trainee. Each should include, but not be limited to, the following items:

- Guidelines of Unit Action Planning Meeting (printable from the commissioner website)

- Unit self-assessment forms for packs, troops/teams, and crews/ships (printable from the commissioner website)
- Current merit badge counselor list and list of activity badge counselors
- Data sheets on unit accident insurance and company contacts
- Information on the council insurance program and how it is tied to tour permit procedures
- A list of key district volunteers and professionals, including telephone numbers and e-mail addresses
- Unit leader training dates
- Roundtable schedules
- Camp information
- Available national, council, and district websites of interest
- Other items appropriate to the type of unit to be visited

## For Cub Scouting Display

*Bear Cub Scout Book*, No. 33107

*Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221

*Cub Scout Leader Program Notebook* (current year), No. 331-014

*Cub Scout Program Helps* (annual), No. 34304

*Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner and Staff Basic Training Manual*, No. 33013 (available on the commissioner website)

*Cub Scout Roundtable Program Planning Guide* (current year), No. 34250

Cub Scout and Webelos Scout Uniform Inspection sheet, No. 34282

*Den Chief Handbook*, No. 33211

*Cub Scouting Fast Start* video, AV-01V022A, and DVD, AV-01DVD22

*Introduction to Cub Scout Sports*, No. 34292

*The Pack's First Two Months*, No. 13-010

*Selecting Cub Scout Leadership*, No. 522-500

*Tiger Cub Handbook*, No. 34713

*Webelos Handbook*, No. 33452

*Cub Scout Wolf Handbook*, No. 33450



## For Boy Scouting Display

*Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 33105

*Boy Scout Leader Program Notebook* (current year),  
No. 331-015(a)

*Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 34253  
(available on commissioner website)

Boy Scout Uniform Inspection sheet, No. 34283

*Boy Scouting Fast Start* video, AV-01DVD22

*Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009

*Troop Committee Guidebook*, No. 34505

*Troop Program Features*: Vol. 1, No. 33110; Vol. 2,  
No. 33111; Vol. 3, No. 33112

## For Venturing Display

*Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655

*Silver Award Guidebook*, No. 25-015

*Venturing Leader Start-Up*, No. 25-634

*New Crew Fast Start*, AV-0322CD

*Venturer Handbook/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494

# Session 1—Why Commissioners?

**Learning Objectives.** At the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- State the purpose of the Boy Scouts of America.
- State the mission of the council and district.
- Explain the four-function concept of council and district operation.
- Describe the commissioner unit service role and its relationship to supporting a unit in a Journey to Excellence Performance Award program.
- State the methods and steps of good unit program planning.

## Preopening

### Reminders

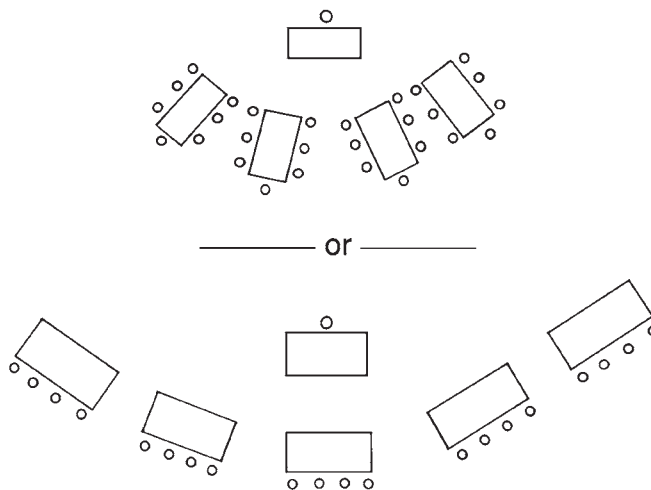
Plan to arrive early. There is much for the volunteers to do before the participants arrive.

Check the materials list. Do you have everything you need?

Do all instructors have assignments and know exactly what is expected of them?

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**Physical Arrangements** Arrange seating so that all participants will be able to see and hear the instructor. If the size of the group permits, a seating arrangement that allows participants to see each other, as well as the instructor, will enhance the informality of the session and greatly assist discussion. In either case, tables should be provided.



The training room should be well set up in advance. Flip chart and markers, easel, LCD projector, screen, laptop computer, extension cords, tables, chairs, the United States flag, and the council flag are essential.

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<b>Background Music</b>	Scouting music will provide a good atmosphere as people gather. Equipment should be in good working order, the recording in good shape, power outlets operable, and the music audible, though not loud, in all parts of the room.
<b>Exhibits</b>	Pertinent charts and posters should decorate the room. Literature basic to commissioners should be on display either on one side, at the back of the room, or in a gathering area.
<b>Registration</b>	Ask participants to sign in, giving their name, address, and phone number on a sheet of lined tablet paper or on small cards. Attendance can later be transferred to a Training Attendance Report, No. 34413.
<b>Name Tags</b>	Prepare a name tag for each participant. Color code the tags if you wish to indicate groupings in advance.
<b>Gathering-Time Activity</b>	<p>Instructors should be on hand to welcome participants and begin building a friendly relationship.</p> <p>Invite participants to visit the displays.</p> <p>As Scouters arrive, provide each with a copy of the Commissioner Quiz, appendix B, which has been reproduced locally.</p> <p>As you hand out the quiz, ask participants to come back to you when they have finished. When they return, give each one a copy of the Unit Commissioner Volunteer Duties Card, part of No. 34265D, so that they can check their own answers.</p>

## Opening—10 Minutes

<b>Opening Ceremony</b>	An instructor conducts one of the opening ceremonies found in <i>Troop Program Features</i> .
<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<p>The course director welcomes all to the training session, congratulating each new unit commissioner on being selected as a member of the commissioner staff.</p> <p>The course director then introduces each of the instructors, telling a little about each one (present role in Scouting, previous positions held, tenure, awards earned). Keep it brief. The course director then invites participants to introduce themselves and tell a little about their backgrounds. If a district or council commissioner is present, the appropriate introduction is also made.</p>
<b>Objectives of This Session</b>	The course director reads aloud the learning objectives listed at the beginning of this section.

# The Aims and Methods of Scouting—20 Minutes

<b>The Aims of Scouting</b>	Review the aims of Scouting: character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness. Elicit these aims from the group and write them on the flip chart.
<b>The Methods of Scouting</b>	Point out that the methods of Scouting are somewhat different in Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing, as we are dealing with different age groups. The methods in each part of the program reinforce the aims of the movement as applied to the characteristics and needs of the youth served.
<b>The Mission of the Council and the District</b>	<p>Use <i>The Council</i>, No. 33071, pages 1–2. Explain briefly that the council is a voluntary association of citizens, including representatives of organizations chartered by the BSA, which promotes the Scouting program within a geographical area. Explain that the purpose of the council is to guide and support its districts for the achievement of Scouting's purpose.</p> <p>Use <i>The District</i>, No. 33070, pages 2–9. Explain that the purpose of the district is to organize and support successful units.</p>
<b>The Four-Function Plan</b>	<p>Further explain that the council and district both achieve their purpose by fulfilling four functions:</p> <p><b>Membership/Relationships.</b> To make Scouting available to all youth.</p> <p><b>Finance.</b> To provide adequate funds.</p> <p><b>Program.</b> To maintain standards and policies.</p> <p><b>Unit Service.</b> To serve chartered organizations through a commissioner staff.</p>
<b>Morale-Building Feature</b>	Explain how to use morale-building features, including stunts, games, and songs. Use one here for a change of pace.

# The Commissioner Service Role—30 Minutes

<b>The Commissioner Concept</b>	<p>Read, explain, and discuss the commissioner concept found in the front of this section of the book. This can be further amplified by material from the <i>Commissioner Fieldbook</i>, pages 10–11.</p> <p>Introduce the <i>Commissioner Fieldbook</i> as the single most important resource for all commissioners.</p>
<b>The Unit Commissioner</b>	Using the preopening quiz and Commissioner Volunteer Duties Cards, lead a discussion on the role of the unit commissioner. Cover all items on the card. Be sure participants have the right quiz answers. The Commissioner Quiz is on page 85.

## Commissioner Quiz Answers

Answers:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T  | 11. T |
| 2. F | 7. F  | 12. F |
| 3. F | 8. T  | 13. F |
| 4. T | 9. T  | 14. T |
| 5. F | 10. T | 15. T |

### ***The Unit Commissioner* Video or DVD**

(You can show the DVD here, make this a prerequisite for commissioners to view prior to attending the basic training, or have them review it between sessions. If not shown, you might want to discuss an overview of its contents. If it is a prerequisite, you will not need to take as much time as allowed.)

Introduce and show the video, AV-04V001R, or from the DVD, AV-06DVD06. It covers the basic duties of a unit commissioner. Alert participants to watch for the five major areas of service.

After the video, ask them to describe the commissioner's role as

- Friend
- Representative
- Unit "doctor"
- Teacher
- Counselor
- Coach
- Mentor
- See the *Commissioner Fieldbook*, page 11.

If your group is large, you may divide into buzz groups and assign each group one of these aspects to discuss and report on.

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### **Morale-Building Feature**

Change the pace with another morale-building feature.

---

## **Supporting the Unit—25 Minutes**

### **Evaluating Unit Operation**

Divide the participants into buzz groups (or you can present as a group). Ask them to discuss at least five indicators of unit health that a commissioner should monitor. Have them report on their discussions at the end of five minutes. The indicator lists should include:

<i>Pack</i>	<i>Troop</i>	<i>Crew</i>
Meeting operation	Meeting operation	Leadership
Webelos den	Youth leadership	Youth leadership
Advancement	Advancement	Advancement
Parent involvement	Adult assistance	Adult assistance
Attendance	Attendance	Attendance
Outdoor program	Outdoor program	Outdoor/skills programs
Den meetings/activities	Patrol activities	Crew meetings
Budget plan	Budget plan	Budget plan
Membership	Membership	Membership
Annual planned program	Annual planned program	Annual planned program

**The Commissioner  
Work Sheet, Guidelines  
for Unit Action  
Planning Meeting, Unit  
Self-Assessment Forms,  
and Unit Visit Tracking  
System**

Ask them if they could use a tool for evaluating a unit's health, something all unit commissioners might use. Hand out copies of the worksheets, No. 34125C, No. 34126A, and No. 33660B. (See appendixes E–L in this section of the manual.)

Ask them to think about how they might use the worksheets. Ask the following questions:

- Would a unit leader resist evaluation? Why? (This is a commissioner's tool, *not* a check-sheet to be filled out in the presence of or shared with the unit leader.
- Do you understand the profile?
- If you had a profile with checks in the right column, where might you go for help? (*Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*, No. 33618)

Discuss the Guidelines for Unit Action Planning Meeting and reference the differences between the worksheets and the unit self-assessment forms for packs, troops/teams, and crews/ships.

- These forms are designed to share with the unit leader and committee chairman before discussing the results.
- This meeting is ideally conducted with every unit annually or when a major change of unit leadership happens.
- The completion of the form will allow for an evaluation of the unit's current program to be reviewed, the goals of the unit shared, and for the district to support the unit in accomplishing its goals.

Discuss the Unit Visit Tracking System as a tool to record and review information about a unit commissioner's contact with their assigned units. With regular and consistent use, this system can provide each commissioner an at-a-glance overview of recent visits and a history of communications with each unit, providing timely and consistent support. (Reference page 26 of the first section of this manual, as well as details of how to use the system available on the website: [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners).)

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## Unit Program Planning—20 Minutes

There is an old saying, "Plan your work and work your plan." Everything that happens in a program year starts with a plan.

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### Cub Scout Program Planning

Unit commissioners can be a great resource to a Cubmaster and a pack committee if they understand the program planning process and tools. (See Chapter 24, *Cub Scout Leader Book*.)

Planning normally starts with the *Cub Scout and Webelos Scout Program Helps* and the pack program planning chart.

Discuss (and display, where applicable):

- *Cub Scout and Webelos Scout Program Helps*
- The pack program planning chart
- The *Cub Scout Leader Program Notebook*
- The council program calendar
- Chartered organization program needs

The annual pack program planning conference

- Who attends (Cubmaster, assistant Cubmaster, pack committee, pack trainer, den leaders, den chiefs, interested parents, and the unit commissioner)

The monthly pack leaders' planning meeting

The monthly den chief and den leader meeting



## Boy Scout Program Planning

Explain that troop program planning follows a pattern, as does pack planning, but it involves the boys in much more of the planning. (See Chapter 8 of the *Scoutmaster Handbook*.)

Familiarity with these tools is imperative:

- *Troop Program Features*
- Troop Program Planning Worksheets
- *Boy Scout Leader Program Notebook*

There are five recognized planning steps (explain):

1. Do your homework (getting ready).
2. Find out what Scouts want (patrol leaders can do this).
3. Hold the troop leaders' program planning conference, with the senior patrol leader presiding and the Scoutmaster and patrol leaders' council in attendance.
4. Secure troop committee support.
5. Pass the word. Share the plan with every Scout, his family, chartered organization, and unit commissioner.

This is a good time to mention that, for those trainees who need a better understanding of program planning, a session from Cub Scout Leader or Boy Scout Leader Basic Training can be arranged.

## Venturing Program Planning

Point out that in crew program planning, elected crew officers play the central role with as many crew members as possible involved in (1) suggesting ideas for activities, (2) planning the activities, and (3) participating in the activities.

Show Chapter 3, Planning Your Crew's Program, from the *Venturing Leader Manual*.

Help crews learn and use these steps in planning crew program:

1. PCI (Program Capability Inventory) form is filled out by all adults related to the crew, by parents, and by other people in the chartered organization.
2. Adult hobbies, interests, skills, careers, and ideas from the PCIs are then organized and transferred to program planning forms.
3. All Venturers complete the Venturing activity interest survey.
4. Using the above information, crew officers brainstorm all ideas for crew activities—without judging their merits for the moment.
5. Officers next discuss and evaluate each idea in relation to the PCI, Venturing activity interest survey responses, and goals of the crew.
6. Officers select specific activities and place them on the crew's annual program calendar.
7. Each month, officers plan the details for the next month's individual activities.

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## Morale-Building Feature

Use *Group Meeting Sparklers*.

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## Commissioner Priorities—5 Minutes

(See *Commissioner Fieldbook*, page 24)

### Distractions

Emphasize that unit commissioners should not fall into the trap of doing everything else in Scouting except for your appointed role: unit service. It happens.

Commissioners are usually great Scouters and may be asked to do many things. While these other Scouting activities might be important, they are often NOT the primary responsibility of commissioners. You must concentrate your Scouting time on helping with specific unit needs and helping each unit become more effective with its program and operation.

---

### Unit Focus

Good unit service is created when the commissioner believes that unit service is so critical to the success of Scouting that it takes precedence over all his or her Scouting time.

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## Effective Commissioner Leadership—20 Minutes

### Leadership Tasks

Explain that in addition to understanding our commissioner responsibilities and knowing how Scouting works, there are other things that will help us to be effective leaders. Some of these include

#### 1. Evaluate and improve your own performance.

Distribute copies of "Self-Evaluation for Unit Commissioners," appendix E, that have been produced locally. Explain that this is a checklist for improving your support of your units. Encourage participants to use it periodically to improve their performance.

#### 2. Maintain a positive and enthusiastic attitude.

Point out that attitude affects our success in commissioner service because it influences other people. Our attitude and actions tell unit people how we feel about the program.

#### 3. Work successfully with adults.

Explain that leadership as a commissioner means working cooperatively with many kinds of people. We must be careful that adult conflicts or differences do not interfere with the program which units provide for youth.

Point out that whenever we work with other people, there is a chance problems will occur. This is often because we forget our objectives and why we're here. It helps to always remember that unit adults are the focus of good commissioner service. Suggest that trainees will find tips on people relationships in the counseling and commissioner style chapters of the *Commissioner Fieldbook* for Unit Service.

**4. Guide unit leaders in working successfully with youth.**

Explain that our responsibilities to youth include:

- Respecting their rights as individuals and treating them as such.
- Seeing that they find the fun and adventure in Scouting that they expected when they joined.
- Helping them develop a feeling of belonging and Scouting spirit that gives them pride and security.
- Doing our best as leaders.

**5. Set a good example for the youth and other adults.**

Ask participants to stand and extend their right arms straight in front of them, parallel to the floor. State: “Now, make a circle with your thumb and forefinger.” (As you speak, demonstrate this action.) Then continue: “Now bring your hand to your chin.” (As you do this, put your hand on your cheek, not your chin.)

Pause a moment. Most of the group will put their hands to their cheeks, not their chins. Wait a few seconds for people to realize their error. Your point probably will be reinforced with laughter as they realize their mistake and move their hands from their cheeks to their chins.

Explain that this illustrates how our actions sometimes speak more loudly than our words. People will do as we do more often than they will do as we say.

**6. Continue learning and growing in leadership skills.**

Explain that the most successful commissioners are those who continue to grow in leadership and keep up to date on the program. We do this by reading *Scouting* magazine and the council newsletter, by attending commissioner meetings, and by taking advantage of other training opportunities.

**7. Practice good communication.**

Emphasize that good communication is essential if commissioners are to stay informed and be successful in their role.

---

**Summary**

Close with the following statement: “As a leader, you have made a personal commitment to Scouting. It’s a commitment of time, effort, and knowledge. It’s a commitment of patience and understanding. It’s a commitment to be a living example for unit leaders, and to lend a helping hand to fellow Scouters. What a fine opportunity for you as a commissioner.”

## The Unit Visit—10 Minutes

(Have all the participants view the podcast for the monthly unit visit on the commissioner website.)

### The First Unit Visit

Explain that, before the next training meeting, each participant will be given an opportunity to visit a unit and use the worksheet.

Explain the ground rules:

- A unit is selected from the ones assigned to the commissioner-trainee.
- The commissioner-trainee must call the unit leader to be sure that the visit is convenient.
- Each trainee will be accompanied by an observer-coach, perhaps the unit commissioner's ADC.
- Each trainee will be given a list of specific items to be looking for and, most important, given something to show or give the unit leader that will impact his or her unit's program (example, a camporee brochure or information on a coming training program of interest).
- Unit commissioner worksheets are not to be brought out during the visit, but must be filled out later.
- The visit should extend through the entire meeting.
- Neither the trainee nor the observer-coach is to make an effort to participate in the meeting, except to be introduced.
- Independent reports will be prepared by trainee and observer-coach and presented at the next training session.
- Uniforms are to be worn and must conform to the appropriate uniform inspection sheet.

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## Closing—5 Minutes

### Summary

Ask, "From what we have just covered in this session together, is there any question that our commissioner organization is to support the unit in a quality program operation?"

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### Announcements

Announce the date, time, and location of the next training meeting. Be sure there is time enough between the training sessions for unit visits to take place.

---

### Assignments

Assign responsibility for the preopening, opening, and closing of the next training meeting to individual trainees. Be sure to make follow-up calls before the next session.

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### Scout Oath or Cub Scout Promise

Led by course director.

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### Song

The "Scout Vesper Song" and the "Cub Scout Prayer" are good closing songs.

# Session 2—Units: The Commissioner's Top Priority

**Learning Objectives.** At the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- Explain how unit committees are organized to support the unit leaders.
- State the role of the commissioner in Youth Protection.
- Recognize the standards for Quality Unit operation.
- Evaluate unit operation.
- Make a meaningful visit to a unit.

---

## Preopening

### Reminders

Be ready for the participants when they arrive. Knowing from the first session that you will have something for them to do from the moment they come in the door is incentive to arrive on time or even early.

Check the materials. Is everything on hand?

---

### Physical Arrangements

Arrange as for session 1 unless you discovered, from the first experience, a better way to set up the room.

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### Background Music

If you used Boy Scouting songs previously, how about some Cub Scouting music now?

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### Exhibits

The exhibits will be more interesting if you change or add to them, based on your experience in the first session.

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### Registration

If you obtained addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers in the first session, it is not necessary to repeat. A lined pad for sign-in should suffice.

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### Name Tags and Resource Kits

Prepare name tags in advance for each participant from your previous roster. Having the name tags laid out on a table for the participants to pick up lets them know you are expecting them and are ready for them. You might also consider ordering permanent name plates for each new commissioner. See the *Insignia Guide*.

Have a resource kit prepared for each participant, as outlined under materials and equipment. The kits can be placed on the table with the name tags.

---

### Gathering-Time Activity

Upon arrival and sign-in, give each participant a program fundamentals examination on whichever program area is best suited. (See appendices C and D.)

You might have posted in a less conspicuous spot copies of the following references (or you might want to have a sheet giving the answers; having both will help them know where to go to get the answers in the future) for the examinations:

*Cub Scout Leader Book*

Question	Pages
1	2-2
2	2-7
3	2-4
4	2-4
5	29-4
6	20-7, 10-3
7	24-7
8	5-1 to 5-3
9	34-35
10	23-5

*Scoutmaster Handbook*

Question	Pages
1	7
2	7
3	8
4	7
5	119–123
6	20
7	20
8	9
9	27
10	8–9

## Opening Period—10 Minutes

### Opening Ceremony

This was assigned to a trainee at the end of the first session. There should have been a follow-up call to be sure the trainee is prepared.

### Welcome and Introduction

The course director welcomes the group back and introduces anyone present who was not at the first session.

### Objectives of This Session

The course director reads aloud the learning objectives found at the beginning of this section.

## Unit Visitation Reports—20 Minutes

### Trainees' Reports and Staff Members' Comments

Each trainee is given an opportunity to report from his or her work sheet. At the end of each report, the appropriate staff member gives a report on the same unit, shares any disagreement, and gives the reason for the disagreement.

This process is repeated until all have reported. In the case of a large number of trainees, consider dividing into smaller groups and meeting in separate rooms for reporting purposes. Assigned staff members are present with each group. Keep it moving so it does not get into too much detail. Make it meaningful and a learning experience.

### Course Director's Summary

At the conclusion of the reporting, the course director makes appropriate comments regarding the differing reports, the need to become familiar with all resource material to be able to make better evaluations, and the need to understand the total situation in a unit to render a valid report. He also mentions there will be opportunity for another visit. The course director reviews the "Unit Contacts" section of the *Commissioner Fieldbook*.

### Unit Visit Basics

- **Commissioners visit each unit at least monthly.** Some units will need more frequent visits—new units or troubled units, for example. Outstanding units need visits, too. Even Michael Jordan needs a coach.
- The visit may be to a unit meeting or unit committee meeting, or a personal visit with the unit leader.
- Unit visits should be entered as "add visits" in UVTS 2.0.



- Have the group brainstorm why unit visits are essential.
- Without unit visits, we can't know how to help a unit improve its program. Without visits, we only find out about problems after the unit fails or weakens and the kids have "voted with their feet" and left the unit.

If you are truly concerned about a unit's health, you must know its condition at all times:

- Is the unit program fun and challenging for the youth?
- Do the leaders find it rewarding?
- Is there a membership growth plan?
- Will the unit reregister on time?
- (Review other information in the *Commissioner Fieldbook*, pages 15–17.)
- Reference the commissioner podcast on the website as a guide in helping them better understand the types and reasons for monthly unit visits. Let them know how and where to access the web: [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners).

---

### Morale-Building Feature

"I'm Happy When I'm Hiking" is a good song for the group to sing. Or use some other interactive session out of *Group Meeting Sparklers*.

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## Unit Committee Functions—15 Minutes

### Unit Committee Functions

The participants must understand that they can best help a unit leader if they also understand what a unit leader should have in the way of help from the unit committee.

Familiarize the participants with Fast Start and how it helps a new leader get off to a good start. Refer them to the online BSA Online Learning Center at [olc.scouting.org](http://olc.scouting.org).

---

### The Pack Committee

For Cub Scout packs, using the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, pages 23-5 to 23-7, point out the functions of the committee, including:

Recordkeeping and correspondence	Outings
Advancement	Finance
Training	Friends of Scouting
Public relations	Membership and annual rechartering

Be sure they understand that there might not be formally organized subcommittees, but the pack chairman should assign certain roles to committee members on either a permanent or an "as needed" basis.

---

### The Troop Committee

Using the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, page 157, and the *Troop Committee Guidebook* as resources, point out the functions of the troop committee, including:

Leadership selection	Membership and annual rechartering
Finance	Advancement
Equipment	Supporting the outdoor program
Transportation	

Again, the organization of the committee depends on the size of the troop.

<b>The Crew Committee</b>	(See the <i>Venturing Leader Manual</i> , pages 18–19)	
	Leadership selection	Membership and annual rechartering
	Finance	Advancement
	Equipment	Supporting the outdoor program
	Transportation	Maintaining the PCI (Program
	ScoutParents unit coordinator	Capability Inventory)

## Introduction to Youth Protection—10 Minutes

Explain that the Boy Scouts of America is deeply concerned about the general welfare of our children. Explain that all leaders are required to be trained and units should show the Youth Protection videos designed specifically to each age group of youth.

**Handout** Distribute copies of *Cub Scout Leader Training Youth Protection* handout, No. 46-150.

### The Commissioner and Youth Protection

#### Commissioners help in several ways:

1. Conduct an annual Youth Protection visit each fall for unit adults in every unit you are assigned to serve (usually 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 abuse: *It Happened to Me*, AV-09DVD11, for Cub Scout–age boys; *A Time to Tell*, AV-09DVD04, for Boy Scout–age boys; and *Personal Safety Awareness*, AV-09DVD33, for high school–age youth.
5. Explain to unit adults how youth and parents use the Youth Protection inserts in the front of the handbooks.

Commissioners are also required to take the online version of the youth Protection training for adult volunteers by going to [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) or attend the council's or district's Youth Protection training course, if one is offered.

## Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit Operation—15 Minutes

### Journey to Excellence Performance Award

Hand out and share the current Journey to Excellence Performance Award commitment forms for units. Participants must recognize, from the discussion, that they represent desirable and important standards for quality unit operation.

Discuss the time schedule for the commissioner working with the unit in making the initial commitment in the early part of the year. Then discuss how the commissioner can support the unit in achieving their committed goals. Then discuss the part the commissioner plays in evaluating between October and December each year if the unit has achieved the award. The final step is for them to understand the importance of recognizing the unit in a public setting of their accomplishments. (See the reference to the award process on the commissioner website at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).)

## Second and Third Unit Visits—10 Minutes

**By the Course Director** In this session, we have been dealing with the unit, its adult organization and functions, and quality program, which are the “glue” that keeps a youth in the program long enough for the purposes of Scouting to be met in his or her life. Now it is time to plan some additional training.

**The Second Unit Visit** These are the guidelines:

- Go by yourself.
- Stay only 15 minutes (a drop-in visit).
- Make the worksheet changes you find appropriate after you leave the meeting, not during the meeting.
- Take along your resource kit of materials handed out during the first training session.

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**The Third Visit (to the Unit’s Committee Meeting)** Explain that one of the meaningful contacts with a unit is to attend the unit’s committee meeting. The committee must recognize the unit commissioner as a friend and useful resource.

Guidelines:

- Take time to visit with the chartered organization representative.
  - Review the unit worksheet before you go—fill out the “Some Ways to Help” column after your visit.
  - Give every member your address and phone number.
  - Wearing the uniform is not optional. Your responsibility is to set the example and encourage proper uniforming for unit leaders.
- 

## Closing—10 Minutes

**Announcements** The course director announces the date and time for the third session. There must be time allowed for the second and third unit visits.

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**Awards** The course director might wish to present Scouter lapel pins for wear with civilian attire.

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**Assignments** The course director assigns responsibility for parts of the third session—preopening, opening, closing, morale-building features, etc., to trainees.

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**Closing Ceremony** As previously assigned to a trainee.

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**Cracker Barrel** Optional. If coffee, tea, punch, or other refreshments are made available during the session, a cracker barrel might not be necessary. However, it provides a great opportunity for fellowship.

# Session 3—How to Help a Unit

**Learning Objectives.** At the end of this session, the participants should be able to:

- State the resource and support available to help make the unit successful.
  - Use counseling and mentoring fundamentals to encourage the unit leader and to lead him or her to self-sufficiency.
  - Explain the annual commissioner service plan.
  - State methods of membership management.
  - Use the resources of the district committee.
  - Use the unit charter renewal process in rechartering a unit.
  - Use commissioner lifesaving techniques to resolve unit life-threatening problems.
- 

## Preopening

### Reminders

This is the final session. The staff members should have established such a good rapport with the trainees that they can be approached by the trainees for personal coaching.

You might consider starting this session a little earlier because it is packed with activity, and reports might involve more discussion than is anticipated.

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### Physical Arrangements

No change from previous sessions is necessary.

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### Background Music

Appropriate music sets a friendly atmosphere.

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### Exhibits

Exhibits might include highlights from the council calendar, as well as some favorite books on Scouting that staff members have collected through the years. Consider including literature that can be loaned to the new unit commissioners.

---

### Registration

Registration is conducted as it was in session 2, but now is when the recorder rechecks any names, addresses, e-mail addresses, or telephone numbers with questions. All names should have been checked previously with the council registrar to be certain the trainees are all registered. When registration is verified, the recorder prepares the pocket certificates for presentation to those who participated in all three sessions and made their three visits.

---

### Gathering-Time Activity

*Badge Game.* Place a variety of Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing badges on numbered cards around the room. Be sure to place masking tape over any lettered portions of the badges. Provide each trainee a sheet of paper or a card upon which to record the badge identification. (Later you can post a list of the correct names by their numbers.)

---

## Opening—10 Minutes

### Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was assigned to a trainee who can use one of the many resources available to a unit leader.

---

### Welcome and Challenge

The course director welcomes trainees back, introduces any visitors or trainees who have not been involved previously, and challenges trainees to ask questions about concerns they might have about being effective unit commissioners and to make the most of this third session.

---

---

**Objectives of  
This Session**

The course director presents the learning objectives found at the beginning of this session, making whatever comments might be deemed necessary regarding achievement of these objectives.

---

## Visitation Reports—15 Minutes

**Participants' Report**

Participants report on any changes made to their worksheets, explaining why they made them. They also report on what they are noting as ways they can help their units.

---

**Staff Members'  
Comments**

Assigned staff members make the comments and recommendations that are necessary to create a clear understanding of the worksheet as a tool for effective unit visits. This might require dividing into small groups because of the length of the reports. Time limits on each report might need to be set.

---

**Course Director's  
(or District  
Commissioner's)  
Summary**

The course director again stresses the importance of the rapport established between unit leadership and the commissioner, and emphasizes that help should be made available with proper coaching by the unit commissioner in such a way that the unit leaders solve their own problems. It is further pointed out that the commissioner does not have to know all the answers, but must know where to get help and must follow through to see that help actually is received and produces the desired results.

---

## Counseling—20 Minutes

**Fundamentals**

Point out that the best way to help a unit is to strengthen its leadership, and that the most effective method of helping a leader develop his potential is counseling. Commissioners must be good counselors to be successful in their roles.

Counseling can be defined as the ability to listen to someone in such a way that they will solve their own problems. These are some fundamentals of good counseling:

- Carefully select a time and place where there will be no interruptions.
  - Understand what the leader is saying.
  - Let the leader know that you hear and understand.
  - Do not give advice. Guide, by questioning, in such a way that they solve their own problems. If they cannot find a solution, plant several possibilities in their mind, but let them select the one they think might work.
  - Summarize from time to time to keep the leader on track.
  - Support their thinking with information. (Know the difference between information and advice.)
  - Refer to the *Commissioner Fieldbook's* "Counseling" chapter.
- 

**Morale-Building  
Feature**

Change the pace with a game, song, or stunt.

# The District Committee—5 Minutes

## A Resource

The organization and functions are explained at this time, either by the course director or someone they carefully selected. It might be done by an experienced member of the district committee or the district executive. Provide a good understanding of the resources available in the district committee to ensure the success of the unit.

Explain that the commissioner is like the country doctor or general practitioner. The district committee includes specialists whom the commissioner can call in for consultation or specialized treatment.

---

# Membership Management—15 Minutes

## Helping Units Grow

Now that the trainees have been introduced to many ways they can help leaders to grow and committees to function, with good budgeting and a good program for youth, it is also essential that they help units to add membership, so that more youth can have the advantages of a sound Scouting experience.

Youth retention is a major emphasis in helping units grow.

Refer to the membership section of *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

Divide again into buzz groups to discuss membership management. A training staff member should meet with each group to indirectly guide them to an understanding that:

- A unit encounters problems when most members graduate in the same year, especially a small unit. A pack with mostly 9- and 10-year-olds or a troop with a majority of 12- and 13-year-olds needs a recruiting program.
  - Inventories are necessary to keep unit committees aware of the membership situation, particularly at unit charter renewal time. How many members are active and which members are inactive and need follow-up are important to know. A quick follow-up will often save a member. An inventory might also point out a program or administrative function as the cause for absenteeism.
  - Year-round recruiting ideas and plans are essential. With youth surveys and lists of Webelos Scouts ready to graduate, commissioners can suggest candidates for membership.
  - Birthday greetings inviting youth to join when they reach the right age are effective. Phone calls and in-person invitations are always encouraged.
  - Roundup programs are suggested by councils and districts and should be joined in by all units. Cub Scouts recruited to attend day camp and resident camps, Boy Scouts to attend long-term camp, and Venturers to participate in an upcoming special skills event are given an exciting introduction to the program.
  - Preventing dropped units is essential for good membership management.
  - A commissioner is assigned during the organization of a new unit to work with them from the beginning. See the *Commissioner Fieldbook* for tips on serving new units.
- 

## Reports

Allow an opportunity for group reports if time permits.

---

## Course Director's Summary

Membership for membership's sake is not the name of the game. A growing unit is a going unit; recruiting will ensure continuation of the unit, with more youth enjoying the benefits. A good program is the key to attracting youth. Youth having fun and excitement in Scouting are our best recruiters.

---



## Unit Charter Renewal Process—15 Minutes

(This is only an introduction of the process. Each district should have a full annual training with all commissioners concerning the process.)

Lead a discussion to ensure a thorough understanding of the unit charter renewal process. The fact that the unit commissioner is involved in a majority of the steps should get everyone's attention. (For councils using Internet rechartering, briefly explain the process.)

---

### **The Plan**

Work from the *Commissioner Fieldbook* chapter "Charter Renewal." "Walk" them through each step, stressing the unit commissioner's role.

---

## The Annual Commissioner Service Plan—10 Minutes

### **Commissioner Service Plan**

The annual commissioner service plan gives specific purpose for some of your regular and supportive contact with units. The plan includes specific functions.

(Refer to the appropriate page of the *Commissioner Fieldbook* and review each function.)

---

## The Lifesaving Commissioner—30 Minutes

Refer to the *Commissioner Fieldbook* chapter "Be a Lifesaving Commissioner." Have each person read the first two paragraphs.

### **Danger Signals**

Unit commissioners must be alert to situations that can signal a unit in trouble. Divide trainees into buzz groups and give them about five minutes to come up with a list of danger signals. Their lists should include:

- Style of leadership
  - Leader does not grasp the possibilities of the patrol method.
  - Leader lacks faith in the boys' ability to run the troop or patrol.
  - Leader wants to keep authority.
  - Leader can train only by mass instruction.
  - Leader's temperament is not compatible with the patrol method.
- Unit is not meeting.
- Unit is without adult leaders.
- Unit has no committee.
- No new members are being added.
- Low attendance at meetings.
- Weak or poorly organized program.
- No advancement.
- No participation in day camp or summer camp.
- No unit budget.

Call for reports and, with each reported item, ask what action might be taken to correct the item.

---

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**Watch the Vital Signs**

Refer the group to the buzz group activity just completed on “Danger Signals.”

---

**Go into Action Fast**

Using a prepared flip chart, conduct a presentation/discussion on each of the bulleted items in this section of the *Commissioner Fieldbook*.

---

**Don't Just Discuss Problems—Discuss Solutions**

Have trainees put a star in front of each of the unit life-threatening situations described in this section of the *Commissioner Fieldbook* (unit not meeting, unit with no leader, etc.).

---

## Closing—15 Minutes

**Course Director's Challenge**

(If time permits, provide time for questions and answers to discuss the material covered and discussion of any key issues.)

This is the time for a stirring challenge by the course director or someone carefully selected to deliver it. The challenge includes:

- Trainees now see their task.
  - Training is just beginning—they must continue to gain knowledge.
  - The commissioner must be a friend to unit leaders.
  - The goal is to see that more youth have a better Scouting experience.
- 

**Graduation**

A key council or district leader presents a District Scouter Training Certificate, No. 33738, appropriately signed and suitable for framing, to each participant.\*

---

**Closing Ceremony**

Sing “On My Honor.” Give them the words first and then carefully lead them in the singing.

---

**Cracker Barrel**

This should be an ample spread of “goodies” to provide a period of warm Scouting fellowship. Consider extending an invitation to the entire commissioner's staff to drop in for the closing period. This will help the trainees become a part of the group.

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\*The Training Course Pocket Certificate, No. 33767, could be substituted, depending on council preference.

# Chapter 4—The One-Day Course

All three sessions may be completed on a single day, probably a Saturday. Because this does not allow participants to absorb new material and put it into practice between sessions, you should provide additional discussion time and breaks to help trainees absorb the subject matter. Additional morale features will help keep an all-day course from becoming tedious.

## Unit Visits

Since unit visits cannot be carried out between sessions, they should be planned before and after the course.

**Arrange for each commissioner-trainee and observer-coach to make the first unit visit before the day of the course. Plan for the second and third unit visits to occur shortly after the day of the course. Use UVTS 2.0 to add a visit.**

## Planning the One-Day Course

A suggested schedule is included. It includes all of the elements of the three sessions, plus time for lunch and other breaks. Plan a special morale feature to present during lunch. Or use part of the lunch hour to share local council information of interest to commissioners.

### To prepare instructor lesson plans for the one-day course

1. Make copies of the lesson plans in this book.
2. Cut and paste each item in the proper sequence.
3. Make copies of the new outline for all instructors.

## Schedule

### Session 1. Why Commissioners?

Preopening

- 9:00 A.M. Opening
- 9:10 A.M. The aims and methods of Scouting
- 9:30 A.M. The commissioner service role
- 10:00 A.M. Supporting the unit
- 10:25 A.M. Take a break
- 10:35 A.M. Unit program planning
- 10:55 A.M. Commissioner priorities
- 11:00 A.M. Effective commissioner leadership

### Session 2. Units: The Commissioner's Top Priority

- 11:20 A.M. The unit visit and visitation reports
- 11:40 A.M. Open forum (questions, concerns, and summary)

Noon

Lunch  
Morale features and/or council announcements

- 1:00 P.M. Unit committee functions
- 1:15 P.M. Introduction to youth protection
- 1:25 P.M. Quality Unit operation

### Session 3. How to Help a Unit

- 1:40 P.M. Counseling/mentoring
- 2:00 P.M. The district committee
- 2:05 P.M. Membership management
- 2:20 P.M. Take a break
- 2:30 P.M. Unit charter renewal process
- 2:45 P.M. Annual commissioner service plan
- 2:55 P.M. The lifesaving commissioner
- 3:25 P.M. Open forum (questions, concerns, and summary)
- 3:55 P.M. Second and third unit visits
- 4:05 P.M. Closing and graduation
- 4:20 P.M. Dismissed

# Appendix A—Suggested Letter to Participants

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

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the fellowship of commissioner service. We know that you will enjoy the experience and take great pride in being able to help America's youth by providing service that assures unit success.

To help you become a successful commissioner, I invite you to attend our next Commissioner Basic Training course to be held     (date)     at     (location)    . All three sessions will start at     (time)    . Call me at     (phone)     if you have any questions.

Scouting fundamentals are so important; you will want to be aware of them. It will help to browse through your Scouting library before the training sessions. Some basic references are listed below.

## **For Cub Scouting**

*Cub Scout Leader Book*, Chapter 2—Cub Scouting: Purposes, Methods, and Ideals; Chapter 7—Organization of Cub Scouting; and Chapter 23—Leadership.

## **For Boy Scouting**

*Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 3—The Boy-Led Troop; Chapter 2—The Adventure of Scouting; and Chapter 8—Troop Program Planning.

## **For Venturing**

*Venturing Leader Manual*, Chapter 1—Leadership in the Crew; Chapter 2—Your First Three Months as an Officer; and Chapter 3—Planning Your Crew's Program.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

(Title)

# Appendix B—Commissioner Quiz

Place an “X” in the appropriate column to indicate whether the statement is true or false.

<b>The Unit Commissioner:</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>
1. Reports to the district executive.	_____	_____
2. Must be an expert in training adults and youth.	_____	_____
3. Is only concerned with reregistering a unit on time.	_____	_____
4. Should be familiar with the official literature used by units for program.	_____	_____
5. Only visits the unit committee, and on a regular basis.	_____	_____
6. Must know the unit program planning process.	_____	_____
7. “Sells” the unit leader on district and council functions as a primary responsibility.	_____	_____
8. Periodically communicates with the chartered organization representative to offer help.	_____	_____
9. Regularly attends roundtables.	_____	_____
10. Guides the unit through the annual service plan.	_____	_____
11. Should earn the Commissioner’s Key.	_____	_____
12. Attends monthly meetings of the district committee.	_____	_____
13. Is not involved in the presentation of the unit charter.	_____	_____
14. Must be familiar with the monthly program themes.	_____	_____
15. Encourages assigned packs, troops, teams, and crews to earn the Journey to Excellence Performance Award.	_____	_____

(See answers to quiz on page 66.)

(Reproduce locally.)

# Appendix C—Cub Scouting Fundamentals

## A Self-Graded Examination

1. How many points in the “Purposes of Cub Scouting” mention values?
2. In helping a boy, what is the greatest gift we can give him?
3. What four symbols learned by all Cub Scouts embody the ideals of Cub Scouting?
4. What is the Cub Scout motto?
5. In a pack meeting, how many ceremonies might one ideally plan on?
6. How do den chiefs and denners get their roles?
7. Who is responsible for leading the monthly pack meeting?
8. What are the four broad areas of development for Cub Scout-age boys?
9. On the Pack Meeting Planning Sheet, when does the recognition period come?
10. What are the pack committee’s 12 responsibilities?

# Appendix D—Boy Scouting Fundamentals

## A Self-Graded Examination

1. How many points in the explanation of the aims of Scouting describe hoped-for attributes of boys?
2. What are the three words that best describe the aims of Scouting?
3. Is the outdoor program an aim or a method?
4. Scouting believes in fitness. What kinds of fitness?
5. What are the four steps to Boy Scout advancement?
6. Patrols choose their own leader; what else?
7. The patrol’s representative to the patrol leaders’ council should be the patrol leader. Could someone else go in their place? Who?
8. Providing appropriate adult association for boys is a stated method of Scouting. Why?
9. On the Troop Meeting Plan form, why does the skills development come before the patrol meetings?
10. What are the eight methods of Scouting?



# Appendix E—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.

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

## 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:



## SERVICE

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

## To Chartered Organizations

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

## 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.

## To Leaders

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

## 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.
- Use UVTS 2.0.

List other areas of interest or concern:

SKU 34424A



# Appendix F



## 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*

# Appendix G



## 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)

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# Appendix H



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## 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.

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
Adult Advisors			
Elected officers			
Planned program			
Adult assistance			
Membership			
Meeting operation			
Service projects			
Program capability inventory			

### 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.

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# Appendix I—Guidelines for Unit Self-Assessment and Action Planning Meeting (conducted semi-annually)

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

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

- To evaluate the unit's progress toward achieving the Journey to Excellence Performance Unit Recognition Award
- To review the unit's goals, successes, and vision for the coming year, including a succession plan for future key leadership.
- To identify any areas of improvement—leadership, program, membership, youth and unit retention.
- 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:
  - Journey to Excellence Performance Award 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.)

# Appendix J

 <b>Pack Self-Assessment</b>		Pack No. _____ District _____ Date completed _____
Completed by _____		Date review meeting held _____
<u>Quality Criteria</u>	Doing a Great Job	Would Like Improvement
I. Pack Leadership		Needs Help
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 have been 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 percent <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. Journey to Excellence Performance Award Standards		
A. We annually recharter on time.	_____	_____
B. We earned the Journey to Excellence Performance Award last year.	_____	_____
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.	_____	_____


# Appendix K

Troop/team No. _____ District _____		 <b>Troop/Team Self-Assessment</b>		Date completed _____
Completed by _____		Date review meeting held _____		

Quality Criteria	Doing a Great Job	Would Like Improvement	Needs 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 have been 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 or recognition awards regularly.				
H. Our troop attends summer camp . . .				
OR				
I. . . . our team plans a major activity annually.				
J. Our unit is 100 percent <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. Journey to Excellence Performance Award Standards				
A. We annually recharter on time.				
B. We earned the Journey to Excellence Performance Award last year.				
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.				

# Appendix L

		Crew/Ship No. _____ District _____		Date completed _____	
Completed by _____		Date review meeting held _____			

Quality Criteria	Doing a Great Job	Would Like Improvement	Needs Help	Comments and Needs
<b>I. Crew/Ship Leadership</b>				
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 has been 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.	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>II. Program</b>				
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 and recognition awards programs to encourage personal development.	_____	_____	_____	_____
H. We attend special council and 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.	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>III. Membership/Attendance</b>				
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.	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>IV. Journey to Excellence Performance Award Standards</b>				
A. We annually recharter on time.	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. We earned the Journey to Excellence Performance Award last year.	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. We are on track to earn the award this year.	_____	_____	_____	_____

# Section III. Continuing Education for Commissioners

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# Preface

**One of the principal responsibilities of the council commissioner is to see that a complete program is in place to train every commissioner in the council. District commissioners must see that every member of their staff receives adequate training.**

Learning is a lifetime activity. As commissioners, we must continually adjust our skills to provide a more valuable service to our units. Therefore, commissioners should view learning as an important part of their Scouting lives—every month, every year.

Nationally developed courses, resource materials, and training recognition provide the structure for good commissioner training. It is the local council's mission to provide fun, sparkle, motivation, and frequent training opportunities so that commissioners will learn good unit service skills.

Commissioner training and recognition includes the following elements that should be completed in a timely manner:

1. New leaders are required to take Youth Protection training before submitting an application for registration. Youth Protection training must be taken every two years.
2. Orientation video or Fast Start online learning course within 48 hours.
3. Personal coaching and/or orientation within two weeks.
4. Commissioner Basic Training within two months.
5. Arrowhead Honor within one year.
6. Commissioner's Key after three years.
7. Continuing education every month/every year.
8. Distinguished Commissioner Service Award (after five years).

See that your council and each of its districts provide all of the basic opportunities for commissioners to learn and to grow in their effectiveness.

# Chapter 1—District Commissioner Staff Meetings

## Training Topics

Training is a continuing process for all commissioners. Commissioners meet monthly for a district staff meeting.

***Part of every meeting should be devoted to a brief training topic.***

*The district commissioner and district executive select a topic each month that best matches the current skill needs of their commissioners.* Parts of the training outlines in Chapter 5 of this section of the manual provide ready-to-go training topics for district commissioner staff meetings, as well as the podcasts provided on the commissioner website.

While the district commissioner or district executive might often lead training topics, selected ADCs and unit commissioners also should be assigned to instruct some topics. Serving as an instructor is a great way to learn. At least once a year, invite someone from outside the commissioner staff to conduct a training topic.

Use the meeting to inform everyone of changes in the units, the district, and the council. Make everyone feel that they will miss out on important information if they skip the meeting.

**Helping units to succeed is at the heart of every meeting, including the training topic.**

# Chapter 2—Council Commissioner Meetings

## Training Topics

The council commissioner meets regularly (possibly monthly or quarterly) with all district commissioners and assistant council commissioners. *The meeting is the nerve center of the council's commissioner operation, and a training topic should be part of it.*

*The council commissioner and Scout executive (or the Scout executive's representative in large councils) select a topic each month that best reflects the learning needs of district commissioners.* The articles printed as a part of the national commissioner newsletter usually contain appropriate topics. Many parts of the training outlines in Chapter 5 of this section of the manual provide training topics for these meetings. You can also use the podcasts from the commissioner website as a part of training.

Some councils find it effective to appoint an assistant council commissioner for training to coordinate training topics as well as help plan the annual council commissioner conference, coordinate the College of Commissioner Science, and promote commissioner participation at the Philmont Training Center.

**Again . . . helping units succeed is at the heart of everything that occurs at the meeting, including the training topic.**

# Chapter 3—The Commissioner Conference

## A Guide for Conference Planners

### What Is a Commissioner Conference?

The annual conference should be the greatest event of the year for the council's commissioners and professionals—a highly informative, high-morale, and total team event.

A commissioner conference does not take the place of basic training in the district. While much learning takes place, the conference includes other objectives and is far more flexible in format than any specific training course.

### What Are the Ingredients?

Each council may use a slightly different recipe, but a typical recipe calls for:

- 60 parts of advanced training
- 20 parts of fellowship
- 10 parts of information on the latest Scouting developments
- 5 parts of inspiration
- 5 parts of recognition

Plan early, mix well, but don't lose the flavor of each ingredient.

*Latest information* may include council dates and plans for the year ahead, new national programs, critical concerns and issues, and a colorful display of the latest commissioner resources. Commissioners need a good glimpse of the big picture.

*Fellowship* may involve good meals, a campfire, cracker barrel conversation, boating, swimming, stunts, signs, and gimmicks. Commissioners need to share with others from all across the council who help units succeed.

The *inspiration* part of your conference may involve a youth speaker, a flag ceremony, presentation of the Distinguished Commissioner Award, or a special motivational speaker.

*Recognition* could include the Distinguished Commissioner Award, the district commissioner with the best unit-to-commissioner ratio, the district with the highest percentage of Journey to Excellence Performance Award Units, highest percentage of on-time unit charter renewals, the best case report of a unit commissioner taking action to prevent a dropped unit, etc.

### Conference Options

Approximately half of all councils run a traditional conference similar in format to the sample programs in this guidebook. The other half use a College of Commissioner Science format modeled after college courses and degrees.

This section is for conference planners regardless of the type of conference. Planners of the “college” should *also* use Chapter 4 of this section.

Many councils hold two-day or weekend conferences to provide time to pursue topics in depth and to better develop important commissioner fellowship. Other councils run one-day events to conserve time, simplify arrangements, and reduce costs. A council might set up an optional Friday evening overnight fellowship activity, with all day Saturday for training and other program features. Travel distances, geography, and the tradition of successful events will help determine which conference pattern is best for your council.

Some conferences are held on a council cluster basis, with two or more councils planning and running a joint event. The joint event works best when councils are in the *same* metropolitan area. *A conference that covers a wide area is likely to reduce attendance because of distance and travel time.* The majority of people in attendance might only be more experienced commissioners. **Councils should place the highest priority on attracting all unit commissioners and new ADCs—this is usually best accomplished close to home in a single council. A single-council conference also best develops a healthy bond between unit commissioners and their own commissioner leaders and professional advisers.**

# Planning Guidelines

## Early Decisions

Plan ahead. Soon after this year's conference—no later than 60 days—the council commissioner, Scout executive, and/or adviser need to make some early decisions. Get ideas and feedback from district commissioners at your next council commissioner meeting. Establish for next year's conference the

- Date
- Place
- Format (overnight, one-day, “college,” etc.)
- Selection of conference chair and staff adviser
- Major theme or focus

These early decisions will ensure obtaining the best possible location, getting the date in everybody's calendar, and securing a planning team to plan a successful event. (The council commissioner may choose to head the conference committee.)

## Conference Committee

After the conference chair and adviser have been recruited, they select a conference committee that is representative of the council and includes people with the talents to carry out the various assignments needed for a successful event. Chairs and/or subcommittees are selected for the following kinds of responsibilities:

- Promotion/participation
- Registration
- Physical arrangements
- Training sessions/workshops
- Morale and special features
- Program
- Hospitality and recreation

Responsibilities will vary depending on the nature of your conference and the local council. Keep the committee structure simple, but remember that success is often related to how many people get involved in conference preparation.

While volunteers carry much of the load, responsibility for conference success also must lie with the council staff. It's a group effort.

## Select the Right Place

The kind of facility affects the success of a conference. In selecting a location, give thought to:

- A convenient, central location with ample parking space.
- A setting away from normal, familiar places—a “change of scenery;” a retreat-like setting.
- A location with intrigue or unusual interest that people have always wanted to visit. This will help draw attendance. It may also provide some special program features. Look for off-season rates.
  - A corporate office or training center of special interest might provide a tour or interesting scenery.
  - A military base might provide special interest, recreation facilities, and low cost.
  - Council camps and training centers can educate commissioners about camp and can offer boating, fishing, or other activities.
  - A college or university might offer a variety of resources.
  - An athletic facility might be popular.
  - Consider a museum, resort, historical site, ship, or fire academy.
- Adequate rooms and room size to meet major program needs.
- Adequate air conditioning and heating.
- Availability of food services and room facilities.
- Lighting, lectern, PA system, tables, and chairs.
- Whether the room or hall is appropriate for the use of audiovisuals.
- How early on the day of the conference the rooms can be set up.
- What time the facility must be restored to its original condition and by whom.
- When the reservation must be made. Whether a deposit is required.



## Build a Responsibility Schedule

Deadlines are needed. List all planning tasks. Assign each task to an individual. Reproduce the responsibility schedule and distribute to those involved as a reminder of their obligations.

The responsibility schedule in this section suggests tasks necessary for a successful conference. To the right of each task is the approximate time before the conference by which the task should be completed.

Adapt the schedule to your needs. Then the conference chair and adviser can follow up to see that each task is completed on time.

## The Conference Program

A top-notch program brings them back the next year.

If a conference theme is desired, plan it early and use it in all promotional materials and calendars. Consider how the theme can be expressed through graphics, gifts, favors, keynoters, signs, program features, and gimmicks.

What special topics need to be included this year? What “bread and butter” topics are needed for optional small-group training sessions and workshops? See page 114 for a list of possible session topics. See Chapter 5 in this section for training course outlines.

Use brief recreation and fellowship activities to break up more serious parts of the program. Begin and end the day with brief, motivational full-group sessions—get the whole gang together!

Plan plenty of small-group break-out sessions in which all participants can actively participate.

Keep people moving. No session should go longer than 60 minutes without a break or change of pace.

Use meal times for fellowship, as well as very short program features.

Be sure that “after hours” and free-time space is set up for informal discussion with refreshments.

Plan displays in well-traveled conference areas and next to meal locations.

Plan a brief time for district commissioners to meet with their staffs.

Develop a program outline early in your planning. Then develop more detail. Share a draft with others and get their feedback. Refine the program. You may need to refine it again. Put the final schedule on a printed program for all participants. Give written credits to everyone who helped.

Council field staff members may serve as advisers and assistant instructors for selected training sessions. Be sure council staff members sit in on all training periods. They, too, are learners.

## Session/“Classroom” Techniques

Obviously, people were endowed with the gift of speech to communicate with each other, but too much talk is deadly. Some brief speakers and lectures are great. Longer speakers are fine if they are “standouts.” Since few of us are, we need to build interesting and lively ideas into all our presentations. A variety of presentation techniques are needed . . . flip-chart or PowerPoint presentations may be fine, but if everybody uses a flip chart or PowerPoint it gets boring.

If possible, get together in advance with all instructors and/or session leaders. Discuss various presentation techniques and the overall program.

Following are some classroom ideas that often prove successful:

- Posted session objectives
- *Well-chosen* humor
- Role-playing
- Case studies and other problem-solving activities
- Audiovisuals (photos, videotapes, DVDs, slide presentations, podcasts, overhead transparencies, PowerPoint, etc.) that make their point quickly and clearly
- Skits and ice breakers
- Games and simulations
- Having trainees list questions and concerns related to the session topic
- Handouts (distributed only at the beginning or end of the session)
- Having trainees develop personal action plans related to the session topic
- Small-group discussion
- Flip charts, either with prepared sheets or with sheets sketched during the session
- Hands-on review of resource material
- Charts, scrolls, posters, models, and samples
- Show and do: the leader demonstrates and the trainees practice
- Well-moderated panel of presenters, panel discussion, and total full-group discussion with a panel
- Props and attention-getters
- Brainstorming
- Trainee presentations
- Contests
- Concise summary—written or verbal
- Relating subject matter to learners’ life experiences and actual back-home environment

- Chalkboards and dry-erase boards
- Exhibits and bulletin boards
- Quiz followed by discussion
- Experiments
- Lecture
- PowerPoint presentation

What other ideas do you have?

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A summary for session leaders might include the  
**10 keys to a good presentation:**

1. Be prepared.
2. Handle questions properly.
3. Don't apologize for yourself.
4. Be familiar with your topic.
5. Use audiovisuals professionally.
6. Stick to the schedule.
7. Involve the participants.
8. Establish personal rapport.
9. Don't appear disorganized.
10. Start off quickly to establish an image.

# Promote—Promote—Promote

The commissioner conference is the biggest commissioner event of the year. It's a vitally important morale-building event, so make every effort to ensure excellent attendance. You have worked hard to make the conference a super experience, but **all of your work is wasted and units suffer if people don't attend.**

Promote the conference so all commissioners will benefit from your good planning and preparation. *Make it easy for people to attend. Keep it close to home.*

Check off the following promotion pointers as you plan or accomplish them—

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Select an interesting or popular location.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Many months before the conference, give all commissioners an opportunity to suggest the topics they would like to see covered. Either give them a one-page list of topics such as the one in this guide and have them check off the five or six they want most, or have them submit ideas on cards or brainstorm as a group the topics they want most.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Offer a banner, revolving trophy, or individual prizes to the district with the best percentage of registered commissioners in attendance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Create a distinctive conference attendance patch, gift, or other incentive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Set up a telephone team in each district.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The more people who are involved in the conference, the better the attendance. People with a task to perform will come and might bring friends. Ask people to be greeters or session assistants, be on ceremony teams or arrangement committees, give awards, give one-minute presentations, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The council commissioner commits each district commissioner to bring their entire team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Don't restrict attendance to only those who have completed basic training or another limiting factor. Make it a gathering of the entire unit service team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Mail tickets for a door prize.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Offer the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook* or other item as an attendance gift.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Establish a fee as low as possible to encourage the largest attendance and still make the conference self-supporting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Bring new commissioner prospects—hot prospects who are almost ready to say yes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Place an announcement in the council newsletter several months in advance. Place follow-up details as the event gets closer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Place a story in newspapers and try to get an interview on a local radio or TV talk show.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Make sure everyone has a ride. Providing transportation shows you care and are willing to go the extra mile to get people there. Car pools are often more fun than riding alone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. In your detailed conference brochure and publicity, add the fun extras that say, "You won't want to miss this!"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Distribute copies of the advance program and news about interesting speakers and presenters.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. **Don't select a conference site so far from home that it inhibits attendance.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Lastly, one of your very best promoters is the reputation of previous conferences.

# Responsibility Schedule

Steps	Months to Conference	Who's Responsible
• Last year's conference committee completes evaluation.	-11	_____
• Council commissioner cabinet discusses last year's conference and provides ideas for this year's conference.	-10½	_____
• Establish date and reserve location. Announce to all commissioners.	-10	_____
• Council commissioner and Scout executive appoint conference chairman.	-10	_____
• Conference chairman and staff adviser recruit conference committee.	-9	_____
• Conference committee holds first meeting to brainstorm objectives, format, program highlights, and broad conceptual schedule; confirm location; and make assignments. These plans may necessitate adding people to the committee.	-8	_____
• Conference committee meets, preferably at the conference location, to develop <i>final</i> plans for objectives, format, program schedule, keynote speaker, use of facility, promotion plan, assignments, etc.	-6	_____
• Have conference committee review promotion ideas listed in this section of the manual.	-6	_____
• Assign a professional staff adviser to each subcommittee.	-6	_____
• Develop budget.	-5	_____
• Develop detailed responsibility schedule.	-5	_____
• Determine courses/workshops to be presented.	-5	_____
• Prepare approved list of course/workshop leaders.	-5	_____
• Obtain a detailed commitment from conference facility on rooms and spaces needed.	-5	_____
• Recruit keynote speaker (some popular speakers may have to be lined up closer to a year in advance).	-5	_____
• Recruit course/workshop leaders.	-4	_____
• Contract with caterer.	-4	_____
• Distribute conference brochures, invitations, registration forms, and other promotional material.	-3	_____
• Plan for recreation and morale features.	-2	_____
• Arrange for gifts and giveaways.	-2	_____
• Obtain commitments for physical arrangements: tables, chairs, stage, PA system, first aid, etc.	-2	_____
• Confirm AV requirements and arrange for equipment.	-2	_____
• Order special awards, determine recipients, write citations.	-2	_____
• Train workshop/course leaders (preferably at the conference facility).	-1½	_____
• Put aggressive promotion ideas in action.	-1½	_____
• Review final details with on-site location personnel: room setups, final schedule, equipment use, early arrivals, pager or cell phone numbers of on-site staff.	-1½	_____

*Responsibility Schedule Continued . . .*

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Days to Conference</b>	<b>Who's Responsible</b>
• Complete plans for conference check-in: name tags, registrar, check-in location, etc.	-30	_____
• Make room assignments for all events.	-30	_____
• Place a follow-up story in the council news bulletin or on council website.	-30	_____
• Conduct final promotion plans for those not yet signed up.	-14	_____
• Review program agenda details with all key participants.	-14	_____
• Have detailed plans for all ice breakers and morale features.	-14	_____
• Review a final checklist to be sure nothing has slipped through the cracks.	-10	_____
• Write a detailed script and review it with the presiding leader or emcee.	-8	_____
• Have the conference program printed.	-7	_____
• Conference adviser meets with professional staff to confirm all details.	-5	_____
• Confirm attendance figures with caterer.	-1	_____
• Preset and test any audiovisual equipment to be used.	-1	_____
• Go over your checklist again.	-1	_____
• Set up registration.	0	_____
• Test PA system (be sure mikes are live, sound level is adjusted, etc.).	0	_____
• Set up exhibits.	0	_____
• Workshop/course leaders meet on location.	0	_____
• Be sure the facility is open, properly arranged, and comfortable.	0	_____
• Have all props, equipment, and awards on hand and ready to use.	0	_____
• Put up signs, posters, and decorations.	0	_____
• General greeters arrive and are in position early.	0	_____
• Speaker's escort arrives and is in position early.	0	_____
• Double-check traffic and parking arrangements.	0	_____
• Mail thank-you letters.	+1	_____
• Pay all bills. Close out budget.	+3	_____

# One-Day Commissioner Conference

## Sample Program

8 a.m. <i>Preopening</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Displays</li><li>• Registration</li><li>• Refreshments</li><li>• Greeters in parking lot</li><li>• Welcoming person near registration area</li><li>• Cub Scout games</li></ul>	2:15 p.m. <i>Period 3—elective workshops/training sessions</i>
	3:15 p.m. <i>Break</i>
	3:30 p.m. <i>Period 4—elective workshops/training sessions</i>
	4:30 p.m. <i>Recreation and free time</i>
9 a.m. <i>Opening general session</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening ceremony</li><li>• Welcome and introductions</li><li>• Morale features</li><li>• Keynote speaker/presentation</li></ul>	5:30 p.m. <i>Dinner with musical and/or inspirational program feature</i>
10 a.m. <i>Break, coffee, displays</i>	6:30 p.m. <i>Closing general session</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Induction of new commissioners</li><li>• Key council program dates for the year ahead</li><li>• The annual commissioner service plan—key unit service dates for every commissioner</li><li>• Demonstration charter presentation</li><li>• Closing challenge</li><li>• Presentation of participation certificates by district</li><li>• Commissioner awards</li><li>• Closing ceremony</li></ul>
10:15 a.m. <i>Period 1—elective workshops/training sessions</i>	
11:15 a.m. <i>Break and travel to next session</i>	
11:30 a.m. <i>Period 2—elective workshops/training sessions</i>	
12:30 p.m. <i>Lunch with short program feature</i>	
1:30 p.m. <i>Skill demonstrations and involvement</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scoutcraft skills</li><li>• Venturing specialties</li></ul>	8 p.m. <i>Adjournment</i> Fellowship and cracker barrel

# Two-Day Commissioner Conference

## Sample Program

### *Friday evening*

- Registration—pick up program kits and bunk assignments
- Refreshments
- Displays
- Informal discussions with resource people available at designated spots
- Fellowship activities

### *Saturday*

8 a.m. *Breakfast*

9 a.m. *Opening general session*

- Welcome and introduction by districts
- Opening ceremony
- Conference instructions
- Morale features: songs, skits, etc.
- Keynote speaker: "Commissioners for the 21st Century"

OR

"Commissioners—the District's Frontline Diplomats"

10 a.m. *Break, coffee, displays*

10:15 a.m. *Period 1—elective workshops/training sessions*

11:15 a.m. *Break and travel to next session*

11:30 a.m. *Period 2—elective workshops/training sessions*

12:30 p.m. *Lunch with short program feature*

1:30 p.m. *Skill demonstrations and involvement*

- Scoutcraft skills
- Venturing specialties

2:15 p.m. *Period 3—elective workshops/training sessions*

3:15 p.m. *Break*

3:30 p.m. *Period 4—elective workshops/training sessions*

4:30 p.m. *Recreation and free time*

- Boating, swimming
- Tennis, volleyball
- Special tour or activity related to meeting facility

4:30 p.m. *Conference staff meeting*

6 p.m. *Dinner with music and/or fellowship activities*

7 p.m. *Evening general session*

- Induction of new commissioners
- Special skit on some aspect of commissioner operation
- Major presentation on the "lifesaving commissioner"
- Morale feature
- Session challenge—"Measuring a Commissioner's Effectiveness"

8:30 p.m. *District commissioner staff meetings*

9:30 p.m. *Cracker barrel; fellowship and entertainment*

### *Sunday*

7:15 a.m. *Interfaith service*

8 a.m. *Breakfast*

8:45 a.m. *General session*

- Opening big idea



*Two-Day Conference continued . . .*

- Drama/morale event, “The Art of Human Relations”
- Key council program dates for the year ahead
- The annual commissioner service plan—key unit service dates for commissioners

9:45 a.m. *Break; coffee, displays*

10 a.m. *Period 5—elective workshops/  
training sessions*

11 a.m. *Break and travel to next session*

11:15 a.m. *Period 6—elective workshops/  
training sessions*

12:15 p.m. *Closing luncheon*

- Presentation, “What’s New in the BSA”
- Participation certificates presented by district
- Attendance trophy
- Commissioner awards
- Presentation ceremony for Distinguished Commissioner Service Award
- Closing challenge

1:30 p.m. *Adjournment*

# Suggested Session Topics

Most conferences include a significant number of concurrent training sessions and workshops. While sessions may be organized by commissioner position and/or experience level, participants should be given a generous choice of topics. Learning occurs best when people choose what they want to learn.

Topics might include:

- Venturing and the Commissioner
- Thirteen Ways to Improve a Unit's Relationship with the Chartered Organization
- Unit Dollars and Cents—Making Sense Out of Unit Finance
- Achieving 100 Percent Centennial Quality Units
- Unit Civic Service Projects Throughout the District
- The Art of Good Counseling or Coaching
- Helping the Unit with Membership/Leadership Inventories
- Ethics in Action—How It Works
- Helping the Seldom-Go-Camping and Never-Go-Camping Troop
- Understanding the Hispanic Community
- Understanding the Vietnamese Community
- Understanding the \_\_\_\_\_ Community
- Den, Pack, and Crew Program Planning
- Cub Scouting and Family Diversity
- Effective Transition: Tiger Cubs/Cub Scouts/Webelos Scouts/Boy Scouts/Venturers
- Coaching the New Unit Leader
- Counseling the Experienced Unit Leader
- The Unit Committee—Fact or Fantasy
- Youth Leaders Really Do Run the Troop
- Elected Officers Make the Crew
- The Venturing Advancement Program—How It Works
- Super Service for New Units
- Three Keys to Venturing Crew Program Planning (program capability inventory, Venturing activity interest survey, and the annual crew officer seminar)
- The Four Ps of Good Cub Scout Roundtables (promoting, planning, preparing, presenting)
- The Four Ps of Good Boy Scout Roundtables
- Commissioner Recruiting—Steps for Success (for administrative commissioners)
- Unit Service in Remote Rural Areas
- Helping Low-Income Urban Volunteers Succeed
- Policy Review Seminar (for administrative commissioners)
- The Fine Art of Being an Assistant District Commissioner (ADC) Team Leader
- The Scoutmaster Just Quit! (helping a unit secure a unit leader)
- The *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* and Other Resources for the New Commissioner
- Becoming a Lifesaving Commissioner
- Roundtables With Pizzazz
- Orientating and Training Commissioners (for administrative commissioners)
- Varsity Scouting—Meeting the Needs of Older Scouts
- How Scouting Can Strengthen, Not Strain, Your Marriage
- Effective Commissioner Communication
- “Super Scouting Expert,” “Smokey the Bear,” “The Collector,” and Other Negative Images
- The Fine Art of Helping a Cub Pack
- Dealing with Many Forms of Prejudice
- Relationship With and Help From the District Committee
- What Is the Soccer and Scouting Program About?
- Being Accountable for Your Monthly Unit Visits

# Chapter 4—College of Commissioner Science

The College of Commissioner Science is one optional type of annual commissioner conference. The college is a format modeled after college courses and degrees. This format also uses the conference to encourage a continuing education experience for commissioners. The purpose is to provide ongoing practical training for all commissioners.

Some councils will not choose the college format because they do not find the college theme and degree requirements helpful. These councils will select another theme or format.

Those planning a conference with the college approach should also use Chapter 3 in this section of the manual, which helps with factors common to all types of commissioner conferences: important planning guidelines, promotional ideas, a responsibility schedule, sample program outlines, classroom techniques, and suggested session topics. Chapter 4 is a supplemental resource with information unique to the college.

The college borrows terminology from higher education. Session topics become “courses” with course numbers. Courses in the “curriculum” are divided into three program levels:

- bachelor’s program
- master’s program
- doctor’s program

Awards are called degrees:

- bachelor of commissioner science
- master of commissioner science
- doctor of commissioner science (Ph.D.)

A diploma is awarded to each participant who completes the appropriate degree requirements. Those who have received both the bachelor and master degrees at previous conferences may receive a certificate of achievement for “postgraduate” studies after completing additional courses.

The conference chair is called a “dean” and the conference fee is “tuition.” Develop other college analogies to fit your situation and imagination.

## Ingredients for Success

A successful conference includes inspiration, meaningful training, good fellowship, and information on the latest Scouting developments. Achieving this success requires the right faculty, adequate preparation, good program, an attractive facility, and lots of promotion.

### Faculty

An adequate number of people must be selected early and trained in their duties.

### Preparation

Responsibility schedules and assignments are followed without shortcuts. Plans for next year’s conference are begun shortly after this year’s conference.

### Program

A dynamic program with carefully prepared courses is the heartbeat of the college. Courses must meet the practical needs of commissioners.

### Facility

The facility should have special interest and provide a proper training environment.

### Promotion

Commissioners will benefit from all your talent and hard work only if they attend. Be sure both current and newly recruited commissioners receive a catalog of courses and registration forms.

# College Faculty

The college is usually administered by an assistant council commissioner, selected by the council commissioner, to serve as the “college dean.” The dean is responsible for the annual college program during the Scouting year and all of the business and affairs of the college. In this role, the dean is the college administrator or chair of the “dean’s cabinet,” which is responsible for the overall administration, direction, and perpetuation of the college. The college dean selects commissioners as members of this cabinet with the approval of the council commissioner.

The staff for the college dean may consist of:

- two assistant college deans
- registrar
- assistant registrar
- dean of bachelor’s program
- dean of master’s program
- dean of doctor’s program

The two “assistant college deans” assist in the administration of the college and perform duties assigned by the college dean (for example, one assistant dean to coordinate support services and one to coordinate instructors and curriculum).

The “registrar” is responsible for the registration of all attendees at the College of Commissioner Science. The registrar, with the assistant registrar and a registration team, is responsible for safeguarding the records of course completion by the attendees, certifying courses completed by attendees to ensure proper awarding of diplomas, preparing and awarding diplomas to attendees, and performing other duties of an administrative nature assigned by the college dean.

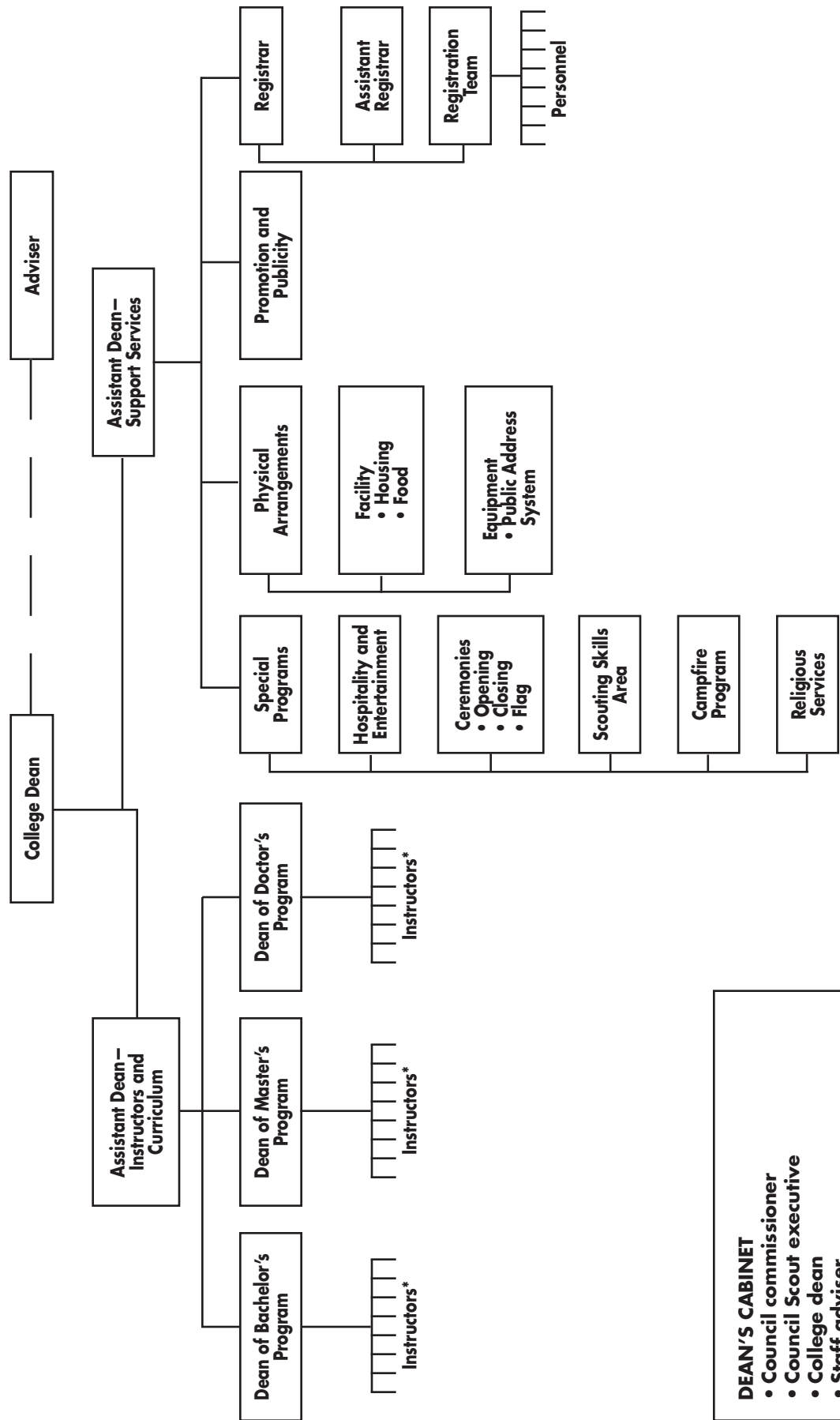
The deans of the bachelor’s program, master’s program, and doctor’s program are appointed by the college dean with approval of the council commissioner. They are responsible for the selection of instructors (commissioners and Scouters, as well as professional staff members, as appropriate) to teach courses in the curricula for the program areas. The deans also assist the dean’s cabinet in the selection of courses for the curriculum and are responsible for the administration of their program area.

In addition, there are chairs for the following committees that are responsible for administrative tasks and support services required to fulfill the requirements deemed necessary by the dean’s cabinet in order to achieve a successful annual college program:

- physical arrangements (including housing, food, and equipment)
- special programs (including hospitality; entertainment; opening, closing, and flag ceremonies; Scouting skills area; religious services; and campfire programs)
- promotion and publicity

The Scout executive appoints a staff adviser who consults with the college dean.

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE – FACULTY ORGANIZATION CHART



DEAN'S CABINET

- Council commissioner
- Council Scout executive
- College dean
- Staff adviser
- Assistant college deans
- Dean for each degree (program area)
- Others as selected by college dean

\*The number of instructors recruited is based on the number of courses offered. (Some instructors can teach two or more courses.)

# Suggested Degree Requirements

## Bachelor of Commissioner Science Degree (BCS)

### Prerequisites

- Maintain registration in any capacity as a commissioner during the entire training program listed below.
- Completion of commissioner orientation (*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* and *Commissioner Fast Start*).
- Completion of Commissioner Basic Training.

### Course Requirements

Completion of seven courses of instruction, at least five of the courses at the bachelor's program level.

### Performance

- Approval of council or assigned assistant council commissioner.
- Approval of Scout executive or adviser to commissioner service.

## Master of Commissioner Science Degree (MCS)

### Prerequisites

- Completion of bachelor's degree or have been awarded the Commissioner's Key.
- Earned Arrowhead Honor.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

### Course Requirements

Completion of seven additional courses of instruction (total of 14), at least seven of the courses at the master's program level.

### Performance

- Approval of council commissioner or assistant council commissioner.
- Approval of Scout executive or staff adviser for commissioner service.

## Doctor of Commissioner Science Degree (DCS)

### Prerequisites

- Completion of master's degree.
- Have been awarded the Commissioner's Key.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

### Course Requirements

Completion of 10 additional courses of instruction not used to qualify for other college awards (total of 24), at least five of the courses at the doctor's program level.

### Thesis or Project

- Completion of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council.
- The topic and final paper or project must be approved by the dean of the doctor's program and the staff adviser.

### Performance

- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty (instructor or support staff) for at least one year.
- Recruit at least three new commissioners.
- Approval of council commissioner or assistant council commissioner.
- Approval of Scout executive or staff adviser for commissioner service.

## Certificate of Achievement for Postgraduate Studies

This certificate may be earned as often as a participant desires (whether or not he or she has completed the doctor's degree).

### Prerequisites

- Completion of the master's degree.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

## Course Requirements

Completion of any seven additional courses of instruction at the master's or doctor's program levels not used to qualify for other college awards.

## Performance

- Approval of council commissioner or assistant council commissioner.
- Approval of Scout executive or adviser for commissioner service.

Note: The above degree requirements are similar to those used by most College of Commissioner Science programs. The dean's cabinet may tailor the requirements to meet the commissioner training program of the council. Some councils may want to add a degree just for roundtable commissioners or an associate degree for newly recruited commissioners who have only attended the college and not completed Commissioner Basic Training.

Remember that college course and degree requirements are not standardized nationally. The College of Commissioner Science is strictly a local council event.

## Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award

### Purpose

To recognize completion of a standardized program leading to the completion of a thesis or project and the award of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science from a College of Commissioner Science.

### Justification

The commissioner is the mainstay for Scouting program administration. It is commissioner service that ensures that units are healthy, productive, and assist in the growth of the program.

The College of Commissioner Science program is designed to have a commissioner learn through a series of training classes, followed by work experiences, to ensure a quality program throughout Scouting. This training will take a number of years to complete. The commissioner finalizes his or her training with an approved thesis or project for the benefit of the Scouting program. This assists both new commissioners as they learn, and seasoned commissioners as they train others.

A well-trained commissioner staff better serves the Scouting program.

The College of Commissioner Science program is a guideline for councils to adapt as they determine what will fit their needs.

Having a knot award for the program requires that the commissioner complete, at a minimum, a training program standardized for all BSA programs.

## Objectives

To further involve commissioners in providing support to units in their delivery of a quality program experience for all youth in Scouting.

To provide councils an opportunity to recognize commissioners for their tenured service, their involvement in learning more about the delivery of quality Scouting, and their involvement in the support of others.

## Requirements

- Tenure.
- Serve as a commissioner for a minimum of five years. It can be in one or more commissioner roles or positions of service.
- Training.

## Prerequisites

- Completion of master's degree.
- Have been awarded the Commissioner's Key.
- Current registration as a commissioner.

Note: To receive this award knot, you must qualify for your doctor of commissioner science degree as well.

## Course Requirements

- Complete a minimum of ten (10) additional courses of instruction not used to qualify for other college awards (total of 24), at least five (5) of the courses at the doctor's program level as listed in the *Continuing Education for Commissioners* section of this manual.

## Thesis or Project

- Completion of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council.
- The topic and final paper or project must be approved by the council commissioner, or assigned assistant council commissioner, or the dean of the doctorate program, and the staff adviser for commissioner service.

## Performance

- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty (instructor or support staff) or work with training support for commissioners for at least one year.
- Recruit at least three new commissioners at any level.
- Approval of council or assigned assistant council commissioner.



- Approval of Scout executive or advisor to commissioner service.
- Grandfather or sunset clause:

Since the key requirement of this award is tied to an approval of a thesis (councils with a commissioner's college) or project (councils without a commissioner's college) that is only earned once, this award is retroactive for individuals who have completed other requirements prior to the approval of this award. This clause applies for the previous 10 years. Any commissioner who meets these requirements would need to list any courses they have taken previously and then complete their thesis or project to apply for the award.

Anyone who earned their doctorate based on the current qualifications will not have to repeat what they have already completed, even if it was prior to 10 years ago. They will have to show their current council commissioner or staff adviser what they have done and then approved. The knots should be available through the

Scout shop, but there should be some approval process for the person to purchase the knot.

#### Award Knot Availability:

The knot can be ordered by the council for presentation from the Supply Group and is number 18093. The knot for the Distinguished Commissioner Service Award is very similar to this knot. If a commissioner has earned both of them, you CAN wear both on your uniform.

#### Award Qualifying Certification:

The council certifies that the individual has met all of the requirements to earn the Doctorate of Commissioner Science Award and should make the presentation at a public gathering to gain recognition for the individual being honored.

# Suggested Curriculum

The following courses are similar to those used in council commissioner conference programs. The dean's cabinet may adjust the course offerings to meet the current needs of commissioners in the particular local council.

When a curriculum has been agreed upon, the council should prepare a course catalog to be distributed with college admission material to assist individuals with registration. The following course descriptions can be helpful in preparing the course catalog.

## Bachelor's Program Courses

BCS 101	<b>Introduction to Commissioner Science</b> An overview of commissioner service and the single most important resource— <i>The Commissioner Fieldbook</i> .
BCS 102	<b>Unit Charter Renewal</b> Review a proven plan for reregistering Scouting units on time with minimal loss in membership and leaders. Learn the role of the commissioner to facilitate and achieve on-time charter renewal.
BCS 103	<b>The Commissioner and the District</b> Interaction of the commissioner with the district executive and district committee. Understanding district and council operation.
BCS 104	<b>Unit Visitation 2.0</b> Provides participants with insight on effective unit visits, what to look for, and how to be a help—not a hindrance.
BCS 105	<b>Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs</b> Helps commissioners understand how to respond to unit needs. Participants become familiar with unit commissioner worksheets and <i>Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews</i> .
BCS 106	<b>A Commissioner's Priorities</b> Suggests the priorities for a unit commissioner's Scouting time and energy, reviews steps in handling unit problems, and covers the important Quality Unit Award.

BCS 107	<b>Youth Protection Training</b> A seminar designed to provide a commissioner with an overview of what constitutes child abuse, and the responsibility of the local council and commissioner in preventing child abuse and reporting suspected cases. The complete Youth Protection training is presented.
BCS 108	<b>Effective Roundtables I</b> Designed for roundtable commissioners and roundtable staff members. Covers basic roundtable ingredients, the planning cycle, and resource materials.
BCS 109	<b>Effective Roundtables II</b> Designed for roundtable commissioners and roundtable staff members as a continuation of BCS 108. Covers promotion and publicity, roundtable location, and a variety of morale builders.
BCS 110	<b>Commissioner Style</b> Presents important qualities of commissioner diplomacy, a concept of "exceptional service," thoughts about "roots and wings," service recovery, and explains how to remove a volunteer.
BCS 111	<b>Health and Safety Training</b> This session is the actual Health and Safety Training Course Syllabus of the Boy Scouts of America.
BCS 112	<b>What Would You Do?</b> A group participation and discussion session on 10 fascinating situations that commissioners might encounter.
BCS 113	<b>Service to New Units</b> Reviews specific commissioner actions to provide adequate care for new units.
BCS 114	<b>Good Commissioner-Professional Relationships</b> This special partnership is the core of Scouting success at the council and district levels. Learn the qualities and tips that make this relationship work well.

<b>BCS 115</b>	<b>Commissioners and Diversity</b> The BSA's leadership and membership reflects the demographic character of our nation. Commissioners can use diversity to make Scouting stronger and more effective.
<b>BCS 116</b>	<b>Using the Unit Self-Assessment Tools</b> How to conduct an action planning meeting with a unit using the unit self-assessment tools and the guidelines for the action planning process.
<b>BCS 117</b>	<b>Selecting Quality Leaders</b> This session outlines the seven-step process that the commissioner uses to help the unit select the best possible leadership.
<b>BCS 121</b>	<b>Introduction To Venturing Commissioner Science</b> Get to know the history, methods, goals, and areas of emphasis within Venturing, along with crew structure.
<b>BCS 124</b>	<b>Venturing Crew Visitation</b> Designed to outline the basic responsibilities of the unit commissioner—what to do before, during, and after the visit.
<b>BCS 127</b>	<b>Personal Safety Awareness For Venturing</b> Reviews Youth Protection within the BSA, and outlines how to handle various abuse situations and how to look for signs of abuse.
<b>BCS 128</b>	<b>Venturing Monthly Program Forum</b> Examine the basic elements of the Venturing program forum, who attends, and what constitutes a successful forum.

## Master's Program Courses

<b>MCS 301</b>	<b>No-Lapse/No-Drop Commitment</b> The group will explore why units lapse or drop and how to prevent it, how to develop a no-lapse/no-drop plan for a district, and why this is so important.
<b>MCS 302</b>	<b>Unit Finance</b> An overview of the unit budget plan, who pays for Scouting at all levels, a variety of successful unit money-earning projects, and how to help units with special financial needs.

<b>MCS 303</b>	<b>Commissioner Lifesaving I</b> This session sets the stage for saving a unit and reviews the basic unit life-saving steps.
<b>MCS 304</b>	<b>Commissioner Lifesaving II</b> This is an in-depth continuation of MCS 303, dealing with the seven unit "hurry cases."
<b>MCS 306</b>	<b>Counseling Skills</b> This session presents counseling as an effective method for commissioners to help units succeed. It covers many elements of good counseling.
<b>MCS 307</b>	<b>Webelos-to-Scout Transition</b> Covers important ways commissioners can help boys make the transition from a Cub Scout pack to a Boy Scout troop.
<b>MCS 308</b>	<b>Venturing and the Commissioner</b> This session stresses the importance of a commissioner's commitment to Venturing and suggests basic elements of a plan for a commissioner to help every crew succeed.
<b>MCS 309</b>	<b>Good Commissioners Need Both Head and Heart</b> Includes great reflections for experienced commissioners. Take home thought-provoking tips and anecdotes.
<b>MCS 401</b>	<b>Just for ADCs</b> This session emphasizes the importance of the assistant district commissioner, his or her responsibilities, the effective ADC's people skills, and the evaluation of his or her work.
<b>MCS 402</b>	<b>Recruiting New Commissioners</b> This bread-and-butter session for all administrative commissioners covers the steps of recruiting commissioners, group recruiting techniques, and sources of prospects.

<b>MCS 403</b>	<b>Orienting and Training Commissioners</b> A session for all administrative commissioners—covers all aspects of commissioner training, including new commissioner orientation, basic training, Arrowhead Honor, the Commissioner’s Key, and continuing education. A variety of classroom techniques are also reviewed.
<b>MCS 404</b>	<b>Advanced Roundtable Leadership</b> An advanced seminar for roundtable commissioners (not staff) and other administrative commissioners. Includes roundtable staff recruitment, roundtable evaluation, and roundtable finance. Also reviews several important points for roundtable success, including how to support your staff.
<b>MCS 405</b>	<b>Effective Unit Service in Low-Income Urban Communities</b> This session emphasizes the importance of Scouting for low-income urban communities and suggests practical methods for recruiting local unit adults, helping units with special financial needs, and providing effective commissioner help.
<b>MCS 406</b>	<b>Effective Unit Service in Remote Rural Areas</b> This session helps commissioners tailor their service to sparsely populated rural areas, with practical methods for recruiting rural adults and working with rural units.
<b>MCS 407</b>	<b>How to Remove a Volunteer</b> An open discussion of a topic only recently put in print. The session provides a variety of practical guidelines on this sensitive topic.
<b>MCS 408</b>	<b>The Commissioner Leader’s Top 10 List</b> Today everyone has their top 10 list. This group will explore a top 10 list to guarantee good commissioner service.
<b>MCS 409</b>	<b>District Commissioner Basics</b> A great overview of this important position, including all major responsibilities.

## Doctor’s Program Courses

<b>DCS 601</b>	<b>Selecting a Thesis/Research Project Topic</b> This session introduces the participants to the thesis project, discusses what constitutes a good thesis or research topic, and helps them select their general thesis topic.
<b>DCS 602</b>	<b>Limiting the Scope of the Topic</b> Participants receive help in reducing the thesis topic to a workable size and get ideas for their thesis or project research.
<b>DCS 603</b>	<b>Developing the Thesis Outline and Writing the Report</b> This session covers the thesis outline and a variety of suggestions for writing and revising the report.
<b>DCS 604</b>	<b>Thesis Workshop</b> This course is for those who feel they need more help getting started on or completing their thesis.
<b>DCS 608</b>	<b>Advanced Commissioner Lifesaving</b> Administrative commissioners are taught to give leadership to a commissioner lifesaving concept. It also guides selected districts in setting up the lifesaving team approach.
<b>DCS 610</b>	<b>Preventing Commissioner Burnout</b> Covers types of burnout and how to prevent or correct it to maximize effective commissioner tenure. Includes valuable tips on time management and refers to several aspects of “commissioner wellness.”
<b>DCS 611</b>	<b>Consider Your Spouse and Family</b> Suggests ways to enhance family relations and resolve family conflicts regarding Scouting. Discusses how commissioners’ spouses can receive recognition from Scouting.

- DCS 620      Assessing Council and District Health**  
Learn about the resources necessary to assess a council's or district's health related to providing quality unit service. Learn how to use the tools available to commissioners in evaluating success.
- DCS 701      Beyond BCS 114: The Commissioner and Professional—  
A Working Relationship**  
Learn more about the relationship between the commissioner and the professional. How can the two work closely together to reach a common goal of providing quality service to units.
- DCS 715      Quality District**  
Learn about the elements of becoming a Quality District and what it takes to ensure success in every area.

# Forms and Certificates

Please see pages 126–131 of the *Continuing Education for Commissioners* section of the manual to sample award certificates for:

*Bachelor of Commissioner Science*

*Master of Commissioner Science*

*Doctor of Commissioner Science*

*Postgraduate Studies in Commissioner Science*

*Service Warrant*

*Commissioner's Record Card*



The Boy Scouts of America

hereby awards the degree of

# BACHELOR OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

to

\_\_\_\_\_

for having satisfactorily completed the program of studies  
prescribed by this College of Commissioner Science

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Council

\_\_\_\_\_

College Dean

\_\_\_\_\_

Council Commissioner



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®







The Boy Scouts of America

hereby awards the degree of

# MASTER OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

to

\_\_\_\_\_

for having satisfactorily completed the program of studies  
prescribed by this College of Commissioner Science

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Council

\_\_\_\_\_

College Dean

\_\_\_\_\_

Council Commissioner



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





\_\_\_\_\_ Council

Boy Scouts of America

## COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council  
Has Qualified

As a

DOCTOR OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

*In Witness Whereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This*

*in the Year*

*Day of*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scout Executive

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of College

PLACE  
LOCAL  
SEAL  
HERE



\_\_\_\_\_ Council  
Boy Scouts of America

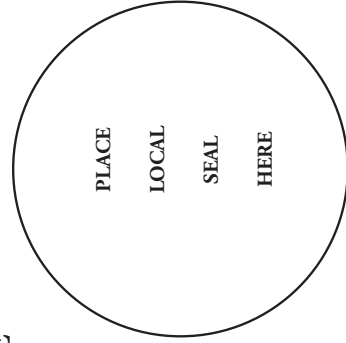
**COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE**  
on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council  
Has Qualified

For the Certificate of Achievement for  
**POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN COMMISSIONER SCIENCE**

*In Witness Whereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This      Day of  
in the Year*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scout Executive



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of College

\_\_\_\_\_ **Council**  
**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**



Know ye that, having special \_\_\_\_\_ trust and confidence in  
the abilities of \_\_\_\_\_

this Warrant is given for service as \_\_\_\_\_

of the \_\_\_\_\_ College of Commissioner Science,

this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.



\_\_\_\_\_  
College Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scout Executive

\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Commissioner

The College of Commissioner Science

**Commissioner's Record Card**

Commissioner's name \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

**Courses**

Note year in which courses were taken.

BCS 101 20 ____	BCS121 20 ____	MCS 406 20 ____
BCS 102 20 ____	BCS124 20 ____	MCS 407 20 ____
BCS 103 20 ____	BCS127 20 ____	MCS 408 20 ____
BCS 104 20 ____	BCS128 20 ____	MCS 409 20 ____
BCS 105 20 ____	MCS 301 20 ____	DCS 601 20 ____
BCS 106 20 ____	MCS 302 20 ____	DCS 602 20 ____
BCS 107 20 ____	MCS 303 20 ____	DCS 603 20 ____
BCS 108 20 ____	MCS 304 20 ____	DCS 604 20 ____
BCS 109 20 ____	MCS 306 20 ____	DCS 608 20 ____
BCS 110 20 ____	MCS 307 20 ____	DCS 610 20 ____
BCS 111 20 ____	MCS 308 20 ____	DCS 611 20 ____
BCS 112 20 ____	MCS 309 20 ____	DCS 612 20 ____
BCS113 20 ____	MCS 401 20 ____	DCS 620 20 ____
BCS114 20 ____	MCS 402 20 ____	DCS 701 20 ____
BCS115 20 ____	MCS 403 20 ____	DCS 715 20 ____
BCS116 20 ____	MCS 404 20 ____	
BCS117 20 ____	MCS 405 20 ____	

# Chapter 5—Training Outlines

The training session outlined on the following pages can be used in a variety of ways.

District commissioners and district executives use parts of the outlines for training topics at monthly district staff meetings. Outlines can easily be copied for use by commissioners assigned to present a specific topic.

Parts of the outlines can be used for training topics at council commissioner meetings.

Each outline can be copied and given to session leaders for the council commissioner conference.

The outlines have been coded as degree requirements for councils that run a College of Commissioner Science.

Many of the outlines also are useful in the personal coaching of any district Scouter, regardless of the Scouter's title.

# Introduction to Commissioner Science (BCS 101)

Give each participant an up-to-date *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## Introduction

Every district needs a dynamic commissioner staff. Commissioners go deep into our Scouting tradition.

As a commissioner, your role is different from that of other Scouters. The insignia you wear displays a wreath around the Scouting fleur-de-lis, 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.

There are many resources to help you succeed. A good commissioner doesn't know everything about commissioner service, but a good commissioner does know how to use Scouting resources to get the answers.

## *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service—* **Front to Back**

The purpose of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* is to provide a resource of practical, usable information, simply stated and readily adaptable. The material herein reflects the experience of hundreds of commissioners from all parts of the country.

Refer to the contents page to review the parts of the book.

Have everyone walk through the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* as a reference for the remainder of the session.

## Commissioner Orientation Section

Gives you an overview of Scouting and commissioner service. Use this section with your orientation coach.

Note the orientation projects on page 8 of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Be sure you've seen the orientation video, *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*, AV-04V001R.

Reference the latest Unit Commissioner Fast Start to make sure they have all seen it. It is available online by going to [olc.scouting.org](http://olc.scouting.org).

## The Commissioner Concept

The only reason for having commissioners is to help units succeed.

The commissioner's specific mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency so that they can deliver a good program to a growing membership.

Be results oriented rather than procedures oriented.

Roles the commissioner plays:

- Friend of the unit
- Representative of the Boy Scouts of America
- Unit "doctor"
- Teacher
- Counselor
- Coach
- Mentor

## The District Commissioner Staff

The district commissioner; assistant district commissioners; unit commissioners—note the outline of duties; roundtable commissioners; your district executive.

## Providing Unit Service

The central idea behind successful commissioners is "we care." These are powerful words. They are a powerful force in human relations. A caring attitude is reflected in everything a good commissioner says and does.

Good commissioners pay attention to what unit volunteers are saying, and they are alert to the feelings behind the words.

Caring is a habit. The more that commissioners view their job with a caring attitude, the more successful that unit will be.

Unit contacts:

- Frequency
- Unit meeting visits
- Unit committee visits
- Other contacts

The annual commissioner service plan.

Other ways to help a unit.

The Journey to Excellence Performance Award.

A special note: Unit commissioners should not fall into the trap of doing everything in Scouting except their appointed job—unit service (see page 24 of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* on priorities).



## Commissioner Style

This chapter lists important qualities of a successful commissioner.

“Exceptional district service equals unit leader perception of help received minus help the unit leader expected.”

What are “Roots and Wings?”

Service recovery: how to right a wrong.

Course BCS 110 covers commissioner style in more detail.

## Be a Lifesaving Commissioner

Commissioner lifesaving is providing prompt, intensive, and often persistent care when major problems occur in a unit.

Courses MCS 303 and MCS 304 cover commissioner lifesaving in detail.

## Counseling

Counseling is the ability to listen and react in a way that will help others solve their own problems.

This section of the fieldbook is your counselor’s guide. MCS 306 provides further instruction in commissioner counseling skills.

## Unit Charter Renewal

The commissioner facilitates the on-time annual charter renewal of all assigned units.

Course BCS 102 covers unit charter renewal in detail.

## Unit Commissioner Training

Orientation video or Fast Start	within 48 hours
Personal coaching/orientation	within two weeks
Basic training	within two months
Arrowhead Honor	within one year
Commissioner’s Key	after three years
Continuing education	every month/year

## Commissioner Resources

A list of basic resources.

## Unit Commissioner Worksheets

## Unit Commissioner Unit Self-Assessment Tools (conducted semi-annually with the district executive)

## Summary

The *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* is your guide, but it is only a tool. It is up to you to build something with it.

# Unit Charter Renewal (BCS 102)

Be sure each participant has the “Charter Renewal” chapter of the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## Why Recharter?

The BSA is unique in that it does not own or operate Scouting units. It grants charters to community organizations that adopt the program and operate units.

It’s like a franchise, and commissioners help renew the annual franchise agreement.

The ownership belongs to other community organizations or groups such as:

- Religious organization
- PTAs/School parent groups
- Service clubs
- Businesses and labor unions

## When Do Units Recharter?

Before the charter date, which is the date of expiration.

Charter length may be a minimum of six months and a maximum of 18 months. Most are for one year.

Each council may have a preferred pattern of recharter dates.

## The Charter Renewal Process

Commissioners are responsible for unit charter renewal, so it is essential that they know the steps in the process.

Schedule with number of days before charter expiration:

- –90 days District executive visits head of chartered organization.
- –60 days Commissioner and unit committee conduct membership inventory.
- –45–60 days Units choosing to renew their charters online select a person as their renewal processor.
- –45 days Commissioner and unit committee chair conduct charter renewal meeting.
- –15 days Renewal application submitted to local council service center.
- +30 days Commissioner presents charter to the chartered organization.

**Ninety days before charter renewal date, the district executive renews the relationship with the executive officer of the chartered organization.** Obviously, if problems are anticipated in the rechartering of the unit and/or if there is significant corrective action to be taken,

the visit should be held earlier. Allow as much lead time as necessary so that positive action may take place before the renewal date.

The commissioner should keep the district executive advised of any matter that could affect the smooth renewal of the charter. Don’t wait until charter renewal time to address major problems.

The district executive:

- Confers about the success or needs of the unit and notes any weaknesses.
- 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.
- Guides the head of the organization into naming the key person responsible for handling the rechartering process.

The local council provides a computer printout of adults and youth members presently registered. This form serves as the unit charter application and is enclosed in the prepared unit charter renewal envelope.

In districts where all units have the same renewal date, the district executive must set up an earlier schedule of visits, and a key commissioner might help with selective visits.

**Sixty days before unit renewal date, the commissioner and unit committee conduct a membership inventory of currently registered youth and adults** using the computer printout. Contacts or visits should be made to inactive youth and adults. Every effort should be made to recruit additional youth and adults so that the unit can reregister with no loss in membership.

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.

## How to Do a Membership Inventory

- Appoint a unit adult to conduct the inventory.
- You will receive computer printouts of all youth and adults registered during the past year.
- Set a membership inventory date at a unit meeting. Before the inventory date, meet with unit leaders to discuss ways to make the best use of the inventory.
- 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 only on the unit copy of the computer printout. A review of the unit record book will supply information on recent attendance.

- All absent or inactive members are assigned to various persons to contact them to determine if they are to be reregistered. Unit leaders and committee members agree on a plan to recruit new adults and youth.
- The commissioner gives special attention to the registration of an adequate number of quality adults. Discuss this with both a key unit person and a commissioner leader or district executive. Do not let anyone “sit on” the forms. If you feel that the process is not progressing, discover who has the forms and what is delaying them.

**Sixty to 45 days before renewal date, units choosing to renew their charters online will select a person as their renewal processor.** He or she will visit the local council’s website, 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 entitled 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 the date submitted. Two other reports that are available are the New Members Added Report and the Members Not Renewed Report. Both 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 chair conduct the charter renewal meeting.** Attendance at this meeting should include 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. This also is a good time to be sure that a pack or troop is a 100-percent *Boys’ Life* unit. If necessary, the commissioner can help complete the renewal form.

A review is conducted to determine the status of the unit qualifying for the Journey to Excellence Performance Award for the past year and to check on the progress of their commitments for this year. The Journey to Excellence Performance Award worksheet with their commitment should have been completed and submitted at the end of the calendar year, but no later than January of the current year. It will show the commissioner which requirements the unit needs help with.

Note the agenda in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Additional changes may be made to the application. The renewal application with appropriate fees are 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. This allows adequate time for processing and any unforeseen delays. If the process is badly delayed, carry the forms by hand through the rechartering process and take them to your district executive.

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 new registration cards for the unit and the new charter for the commissioner to present.

**Thirty days after charter renewal, a formal presentation of the new charter and membership certificates is made at an appropriate gathering of the chartered organization.**

Note the sample charter presentation ceremony in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Make it the celebration phase of an ongoing relationship between the organization and the BSA. Be sure everyone present is recognized, from the head of the organization to the newest youth member.

**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. Help units use the option that is best for them.

## Failure to Recharter

If the unit fails to recharter on time, immediately discover who has the charter renewal forms and what is holding them up. Consult with your district executive. Carry the forms by hand through the rechartering process and take them to your district executive.

If the unit needs a major reorganization, complete the reorganization before the charter expiration.

## Charter Renewal Application

Review a typical computer printout used for charter renewal. (Show how easy the paperwork is if they just follow the directions and take it one step at a time.)

## Two Principles Ensure Success

**Keep the unit charter renewal process simple.** Do not attach anything to the recharter process that does not specifically have to do with the chartered organization’s renewal of its charter, or the reregistration of leaders and youth. The addition of anything else to the renewal process or paperwork has the potential for delaying prompt renewal, particularly for units that might be prone for any other reason not to renew their charter on time. Keep paperwork simple. Do not add a bunch of items to unit renewal packets. Simple renewal steps are summarized above. Please do not add anything.

**Anticipate anything that could delay on-time renewal of the unit's charter.** Good commissioners get ahead of the curve. Is the unit leader going to be out of town for a month? Are there unit problems that might delay the renewal? Has there been a loss of adults? If the unit needs a major reorganization, plan and complete the reorganization well before the charter expiration. Each council may have a preferred pattern of renewal dates. Some might find it best for all units of a district to renew charters in the same month. This pattern is often combined with a renewal meeting with help available for all units to facilitate paper-work. In rural districts, a different approach might be needed. What's best for each of your districts?

# The Commissioner and the District (BCS 103)

## Volunteers and Professionals Working Together

Scouting's special relationship between volunteers and professionals is the core of its success. When the relationship thrives, the movement thrives. (Refer to "Your District Executive" in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* and Chapter 8 in *A Guide for Commissioners on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships*.)

What makes the relationship work? (Discuss and list on a flip chart.)

Who makes the important decisions?

The flavor of the relationship.

How can the unit commissioner and the professional best work together?

Common problem areas and how to avoid them.

## District Organization

Discuss the organizational chart and each group of people in the district.

How important is the role of the commissioner?

Review how the commissioner uses the resources of the district committee and its operating committees.

## Council Organization

Briefly discuss the organizational chart (council and district).

How we support one another.

District or council identity.

## Let's Talk About a Successful District

List qualities of a successful district.

Requirements for the Journey to Excellence Performance Award.

How does the unit commissioner contribute?

# Unit Visitation (BCS 104)

Be sure each participant has the “Providing Unit Service” chapter of the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

The ultimate responsibility of unit commissioners is to see that every unit assigned to them succeeds. Commissioners do a variety of things to help units succeed, but **the most basic task is the unit visit**. Without unit visits, we don’t know how to help a unit improve its program and operation. Without visits, we only find out about major problems after the unit fails or weakens and the kids have “voted with their feet” and left the unit.

**Commissioners visit each unit at least monthly.** Some units will need more frequent visits—new units or troubled units for example.

**Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0 use:** Become familiar with the UVTS 2.0 and use it to record significant outcomes of your unit visits, as well as a reference tool to track unit progress.

## Types of Visits

Unit meetings—where Scouting really happens. These meetings are your best way to observe what’s happening.

Unit committee meetings—often your best opportunity to interact with unit adults.

Individual get-together with unit leader.

Visit with other unit adults—district roundtables or program forums.

Council or district or unit activities.

Effective phone contacts.

E-mail, fax, and websites are efficient tools, but don’t let technology replace person-to-person kindness. Face-to-face helpfulness is still the most valuable unit service method.

## Visitation Strategy—Before You Go

You go as a friend of the unit—not as the district “superspy.” Constantly ask yourself how you can help the unit.

- Know what is best for the success of your units.
- Your help should strengthen the roles of unit adults, not glorify the commissioner. “It’s better to teach a person to fish than to feed him a fish.”
- The commissioner operates quietly, generally in the background.
- Be helpful, not critical.

It’s usually better to call first.

- It’s common courtesy.

- Calling beforehand helps assure you’ll be welcome.
- It shows you’re not there to snoop.

Know your units, do your homework, and know what to expect.

## During the Visit

Watch and listen.

Be careful not to disrupt the meeting.

Stay long enough to get an accurate impression.

Avoid making lengthy notes during the visit.

Meet and chat with other adults who are “on the sidelines.”

Get to know some of the boys.

Don’t distract the leader—talk with him or her during free time, perhaps not until after the meeting.

Always give the leader a chance to mention problems or ask questions.

Always take some freebies—even if only applications or an activity flyer.

## After the Visit

After, not during, the meeting, make a record of your visit using the online Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0, or review and fill out a commissioner worksheet (in the back of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*).

Determine the priority needs of the unit. At any point in time, different units will have different priority needs, and needs change over time.

Determine how you (or others in the district) can be most helpful. Perhaps it’s only to provide a personal “well done” or “congratulations.”

Discuss special needs with your ADC, district commissioner, or district executive. If there is a crisis, communicate immediately.

## Brainstorm Ways to Help a Unit

### Prioritize Your Units

Spend your time with the weakest units.

Strong units need a helpful contact. Weak units need significant attention.

## **Keep a Positive Attitude**

## **How to Conduct a Uniform Inspection**

Do a uniform inspection if time permits. Refer to the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## **Counseling**

Refer to the section on counseling in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.



# Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs (BCS 105)

Give each participant a copy of *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

## A Commissioner's Primary Mission Is to Help Units

Succeed.

Develop a better program.

Operate more effectively.

## Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0

Have PowerPoint slides or hard copy handouts for all participants showing screens of how the Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0 works. Discuss the screens, pointing out significant observations during the visit and how to use the system to record their unit visits. Explain that this system is available to those who have access to the Internet and that there are other tools available using a paper method that will provide similar feedback.

## Unit Commissioner Worksheets

Have everyone review the worksheets in the back of *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

Review the nine to 10 categories to be observed for each type of unit.

Demonstrate how to use the unit profile.

Emphasize how to use "Some Ways to Help" suggestions.

## Commissioner Response to Unit Needs

Introduce *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*.

Under each program element or heading are several **standards** based on proven experience and policy.

Following the standards are a number of practical **commissioner action** responses to help the unit with a given standard or program need.

Note the abbreviations (C, S, and V) where an item is not common to all types of units.

## "Find a Solution" Contest

Divide the group into teams of two or three.

Read a statement from the following list. The first team to find the correct page in *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* with the information needed to help with the statement read earns a point. Keep score.

After each point is scored, take a minute or two to review the possible commissioner actions listed under the correct topic.

Suggested contest statements:

- St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church has a new pastor who is unfamiliar with Scouting.
- Neither Troop 41 nor Crew 41 appear to have any program planned more than two weeks in advance.
- Last week you attended a pack meeting and only three parents were present.
- One of your assigned troops has not added a new boy member in 10 months.
- One of your troops has very few boys in Scout uniform.
- At their May pack meeting, Cubmaster Bob Newguy tells you he looks forward to seeing you in September.
- The chair of a unit committee calls and expresses concern about the adequacy of the unit's meeting place.

Award a small prize to the winning team.

## Class Project

Divide the group into larger teams of four to six people. You might simply combine teams from the preceding contest.

Assign the following case situation and ask each team to list every section of the *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* book that could help them respond to the unit situation: "A Cub Scout pack consisting of six members, one den leader (untrained), one Cubmaster (untrained), no committee members, and parents who say they're willing to help but never make a move to do so."

# **Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners Video, AV-04V002**

This video is used to help commissioners increase their skills in handling common, often unit life-threatening problems. One or two tape segments are often used as a training topic at each monthly council and district commissioner meeting.

There are 14 problem segments on the video. Select one in the last third of the video—least likely to have been used in the districts. Or, let the participants quickly select one of the problems that they would most like to explore.

Show the video segment to set up the problem.

Turn the video off and have the group discuss their ideas for a solution.

Return to the video to add video solutions to the group's ideas.

(Check with the session leaders of “No-Lapse/No-Drop Commitment” and “Commissioner Lifesaving II” to be sure each of you uses different problems from the video.)

# A Commissioner's Priorities (BCS 106)

Be sure each participant has the “Special Notes on Priorities” section of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## Know Your Units— Our No. 1 Priority

Know the unit adults.

Be a friend of the unit. Do unit people view you as a person who really cares?

Understand the environment in which the unit operates:

- Chartered organization
- History and experience with Scouting
- Income and education level
- Inner-city neighborhood
- Urban/suburban
- Remote rural area

Visit often enough to be up-to-date.

Beware the **hazard of placing emphasis on the district rather than on units and unit advocacy**.

## 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.

Evaluate your time—it is limited.

- Concentrate your commissioner energies on the unit needs you highlighted.
- Beware the **hazard of giving the most attention to the healthiest and most active units**. Good commissioners don't do that. Establish your priority unit(s). Priority units receive your most careful attention.

## Beware the Hazard of Diversion

Caution: Don't fall into the trap of doing everything else in the district except your appointed role—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 do cooperate with other Scouting personnel working on specific programs even though they are not responsible for them.

Don't feel guilty about occasionally saying “no” to other requests.

Serve in the commissioner position only. Some people, of course, may desire to remain affiliated with their home unit—perhaps in their own church. However, understand that being a commissioner is your primary Scouting responsibility. Use your time helping with specific unit needs and helping each unit become effective with its unit program and unit operation.

Your principal Scouting obligation must be with commissioner responsibilities.

There is no room in a person's schedule for other Scouting positions. A commissioner who accepts other roles in Scouting probably does not understand the scope of the assignment. Carrying other duties in Scouting will only dilute the effectiveness of the vital role of a commissioner.

## Typical Priority Unit Needs

The following are high priorities for commissioners because they are major threats to unit survival and/or indications that boys may not be receiving good Scouting:

- Unit not meeting
- Unit with no leader
- New unit leader lacks orientation or training
- Unit with no active committee
- Unit with no new youth members
- Unit with weak leadership
- Unit conflict with chartered organization
- Unit charter renewal time

(These priorities are covered in detail in courses MCS 303 and MCS 304, Commissioner Lifesaving I and II.)

## Steps in Handling a Problem

Identify the problem.

Decide if it is a problem.

Discuss the problem with the ADC.

Is assistance needed from the district committee?

Decide whether you will handle it alone or with the ADC.

Decide who is to handle the problem.

Plan your actions.

Plan your alternatives.

Put the plan into action.

Evaluate.

# The Journey to Excellence Performance Award

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

The Journey to Excellence Performance 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 Journey to Excellence Performance Award based on the year's achievements. The unit conducts an annual review of the criteria and makes a commitment by completing the commitment and achievement form, and has it signed by a council representative, usually a commissioner. This commitment form should be completed at the end of each year, or no later than February of each year.
- At the end of the year, between October 31 and December 31, the unit determines if they have accomplished their established commitments and completes the achievement portion of the form. The commissioner or district representative signs-off on the form. One copy is retained by the unit, one copy is kept by the district, and one copy is returned to the local council service center so units can be properly recognized.
- There are streamers, plaques, emblems, and pins to use for recognizing units and unit members. You will want to help present the recognition pieces.

As a commissioner, you:

- Become knowledgeable about the award criteria, forms, and procedures. See your current Unit Commissioner Program Notebook for the latest award criteria for packs, troops, teams, and crews. You can also go online to the commissioner website for copies of all forms and an implementation booklet to support the award program.
- Carefully brief unit personnel of the units you serve.
- Throughout the year, provide help and encouragement for units to meet award criteria.
- Guide the annual review of unit commitment and achievement for the calendar year, and help to ensure they complete their commitment for next year.
- Provide recognition for the unit's achievement. A ribbon is available at no charge for all units that qualify. All other recognitions can be ordered by the unit and purchased through the Scout shop.
- 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.

Review the current worksheet and criteria for a Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit. The criteria is the same for all types of units. For more information on the Journey to Excellence Performance Award, go to [www.scouting.org/commissioners](http://www.scouting.org/commissioners).

# Youth Protection Training (BCS 107)

## Introduction

The Boy Scouts of America has identified the problem of child abuse as one that is unacceptable in our society. We have adopted a strategy to guide our Youth Protection program.

**Educating Scouting volunteers, parents, and Scouts to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse.** This training program is a key element in the educational program of the BSA. In addition, information is provided to members and their families through BSA publications and video productions.

**Establishing leader-selection procedures to prevent offenders from entering the BSA leadership ranks.** The adult leader application form requests relevant information that should be checked by the chartered organization before accepting the applicant into unit leadership. The National Council Registration Service routinely screens applicants against a listing of individuals known to be ineligible for BSA membership.

**Establishing policies that create barriers to child abuse within the program.** BSA has adopted various policies to guide the interaction of adult and youth members.

**Encouraging Scouts to report improper behavior in order to identify offenders quickly.** Through stressing the “three Rs” of Youth Protection (recognize/resist/report), members are encouraged to report attempted or actual abuse.

**Swift removal and reporting of alleged offenders.** Anytime abuse is suspected in Scouting, the alleged offender will not be eligible to participate in the program until completely exonerated of the accusations. The Scout executive is responsible for reporting all suspected abuse to the proper authorities irrespective of whether the person making the allegations to him reports to the authorities.

## Youth Protection Guidelines Training for Volunteer Leaders and Parents

Present this video-directed course in its entirety. Be sure to use the latest version of training developed by the Boy Scouts of America. This is also available primarily online through the online learning center for all adults to complete.

## Commissioner Duties

Conduct an annual Youth Protection visit each fall for unit adults in every unit (usually as part of your November visit at a unit committee meeting). Review the latest training dates, booklets, and videos.

Help units and their chartered organizations use proper leader-selection procedures.

Coach unit people if child abuse occurs.

Promote unit use of the videos designed to protect youth from sexual abuse: *It Happened to Me* for Cub Scout–age youth, *A Time to Tell* for Boy Scout–age youth, and *Personal Safety Awareness* for high school–age youth.

Explain to unit adults how the boy and parent use the inserts in the front of the youth handbooks.

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.

# Effective Roundtables I (BCS 108)

The major resources for this course are the latest editions of the *Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, and *Venturing Roundtable Guide*. *Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner*, *Staff Basic Training Manual*, and *Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training* may also be helpful resources (although these conference sessions should not be considered a substitute for basic training). All of these references have pages that can be copied for handouts.

## Introduction

Essential elements for success:

- The will to do.
- The skill to do.

Who should attend roundtables.

When and where to hold roundtables.

Why people attend.

## Roundtable Structure

Combined sessions

Separate sessions

## Basic Ingredients of a Roundtable Program

Preopening

- Exhibits
- Display
- Literature

Opening

Information and recognition

Cub Scout program theme/Boy Scout program feature

Closing

After the meeting

## The Planning Cycle

Annual program planning

- Annual planning conference
- Monthly program themes
- Use of theme managers

Quarterly planning meeting

Monthly staff meetings

- Program themes
- Personal resources
- District and council events
- Special dates

## Roundtable Planning Checklists

## Resource Materials

Divide the class into separate Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity, and Venturing groups for the remainder of the class time.

- Planning guides
- *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*
- *Scouting* magazine
- *Boys' Life* magazine
- Scouting literature
- Other resources

## Closing (Preview BCS 109)

# Effective Roundtables II (BCS 109)

## Promotion and Publicity

Regular date, time, and meeting place.

- “Think second Thursday” (or whatever your regular date is).
- Have a permanent meeting place.
- A dependable schedule is important for good attendance.

Reminders.

Newsletters/e-mails/council website.

Door prizes.

Forming a roundtable pack or troop.

Unit involvement draws attendance. Get lots of people involved in the production!

Recognition.

Promotional plans.

Gimmicks, goodies, and product samples.

Attendance awards.

Personal contact is best.

Phone squads.

Line up interesting guests and speakers who will draw attendance.

## Location

Adequate space

Adequate parking

Available year-round

Areas for split sessions

Attractive and interesting facility

Easily accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities

Meets health and safety requirements

## Roundtable Morale Builders

Displays and exhibits

- Program theme ideas
- Council and district events
- Scouting literature
- Equipment
- Unit show-and-tell
- Scouting memorabilia
- Trading post literature store
- *Boys' Life*
- Other stuff

Information center

- Announcements (keep them brief)
- Written notices and packets
- Scouting “supermarket”
- Physical property bank

Songs

- Use of songs
- Songleading tips
- Songbooks

Icebreakers, stunts, and skits

- Icebreakers
- Group meeting sparklers
- Cheers and applause
- Stunts and skits
  - Developing skits
  - Staging skits
  - Resources
- Funny lost-and-found

Games and contests

- Value of games
- Types of games
- Use of games

Recognitions

- New people and units
- Units and leaders
- Awards
- Fun stuff

Ceremonies

- Purpose of ceremonies
- Essential ingredients
- Staging ceremonies
- Involvement and participation
- Types of ceremonies
- Ceremonial props

## Review of Quality Roundtable Ingredients

Action

Material

Handouts

Skills and crafts

New ideas

Useful information

Fun

Food



# Commissioner Style (BCS 110)

Be sure each participant has the “Your Commissioner Style” chapter of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## Introduction

A commissioner’s style—*how* they provide service—is as important as what they do in the service process.

## Be a Frontline Diplomat

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. (Conduct a presentation/group discussion on each of nine qualities of a “commissioner diplomat.” Write the quality on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or flip chart as each quality is discussed.)

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

## Exceptional Service

A part of commissioner style is to provide “exceptional service” as defined in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. (Display definition on a display card, PowerPoint, or overhead projector.)

Exceptional service can also be stated like a mathematical formula:

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

Simply meeting the expectations of unit leaders is not enough in our increasingly competitive society. Most people expect more than just “good enough” service. Exceptional commissioner service results in successful units.

Have the group suggest ways to exceed the expectations of unit adults.

## Roots and Wings

Good commissioners have both “roots” and “wings.”

### Roots

**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 Boy Scout Law and Cub Scout Promise, the value of youth leadership, and the quality of good unit programs. Good commissioners have roots.

Commissioners have some of the deepest roots in Scouting’s history; they are the keepers of the traditions and standards of the BSA.

### Wings

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 changes and new ideas to keep Scouting relevant to the world in which we live.

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 to what the unit is doing in the community around it and the cultural background of the young people it serves. Good commissioners have wings. Effective commissioners balance their roots and their wings.

Have the group brainstorm two lists on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or flip chart.

What are specific examples of traditions and standards in Scouting that should probably not change (“roots”)?

What are specific examples of recent changes in Scouting that we should try to quickly adapt to (“wings”)?

## Service Recovery

Service recovery means HOW TO RIGHT A WRONG. 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 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?

(Have the group suggest specific steps commissioners need to be prepared to take to right a wrong. Then add any of the following points they may have missed.)

- **Find a sincere way to say “I’m sorry.”** Admitting a goof-up might not be easy, but it sets the stage for overcoming a blunder.
- **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 fees to stop payment on your check 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 that 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 even 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.

# Health and Safety Training (BCS 111)

To conduct this session, use the *Health and Safety Training Course Syllabus*, No. 19-100A.

The council health and safety committee and/or risk management committee, with the consent of the Scout executive, have the responsibility to appoint people qualified to teach the BSA Health and Safety Training Course. This course introduces the concept of the “sandwich principle” with emphasis on the importance of qualified supervision and discipline. The course features the BSA booklet *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416 (also available online under [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)), and the video *Scouting Safety . . . Begins With Leadership*, No. 19-201.

Experience has shown that the vast majority of serious injuries and fatalities in Scouting occur in unit-related activities conducted off council properties. Scheduling this training feature for commissioners is important, because safe activities are great activities—and they save lives and prevent tragic injuries. Doing so will help commissioners promote the principles for safe Scouting with our unit leaders.

# What Would You Do? (BCS 112)

This is a group participation/discussion session on some fascinating situations that commissioners might encounter.

Divide your participants into small groups. Give each group a separate problem to solve. Ask them to come up with some creative solutions to not only solve the problem, but to solve it in a way that will allow all parties to share positively in the solution.

Distribute a list of all 10 situations to participants so they can review the problem and make notes as each group reports.

Have each group make a brief report.

After each small group reports, ask the larger group to suggest at least one idea from the report that could serve as a broader guideline for commissioners in other kinds of situations.

## Situations

1. One of your friends, a new unit commissioner, meets for the first time with a longtime Cubmaster. While the Cubmaster is not hostile, he is decidedly formal. In the course of conversation, he says, "We don't support Friends of Scouting in this unit, because the council has never done anything for us." The new commissioner calls you and says, "So what do I do now?"

2. You receive a call from a harried Scoutmaster. She reports that her unit commissioner is an impossible chauvinist who resents women being in leadership positions in Scouting. She, with the backing of her unit committee, demands the immediate reassignment of the commissioner. As an ADC, your course of action would be . . .

3. You receive a call from John Smith, who informs you he is the new unit commissioner for Troop 1 and Pack 1. John wants to talk to you about some changes he thinks should be made in the operation and leadership of both units. He informs you that he has already spoken to the pastor of the church that holds the unit charters. You have never heard of John Smith before. What do you do next?

4. You are a unit commissioner. You receive a call from an irate mother of a young Scout. Mom launches into a tirade about how her son's advancement is being frustrated by members of the Scout's unit. It seems her son had earned 17 merit badges at summer camp. He worked from 5 in the morning until 11 at night and had the approval of the provisional assistant Scoutmaster at the camp. She stated that the troop advancement committee is sitting on the blue cards and not processing them. Mom makes it clear that her son, who is 12 ½ years old, is going to be the youngest Eagle Scout in the nation. As soon as you hang up the phone, you should . . .

5. You receive a call from a single-parent father who is

trying to get his twin sons into a Cub pack. He has been told by all the units in the area that they are full. What would you do?

6. You learn that one of your packs is telling their Cubs that denners and assistant denners who have completed their terms can cut the cords off and continue to wear the small yellow shoulder tab. The women of the pack have voted to wear the green Venturing uniform shirt with the blue tabs. What should you start doing?

7. You meet a Scoutmaster at the council service center and he complains to you that he can never get any information about what's happening in the district and the council. He feels isolated and forgotten. What would you recommend?

8. It has come to your attention that one of your newly assigned troops has not attended a council summer camp in more than six years. In fact, the troop hosts its own camp on privately owned land. The troop committee supports this program and feels the camp experience they are providing is far superior to anything happening in a council camp. Should you do anything?

9. You have a unit in your area that has never, in the memory of man, ever done its charter renewal correctly. The unit leaders refuse to attend the orientation meetings and, in fact, do not take charter renewal seriously. Should you do anything with this unit? If so, what's the first thing?

10. The committee chairman of a newly formed Boy Scout troop calls you and wants a laundry list of all the training opportunities for Scout leaders. Make up the list and prioritize it, showing the chairman who should take what training and in what order.

# Service to New Units (BCS 113)

## Introduction

New units are a tremendous factor in membership growth—so more young people will grow in character and in personal fitness.

How many of you currently serve a new unit?

How many have served a new unit in the past?

Some of you will be assigned a new unit in the future.

## Commissioner Tasks in Serving a New Unit

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.

- How do the organizer and commissioner work together?
- How do they handle the transition?

Make the presentation of the first unit charter a very special event for members of the chartered organization and unit personnel.

- Where in Scouting literature can you find details on unit charter presentations? (*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.)

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.

- What is your role at a unit committee meeting? (A guest and a coach.)
- What is your unwritten agenda for new troop committee meetings? (Building good team relationships, orientation on unit committee operation, coaching in unit program, etc.)

Unit leader training is a priority. Follow up if unit leaders missed Fast Start, New Leader Essentials, or the appropriate new leader specific course. Provide the missing sessions if they cannot get to district courses. Tailor the training to the unit.

- (Review all the component courses for Basic Leader Training.)
- (Review why Basic Leader Training must take place ASAP—hopefully as part of the process of organizing the unit.)

Be sure new unit leaders get “youth buy-in.” In crews and ships, 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 all dens are meeting regularly.

Don't assume the unit will have a program. Guide the unit in planning the first month or two of its program.

- How would you go about helping a new unit with its first two months' program?
- Be sure unit leaders know about program helps and other program resources.

Don't appear to be a checker-upper. Commissioners are there to assist and guide, like good friends. First impressions are very important with a new unit.

- (Brief discussion.)

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.).

- Why is this important?

Recognize unit successes. Congratulate leaders for all achievements, no matter how small.

- Why? (Increase self-confidence, overcome fear of failure, positive reinforcement, etc.)

Help leaders solve immediate concerns.

- (Elicit examples from group.)
- Failure to solve immediate concerns quickly may undermine further development of very new units with inexperienced leaders.

Play a helpful mentoring role with unit folk, and a trusting relationship will have begun.

- How does the commissioner's initial experience with a new unit affect the commissioner's ability to help the unit in the future?
- What clues might indicate that you have a good trust level with the new unit's leadership?

# Good Commissioner-Professional Relationships (BCS 114)

## Introduction

Since the early days of Scouting in the United States, good volunteer-professional relationships have been one of the special hallmarks of the Boy Scouts of America. Today, this special partnership between volunteers and professionals is the core of its success at the council and district levels. When the partnership thrives, the Scouting movement thrives. If the partnership is not working well, Scouting suffers.

Both commissioners and professionals share responsibility for building good working relationships in Scouting. No matter what your job or task is in the council, skill in working effectively with your professional is important.

Today we're going to look at a few general qualities and practical tips for building a good relationship.

## Qualities of a Good Relationship

**(Lead discussion.)**

What evidence would suggest that a good relationship exists between a volunteer and a professional?

Elicit:

- Each understands what the other “brings to the table.”
- They seek each other's counsel or guidance.
- They enjoy each other's company.

**Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, respect, and recognition of each other's role and competency.**

(Uncover the above statement on a large banner, poster, flip chart, or other medium to remain on display throughout the session.)

When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth).

In Scout districts, for example, mutual dependence results because district executives know they cannot possibly do all the work that needs to be done, and district volunteers know they need the coaching and experience of full-time professionals.

If partners have complete confidence in each other, they will seek each other's counsel or guidance. Neither partner has a monopoly on wisdom, judgment, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision-making, the combination is unbeatable.

Your professional is a Scouting friend and counselor and mentor. Working together is more effective when commissioners and professionals enjoy each other's company. Professionals do not work for district volunteers, but with them as partners on behalf of youth. The unselfish service they both render and their common dedication breeds mutual respect and a feeling of kinship. One test of the relationship is whether the two parties think of each other as friends.

Occasionally a volunteer will say to a professional, “Remember, you get paid for this, and I don't.” But that is not the significant difference between volunteers and professionals. The significant difference is that volunteers are able to give only a portion of their time to Scouting, while professionals give their full time, and then some.

This means professionals are dependent upon the movement for the material things of life, but it does not mean professionals look upon Scouting differently than volunteers. Both are dedicated to the same principles, and both are trying to live out those principles in their lives and in their work.

The fact that professionals give all their time means their experience is broader and deepens more quickly. Their training is more intensive and continues throughout their professional careers. This makes their coaching more valuable to volunteers. So seek out the guidance of your professional coach.

These qualities are a final result of our efforts. The remainder of the session will help us achieve the result.

## Tips for Better Relationships

Here are a few tips on how good commissioners work with their professionals:

(Place the following 10 tips in a container and have 10 participants, each in turn, take one and share with the group. Following each statement, take a couple of minutes for group discussion and instructor comment.)

1. Intentionally begin to build a good relationship with your professional from your very first visit. Be positive. Be enthusiastic. Be prepared. Think in advance about the impression you want to make as one of the trusted volunteers of the district.
2. Be accessible to your professional adviser. Exchange phone numbers, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, etc. Avoid the impression that you are too busy or annoyed when they call. Return their calls.



3. Create a welcome environment for the new professional and plan ways to incorporate them into the team. Remember that it's easy for a group to turn inward and make newcomers feel awkward or unwelcome. Send a letter of introduction to appropriate volunteers from an appropriate person in authority (council president, Scout executive, etc.). This helps a person feel good about joining the district or council. It also helps volunteers get acquainted with the new pro.

4. A professional will try to make efficient use of commissioners' time and, as best they can, plan visits and meetings at times that are best for volunteers. Commissioners and professionals should help make the most efficient use of each other's Scouting time.

5. Commissioners should know that they can turn to their pro for advice or troubleshooting. Help create the kind of relationship in which you are comfortable asking for help.

6. There will inevitably be some professionals you don't like as much as others. That's human nature. However, part of being a good Scouter is working with all kinds of people, even when the chemistry isn't perfect. Feel free to talk with your professional partner about how you are working together.

7. While you obviously want to form a Scouting relationship, it is nevertheless important to get to know your professional as a whole person. Most of us will feel more comfortable working with someone who is interested in other aspects of our lives as well as our Scouting responsibilities.

8. Keep in mind that Scouting is not a person's only priority in life. They will have family priorities, and may be involved in religion and other activities.

9. Let your professional adviser know if you plan to have your spouse, secretary, or work associate assist you with a Scouting task, and how the pro can be helpful to that person.

10. Develop good communication in which you and your professional really listen to and understand each other.

11. In some instances the function of guiding other volunteers is shared between you and a pro. A district executive works with operating committee chairs, who also look to the district chair for guidance. Both the district commissioner and district executive have a direct working relationship with ADCs. Unit commissioners work with both their district executive and their ADC.

You and the professional should be careful to avoid confusion for volunteers and to ensure that they receive consistent messages and have a compatible relationship with both their volunteer leader and the professional.

## A Closing Note

Historically, Scouting's great success has resulted because of volunteer talent and the professionals who guide and support talented volunteers.

The continuing greatness of Scouting as a volunteer movement is in your capable hands as you and your volunteer team work effectively with your professional adviser.



# Commissioners and Diversity (BCS 115)

## Diversity—A Truly Important Idea

The United States of America is a unique microcosm of the world's people.

(Think about it.)

Its makeup is unlike any other country in the world.

This has been one of the key elements of our power and success as a nation.

IN THE PAST, this country was called “the great melting pot.” Customs and cultures from many lands were expected to blend together like ingredients in a cream soup. But was this really accurate?

TODAY, we have a better understanding. We're starting to realize that the United States is more like a beautiful tapestry with the variety of threads with different colors and textures woven together to make this a work of art.

## Diversity—A Scouting Value

The Boy Scouts of America's leadership and membership is growing to reflect the demographic character of our nation. We are and will continue to be a DIVERSE organization.

(Discussion question:)

Take a look at your unit, district or council back home. Does it reflect the demographic makeup of your community? Or take a look at the organization where you work.

The strength and inclusiveness that results from this demographic growth will help us accomplish our vision as an organization.

## Positive Types of Diversity

(Have group develop a list. Record on a flipchart. Be sure the list includes the following:)

- Race
- Ethnic/nationality background
- Gender
- Age
- Marital status—single, married, divorced
- Work experience
- Personality
- Religion
- Cultural values

Diversity in the Boy Scouts of America is a desired state. It is an environment where all DIFFERENCES (age, gender, race, ethnicity, physical ability, personality, and life experiences) are valued and integrated into every aspect of the organization's operations.

## Diversity Within Unity

The membership of the Boy Scouts of America is united by our mission, vision, and common values as expressed in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and the Venturing Oath.

What else can you think of that unites us in Scouting?

(Group response.)

*Diversity* is the **uniqueness** that each of us brings to fulfilling our mission and achieving the vision.

When we build on our common values, our differences can become a distinct advantage, allowing us to reach more young people with a richer program of Scouting.

## Group Projects

(Form small groups of four to eight persons. Assign a project question to each group. Have each group select a person to report back.)

- Why does diversity make Scouting stronger? Give some examples of how diversity makes Scouting better.
- How can commissioners help value individuals and use diversity to make Scouting stronger?
- Each one of us can change the world, or at least a small part of it. When we treat people fairly and respect their differences, the people around us respect us. Those watching us learn by our actions and often imitate us. Make a list of possible examples of how a commissioner can be a role model on diversity.
- People catch prejudice from other people, and no one or no group is immune from prejudging others. However, we can recognize and build up resistance to prejudices in ourselves and help friends and family do the same. Positive attitudes toward other people are rooted in a strong positive self-image. Self-assured people are not threatened by differences and are open to new experiences. What can commissioners do to overcome prejudice?

(Have each group give a brief report.)

## Summary

The strength of the Boy Scouts of America lies in its mission, vision, and traditions, but most of all in its people.

We strive to create an environment where people are valued as individuals and are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. From that effort can come an environment where everyone is energized to contribute to the success of our mission, and we and our nation are better for it.

# Using the Unit Self-Assessment Tools (BCS 116)

This course focuses on how to conduct an action planning meeting with a unit using the unit self-assessment tools and the guidelines for the action planning process.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will learn the purpose of the self-assessment tool, when to use the tool, how to set up a meeting for reviewing the results of the tool, who should attend the meeting, and what preparations are necessary before the meeting.

The participant will learn how to conduct the assessment for a pack, troop, or crew

## References

*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621

- Chapter 19, Guidelines for a Unit Action Planning Meeting
- Chapter 20, Unit Self-Assessment Forms

## Teaching Technique

This 50-minute presentation will contain lecture-style information, as well as group discussion, role plays, and handouts. The information provided will help commissioners of all levels better understand the different aspects of unit evaluation.

**Unit self-assessment forms**—one for each type of unit is required for this class. What is the purpose in using this form? It involves the unit leadership and the commissioner looking at the unit's program, their vision, and what we can do to help them. How do you use this to your advantage?

## Teaching/Learning

**Purpose of the meeting (use as the agenda for the meeting):**

- To evaluate the unit's progress toward achieving the 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 needed to assist with unit improvements and who will follow up on those actions.
- To schedule any necessary follow-up to monitor progress.

**When to conduct the 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, preferably six months prior to the annual charter renewal.
- As needed when a problem arises.
- When unit leadership changes.

**How arrangements for the meeting should be made:**

- 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?**

- This setup provides a small group to openly analyze the program, their unit's needs, and steps necessary 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 what 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 or 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.)

## Summary

The action planning meeting is initiated annually or after a change in the top leadership of a unit. It is a meeting between the commissioner, unit leader, and unit committee chair. The commissioner will share the unit self-assessment form with the unit leader and ask him or her to review it with the unit 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. “Doing a good job,” “needs improvement,” or “needs help” will be checked. Then the commissioner, unit leader, and unit committee chair will 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 help, if needed, the unit achieve those goals. The areas marked as “needs help” are especially areas of interest in which the district can assist. The area of need will determine the district operating committee to help with its accomplishment.

The action planning meeting needs to be conducted semi-annually with the district executive.

# Selecting Quality Leaders (BCS 117)

This course focuses on the selection of quality leaders. The role of a commissioner is to help the unit follow this process to ensure the unit selects the best possible leadership for their unit. Keep in mind during the process that the commissioner is there to assist the unit's leadership in following all of the steps of the process in order for them to make their leader selections.

## Develop a List of Needs

- Know what you need.
- Have position descriptions.
- Know your resources.

## The Process: Seven Steps

### 1. Chartered Organization Briefing

COR and/or IH meets with committee chair and unit commissioner to discuss process.

District executive provides material, videos, and recruiting techniques.

ACTION: Form steering committee.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the chartered organization to recruit new leaders.

### 2. Steering Committee

Committee chair sets up meeting place, date, and time.

ACTION: Complete following tasks at meeting.

- Review video *Selecting Quality Leaders*.
- Prepare list of potential candidates.
- Rank the prospects.
- Clear the list with the IH and COR.

Select three-person team to call on the top prospect.

### 3. Make an Appointment With Prospects

The committee person who knows the prospect best makes the appointment.

ACTION: Appointment made over the phone.

Do not try to recruit over the phone.

Set date and time at the prospect's home.

Involve prospect's spouse.

Confirm date, time, and place with other committee members.

Role play.

Schedule the appointment.

### 4. Call on the Prospect

ACTION: Committee arrives as a group.

Ask prospect to serve in the position.

Explain this is subject to approval of membership application.

If prospect says "no," go to next on list.

Role play.

Call on the prospect.

### 5. Have Prospect Complete Adult Application

ACTION: Prospect fills out adult application.

- New leaders are required to take Youth Protection training before submitting an application for registration.
- References checked, application signed by committee chair and chartered organizational representative.
- Application submitted to council.

### 6. Welcome the New Leader

ACTION: Welcome the new leader.

- After application is processed and approved, the COR should welcome the new leader.
- Hold a formal induction ceremony.

### 7. Schedule Training

ACTION: Fast Start is conducted.

Encourage attendance at roundtable.

Schedule New Leaders Essential.

Schedule Youth Protection training.

Schedule training for specific position.

## Summary

# Introduction To Venturing Commissioner Science (BCS 121)

## Introduction To Venturing

A brief history:

- Venturing was officially created by the Boy Scouts of America's executive board on February 9, 1998.
- During a five-year period in the early 1990s, outdoor Exploring grew 94 percent to nearly 100,000 members. When the committee had come up with an idea, it often sounded familiar. Then it referred to a 1950 edition of the *Exploring Handbook* and found that the idea had been applied years ago. So, if you are a history buff and have an early edition of the *Exploring Handbook*, you can see many similarities between the early days of Exploring and today's Venturing.

Aims and methods

- The aims of the Boy Scouts of America are to build character, develop citizenship, and foster personal fitness.
- Methods of Venturing:
  - Leadership
  - Group activities
  - Adult association
  - Recognition
  - Ideals
  - High adventure
  - Teaching others
- Four specific goals of Venturing:
  - Experience
  - Development
  - Leadership
  - Growth
- Six areas of emphasis (discussed in MCS 308) related to the six experience areas:
  - Citizenship
  - Fitness
  - Leadership
  - Outdoor
  - Service
  - Social

## Venturing Literature

*Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494

- Serves as the bible to introduce the program and give guidance for leadership development, crew structure and operations, awards and recognition, and resource references for the program.

- Also introduces the specialty awards above and beyond the Bronze awards of Outdoors, Religious Life, Sports, Ranger, TRUST, and Quest.

*Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655 (not only for adults)

- Parallels the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook*.
- Information to better the quality of the programs, with detailed information for:

Interest surveys

Recruitment

Training

Program planning

Crucial situations within the crew

Values and ethical principles

Program ideas

Responsibilities of youth and adult leadership

## Crew Dynamics

The relationship between the adults and youth.

**Group dynamics** is the study of groups, and also a general term for group processes.

In *organizational development* (OD), or group dynamics, the phrase "group process" refers to the understanding of the behavior of people in groups.

Because people gather in groups for reasons other than task accomplishment, group process occurs in other types of groups such as personal growth groups (e.g., encounter groups, study groups, prayer groups). In such cases, an individual with expertise in group process can be helpful in the role of facilitator.

The social status of people within the group (i.e., senior or junior) is well-researched but rarely mentioned by professional group workers. The group leader (or facilitator) will usually have a strong influence on the group because of his or her role in shaping the group's outcomes.

How it works (the structure of the crew is covered in the next section):

- President—Advisor
- Administrative vice president—associate Advisor
- Program vice president—associate Advisor program
- Secretary and treasurer—(crew committee) treasurer
- Crew membership and activity chairs—consultants

# The Crew/Unit Structure

## Youth

### President

- Serves as youth leader of the crew.
- Implements the crew program in cooperation with officers and members.
- Works closely with Advisors and other adult leaders in a spirit of partnership.
- Represents the crew at the Teen Leaders Council annual program planning conference and is available to report to the chartered organization and crew committee.
- Assists the crew Advisor in conducting the Crew Officers' Seminar, appoints youth chairs for special projects, and appoints special crew officers.
- Presents the annual report to the chartered organization at the conclusion of the term of office.
- Assesses on an ongoing basis whether the responsibilities of the officers are being considered and carried out effectively.
- Approaches Venturing with a spirit of fun and enjoyment, and encourages others to do the same.

### Administrative Vice President

- Serves as administrative officer of the crew.
- Assumes the responsibilities of the crew president in his or her absence.
- Leads the recruiting and admission of new members during the year.
- Usually chairs the annual crew open house.
- Organizes and recognizes the achievements of crew members.
- Conducts opening and closing ceremonies for special occasions as scheduled.
- Attends all crew activities.
- Participates in the council's annual Teen Leaders' Council program planning conference.
- Approaches Venturing with a spirit of fun and enjoyment and encourages others to do the same.

### Program Vice President

- Program officer. Arranges a program planning process for the crew.
- Collects and maintains a crew activity file consisting of the program capability inventory, a list of crew members' interests and suggestions for activities, program resources, and an annual activity schedule.
- Determines the interests of the crew members on an ongoing basis (via crew surveys).
- Provides support for the chair and committee for each activity.

- Maintains an up-to-date calendar of crew meetings and activities.

### Secretary

- Communication officer. Manages all communications and publicity for the crew (activity fliers, etc.).
- Maintains crew membership and attendance records.
- Handles crew correspondence and minutes.
- Coordinates crew publicity through the local media and crew newsletters, and sets up and runs the crews' telephone network.
- Helps the program vice president publish a schedule or newsletter for crew members to keep them informed about meeting plans, activities, and last-minute changes.

### Treasurer

- Financial officer. Maintains financial records and monitors the crew's budget.
- Communicates with the officers and members on a regular basis to keep them informed about the crew's finances.

### Quartermaster

- Has responsibility for the crew's supplies and equipment.
- Keeps an inventory of and maintains equipment in good working order.
- Monitors the safe return of equipment that has been loaned to a crew member.
- Generates a list of equipment and supplies needed by the crew for future acquisition.

### Crew Guide

- Serves as an individual mentor for new Venturers, assisting in their understanding of the Venturing program and participation in crew activities.

### Historian

- Collects and preserves memorabilia, press releases, photos, and other data of historical significance to the crew.
- Maintains information about crew activities and erstwhile crew members.

### Crew Members

- Every member of the crew is responsible for promoting the goals of Venturing: experience, development, leadership, and growth.

## Adult

### Advisor

- Fosters an environment within the Venturing crew that has a true sense of community and that encourages everyone's growth and responsibility to one another.



- Serves as the key adult leader and is responsible for training crew officers, helping them plan a program of activities, coaching them in their leadership responsibilities, and obtaining adult help and resources as needed.
- Has the ultimate responsibility for the crew.

#### Associate Advisor for Administration

- Provides backup leadership for the Advisor and assumes responsibility for the crew in the Advisor's absence.
- Supports the administrative vice president and assists this person specifically with the crew's recruitment and recognition efforts.

#### Associate Advisor for Program

- Works closely with the program vice president.
- Supports the program vice president to help determine the interests of the members, plans the year's program, and ensures the crew calendar is maintained.

#### Other Associate Advisors

- Crews with a large membership or unique program may have a number of adults serving as associate Advisors.
- They may provide support for equipment and transportation, make parental contact, plan special activities and projects, or help with the superactivity.

#### Consultants

- Interacts with the crew by providing technical expertise, special skills, equipment, facilities, or community contacts related to the crew program. They may be one-time participants.

#### Crew Committee

- Provides adequate adult leadership.
- Reviews, supports, and approves the crew's program plans.
- Serves as a liaison between the crew and the chartered organization.
- Keeps parents informed about the crew, chartered organization, and Venturing.

## Unit Support

Serve the crews! Provide a sense of caring that becomes habitual.

Monthly program forums.

Know your crews and report on their status. Make regular visits and reports.

Charter renewal.

Advisors and those in adult leadership roles are trained.

Help to connect crews to packs and troops.

Help with earning the Quality Award.

## Leadership Development (Youth and Adult)

### Youth

#### Venturing Leadership Skills Course

- For all members to have the opportunity to lead.
- Vision/Communication/Organization/Synergism.

#### Kodiak

- Five essential leadership commissions while on a six-day or two-weekend TREK.
- The Effective Team/Values and Vision/Communication/Planning.

#### Kodiak X

- Outdoor conference setting.
- Two final commissions: Evaluating Performance/Mentoring.

#### Venturing's "honor society:" National Youth Leadership Society

Mentoring is an opportunity to help a person grow through discovery. This session will address various mentoring models and ways to be a mentor to Scouts and Scouters.

### Adult

#### What is considered "TRAINED"

- Fast Start training
- Youth Protection training
- This Is Scouting
- Position-Specific Training
- Venturing Leader Specific Training

#### Recommended

- Outdoor Leadership Skills (OLS)
- Powder Horn
- Wood Badge for the 21st Century

## Summary

- Your tools
- *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*
- *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*
- *Venturer/Ranger Handbook/Venturing Leader's Manual*
- Continuing education



# Venturing Crew Visitation (BCS 124)

## Introduction

Unit commissioner ultimate responsibility (unit success)

Basic responsibility (unit visitation)

Without visits:

- There is no unit help.
- There is no problem solving.
- There isn't an understanding of the needs of the unit.
- There is NO UNIT!

## Types of Visits

- Crew meetings
- Crew activities
- District level (VOA meetings; rendezvous; socials, i.e. pizza night or ice cream night)
- Telephone calls and e-mails. Are these the best? Don't let technology replace the personal visit.

## Visitation Preparation

To uniform or not to uniform; that is the question.

- Most crews elect the “no uniform” option and choose a T-shirt style of identification.
- BSA policy states: *The Boy Scouts of America has always been a uniformed body. Its uniforms help to create a sense of belonging. They symbolize character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness. Wearing a uniform gives youth and adult members a sense of identification and commitment. The Insignia Guide presents detailed information to enable our members to wear the correct complete uniform on all suitable occasions.*
- *The recommended uniform is the spruce green Venturing shirt with green epaulette tabs and gray backpacking-style shorts or gray casual pants. However, the uniform, if any, is the choice of the crew. Sea Scouts may wear the Sea Scout uniform. If worn, the Insignia Guide is to be followed.*

Be an adviser.

Be a friend.

Know your crew's interests and capabilities.

## During the Visit

Be prepared for a totally “youth-run program” with:

- Total confusion
- Diplomatic process
- A mix of both

No paperwork.

No disruptions.

No criticism.

Talk with adults, parents, and leaders.

## Analysis After the Visit

Assess the meeting.

Note areas of improvement and strong points.

Determine how to help and encourage success.

Determine special needs.

Reflection.

Setting unit priorities.

## Brainstorm and Formulate Creative Ways to Help

Use techniques from the *Venturing Leader Manual*.

Be optimistic.

## Crew Lifesaving Critical Needs

New crews' critical first year.

Leadership training and annual planning conference.

Helping the officers to solve their own problems.

## Crew Resources for Survivability

Chapters 1-3 of the *Venturing Leadership Manual*.

# Personal Safety Awareness For Venturing (BCS 127)

## Introduction

To serve as a Venturing commissioner, all crew leaders need to have basic knowledge about abuse of adolescents and the Youth Protection policies of the Boy Scouts of America. Due to the coeducational membership of Venturing, youth protection takes on added dimensions.

In response to increasing awareness about sexual abuse in society as a whole, and concerns about the potential for sexual predators using the Boy Scout program to locate victims, the BSA developed the Youth Protection program in the late 1980s in conjunction with input from leading law enforcement and psychiatric experts on the subject. In 2003, criminal background checks were required for all new leaders. Leaders who had registered before 2003 were required to undergo background checks in 2008.

This training highlights four different, yet concurrent, areas of adolescent development.

The areas are:

1. Movement toward independence.

Adolescence can be a specifically turbulent and dynamic period of one's life. It has been identified as a period in which young people develop abstract thinking abilities, become more aware of their sexuality, develop a clearer sense of psychological identity, and increase their independence from parents.

2. Future interests and mental ability.

This is typically to retain only information that is relevant for a particular purpose.

3. Social relationships.

Peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes, values, or behavior in order to conform to group norms. Social groups affected include membership groups, when the individual is "formally" a member.

4. Morals, values, and self-direction.

- Morality signifies having a code of conduct or belief.
- Adolescents who were uninvolved in groups were more likely to endorse self-interest and materialistic values.
- That ability to put one's life in order.

## Resources For Education And Training

Youth Protection Guidelines: Training for Adult Venturing leaders

- AV-03DVD14

Personal Safety Awareness for Venturing

- AV-09DVD33

## Background Information On Abuse

Child abuse is harm to a person under the age of 18 that occurs immediately or through accumulated effects over a period of time.

When the harm is caused by withholding life's necessities from a child, it is classified as NEGLECT. The ability to provide such necessities as food, clothing, education, and medical care, but failing to do so, is the factor separating neglect from the effects of poverty.

Three additional kinds of abuse:

**Emotional abuse:** When a youth is constantly told that he or she is no good or never will be. Denigrating name-calling is a form of emotional abuse. The physical signs are subtle, and it is difficult to substantiate emotional abuse. It can come from adults and peers.

**Physical abuse:** This is bodily injury to the youth by the parent, caretaker, or peer. Indicators of physical abuse include unexplained, unusual, or repeated injuries.

**Sexual abuse:** Any sexual activity between a child and an adult, or between children when there is an unusual distribution of power such as when one is significantly older or larger. Indicators include pain in the genital area, sexually transmitted diseases, and difficulty walking or sitting down. There is specific behavior that is associated, such as inappropriate sex play, sleep disturbances, wearing lots of clothing, and fear of being alone with a particular person.

Other indicators could be stress from any number of events in a child's life such as family disruption, loss of a pet, school-related problems, withdrawal, substance abuse, running away, and depression.

## Types of Safety Awareness

### Acquaintance Rape

Misconceptions.

Perpetrator is known to the victim.

The risk of acquaintance or date rape is greater when behavioral boundaries are not clearly established.

"No, I am sorry, this is not what I want to do." Once one person makes that statement, the other person should not attempt to persuade or force the first person to have sex.

## Peer Sexual Harassment

By definition, sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct that either creates a hostile environment or is presented as a demand in exchange for getting something in the workplace or school (it is illegal in both places).

Sexual harassment may occur between peers, or it may be a misuse of power, such as by an employer to an employee or a stronger individual harassing a weaker one.

### When teasing crosses the line:

- Visual (ogling, staring, posters or pictures, magazines, and fliers)
- Verbal (repeated requests for dates, questions about personal life, lewd comments or jokes, and whistling)
- Threats (quid pro quo demands such as: “If you sleep with me, I’ll give you that promotion.” Also, loss of a job or selection process.)
- Force (rape or physical assault)

## Internet Safety and Pornography

New challenges are presented with the ever-growing technology and well-being of Internet users. Keep personal information to a minimum. Allow only people you know to have access to your Web pages. Review messages from others before allowing them to be posted on your blog. Block anyone who seems threatening.

## Suicide and Depression

The intentional killing of one’s self, and the *metaphorical* sense of “willful destruction of one’s self-interest.”

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for American teenagers (behind accidents and homicides).

Depression can refer to a variety of abnormal variations in an individual’s mood.

### Recognize the symptoms:

- A person suffering a major depressive episode usually exhibits a very low mood that pervades all aspects of life and an inability to experience pleasure in activities that formerly were enjoyed.
- Depressed people may be preoccupied with, or ruminate over, thoughts and feelings of worthlessness, inappropriate guilt or regret, helplessness, hopelessness, and self-hatred.
- Other symptoms include poor concentration and memory (especially in those with melancholic or psychotic features), withdrawal from social situations and activities, reduced sex drive, and thoughts of death or suicide.

## Commissioner Duties

Annual safety awareness visit

The Annual Commissioner Service Plan listed in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621, Chapter 6, Providing Unit Service

Chartered organization training

District/council training

Where to get help

**Suicide intervention** or **suicide crisis intervention** is a direct effort to stop or prevent people attempting or contemplating suicide from killing themselves. Current medical advice concerning people who are attempting or seriously considering suicide is that they should immediately go or be taken to the nearest *emergency room*, or *emergency services* should be called immediately by them or anyone aware of the problem.

# Venturing Monthly Program Forum (BCS 128)

The major resources for this program are the *Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner and Staff Basic Training* manual, No. 33013, *Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training*, No. 34256A, and the *Venturing Monthly Program Forum*, No. 34342.

Other useful resources for this course are the current editions of the *Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 34410, and *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, No. 511-942WB (online at [info.netbsa.org/prof/boyscout/index.html](http://info.netbsa.org/prof/boyscout/index.html), under “Training”)

Who is responsible for the Venturing forum (roundtable)?

## Review

### Effective Roundtables I (BCS 108) and II (BCS 109)

- Essential elements—the *will* to do and the *skill* to do.
- Who attends?
- When and where?
- Why people attend?

## Structure

- Combined or separated?
- Basic ingredients: exhibits, display, literature
- Opening: ceremony, welcome, recognition, and “intercrew communications” (better known as announcements)
- How-to section
- Activity (game)
- Program features
- Closing
- Wrap-up, food, and fellowship
- The need

## Monthly Forum Guide (Introduction)

What is a Venturing forum?

- Monthly vs. quarterly
- Supplemental training
- Continuing education
- Helpful information

The “aim” of the Venturing forum is to provide training, information, and motivation to Venturing adult leaders and crew officers.

The forum should be considered supplemental training to Venturing Leader Specific Training.

Adults and youth officers should receive helpful information about upcoming events (district area, council region) that should help them become more effective leaders.

The most important goal of a Venturing forum is to motivate adult leaders and youth officers. It should be inspirational, create enthusiasm, and help adults and youth leaders implement the vision and promise of Venturing.

The primary purpose of the forum is to help ensure the success of the crews in your district and council.

## The Job Of The Venturing Forum Commissioner

- Put together an exciting, motivational, and informative forum.
- Recruit and train a team for adult and youth volunteers.
- Recruit consultants from the community.
- Serve as a member of the district commissioner staff.
- Coordinate with the training team to provide supplemental training opportunities.
- Spend as much time planning for a forum as conducting one.
- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of Venturing crew Advisors and youth officers.

## Who Attends Forums

- Designed for all adult leaders, Advisors, associate Advisors, Skippers, crew and ship committee members, and unit commissioners.
- Youth officers, on occasion and when appropriate. Subjects offered that would apply to them include how to conduct an open house, crew review, leadership skills course, and how to elect officers.

## The Successful Venturing Forum

People will come when there is:

- Fellowship, importance, a sense of belonging, valuable ideas, learning by doing, and a dependable schedule
- Thoughtful planning
- Careful preparation
- Smart accomplishment

## Advanced Planning Brings Better Results

- Crew leader input (program features and how-to sections)
- Unit commissioner input
- Council/district calendar
- Annual Venturing forum planning conference
- Quarterly meetings of key staff
- Monthly planning meetings
- **Following up**

## Annual Venturing Forum Planning Conference

- Review from last year.
- Cover survey results.
- Program features.
- Discuss surveys (everything that deals with the Venturing program).
- How-to section surveys (items that deal with the operations of a crew).
- Review of the forum guide.
- Work on the annual plan (discuss surveys).
- Build a team.
- Fill in the forum commissioners work plan.
- Venturing Forum Planning Worksheet from *Venturing Monthly Program Forum*, No. 34342

## Forum Planning Work Sheet

Suggested agenda? There is NO suggested theme or subject for each month. You and your staff members choose the specifics of each month. At the annual staff meeting, mix and match ideas based on the needs and desires of the crews.

Remember the surveys?

### Let's do a monthly forum:

- Based on the surveys, several crews need help with the program capability inventory.
- Several crews need help with cooking.
- Crew 2 (on the survey "Can Teach").
- Crew 4 (on the survey "Can Teach").
- The how-to section of the PCI lists resources for the PCI. (Pass out the packet.) Discuss each resource briefly.

- For the game, group juggling was chosen and assigned to a crew.
- The program features section for Cooking lists the resources. (Pass out the next packet.) Discuss each resource briefly.
- Discuss how the entire forum should and could fall into place.

## Progress Record for the Forum (Roundtable) Commissioner

Discuss the progress record for the roundtable commissioner and their staff.

## Summary and Questions

District Commissioner

Roundtable Commissioner

Cub Scout Roundtable  
Commissioner (Staff)

Boy Scout Roundtable  
Commissioner (Staff)

Venturing Forum Roundtable Commissioner  
(Staff)

# No-Lapse/No-Drop Commitment (MCS 301)

## Introduction

Why make a no-lapse/no-drop commitment?  
List the reasons.

Why is a continuity of unit tenure important?  
List the reasons.

What do you think constitutes a no-lapse/no-drop commitment?

## Why Units *Lapse* and How to Prevent It

For each reason “why,” have the group determine how to prevent the lapse.

- The charter renewal process was started too late (less than 90 days before charter expiration).
- The commissioner left all the steps of charter renewal up to the unit.
- The unit held up the renewal papers for a missing signature.
- The commissioner failed to get involved (or get others in the district involved) to help solve a major unit problem until it was charter renewal time.
- The commissioner assumed unit people would turn in the renewal forms.
- The district/council tried to use charter renewal time to get the unit to do a lot of other things other than simply getting reregistered.
- Someone in the unit “sat on” the forms.
- The unit hadn’t collected all the registration fees.
- They completed the online paperwork, but did not print it out, secure the signatures needed, and turn it in at the council service center.
- Name others.

## Why Units *Drop* and How to Prevent It

Two optional projects:

1. Have the group list six to eight of the gravest unit problems leading to a dropped unit.

- Divide the group into six to eight small teams and assign each team one of the unit problems.
- The teams outline how to solve the problem.
- The teams report to the larger group.

2. Or use the *Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners* video inside *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support*, AV-06DVD08.

- There are 14 problem segments on the video. Select one in the last third of the video—least likely to have been used in the districts. Or, let the participants quickly select one of the problems that they would most like to explore.
- Show the video segment to set up the problem.
- Turn the video off and have the group members discuss their ideas for a solution.
- Return to the video to add video solutions to the group’s ideas.

(Check with the session leaders of “Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs” and “Lifesaving II” to be sure each of you uses different problems from the video.)

## The Commitment

Have the group discuss how a district commissioner staff could develop a strong no-lapse/no-drop commitment, and some of the motivational ideas for such a plan.



# Unit Finance (MCS 302)

## Reviewing Our Resources

*The Scoutmaster Handbook* (section on troop finance)

*Cub Scout Leader Book* (section on pack finance)

*Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities* and *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Low-Income Urban Communities* (folders on unit funding)

## Who Pays for Scouting?

The youth

The unit

Chartered organization

Local council

National Council

## Unit Budget Plan

Purpose and objectives.

Review sample budget plans for a pack, troop, team, and crew.

Discuss the commissioner's role in helping units establish a budget plan that meets Scouting's purposes (teaches thrift).

Covers unit expenses, including *Boys' Life* magazine.

Accident insurance.

## Unit Money-Earning Projects

Review the application form:

- Why approval is necessary
- Ten guides to money-earning projects
- Wearing of uniform
- Commercialism

Solicit and list ideas for acceptable unit money-earning projects.

## Local Council Finances

Review the FOS fact sheet

Discuss the need for unit FOS

Discuss methods of communicating the FOS story to units

United Way/other support

## National Council

Registration fees, other income sources

Supply Group profits

Local council benefits received from BSA

## Helping Units with Special Financial Needs

Distribute the rural and urban best methods folders and use them to teach participants how to help units fund:

- Uniforms
- Summer camp
- Equipment
- Registration fees



# Commissioner Lifesaving I (MCS 303)

Be sure each participant has the “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner” chapter of the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## What Is Commissioner Lifesaving?

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 problems occur.

## Watch the Vital Signs

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

What are some of these life-threatening situations? (Hold a group brainstorming session. See the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.)

## Go Into Action Fast

(See the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* section “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner.”)

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.

Consult with your assistant district commissioner or district commissioner.

Ask six basic questions.

Be enthusiastic. Demonstrate that you care.

Apply “first aid.”

Apply “second aid.”

Generate a real atmosphere of teamwork.

Replacing a leader is a delicate matter.

## 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 may 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.

# Commissioner Lifesaving II (MCS 304)

## Typical Hurry Cases

Using the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* section on lifesaving; *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*; and the *Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners* video; develop this course as a major problem-solving session. By the end of class time, participants should understand how to be a vital force in solving the following unit crises:

- Unit not meeting (“stopped breathing”)
- Unit with no leader (“no heartbeat”)
- Unit with no committee (“choking”)
- Unit with no new members (“severe bleeding”)
- Unit conflict with the chartered organization (“poisoning by mouth”)
- New unit leader lacks orientation or training (“blue baby”)
- Unit with weak leadership (“comatose”)

Use the *Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners* video inside *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support*, AV-06DVD08, with at least three of the above problems:

- Show the appropriate video sequence to set up the problem.
- Turn the video off and have the group members discuss their ideas for a solution.
- Return to the video for additional video solutions to the group’s ideas. (Check with the session leaders of “Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs” and “No Lapse/No Drop Commitment” to be sure each of you is using different problems from the video.)

# Counseling Skills (MCS 306)

## Introduction

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 counseling skills.

What is counseling?

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 encouragement in a difficult task, or help in solving a problem, interpreting facts, or resolving indecision or confusion.

## Elements of Good Counseling

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.

*Listen* more than you speak. You may need to check out your understanding with the other person. (“Bill, are you saying that . . . ?” “Sue, is . . . how you really feel?”)

Try to *understand* what a leader tells you. Listen for hidden meanings and watch body language.

Let the leader know that *you really hear* what he or she is saying.

*Do not give quick, easy advice*. People need to be guided as they find ways to solve their own problems.

*Summarize* the problem and help them organize their thoughts.

*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.

*Encourage* the leader to review verbally several possible solutions to the problem.

*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.

*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?)

*Be aware of your biases*. Commissioners are likely to have conversations that test their own prejudices. Perhaps you don’t feel that women make good Scoutmasters. Be aware of a prejudice of this kind. Try to remain open in a conversation where prejudice might make you a poor counselor.

*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.

*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.

## 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. Good questions relate directly to what the speaker is saying. (An abrupt diversion in the direction of conversation may be a turnoff to the other person.)

What are some questions that might help in the following situations?

- A unit leader tells you he is not getting real help from his unit committee.
- A Cubmaster says that none of the men in the pack will respect her leadership.
- A pastor bemoans the fact that the church board doesn’t understand why the troop that meets in the church does the things it does.
- A crew Advisor says that the crew officers don’t take any initiative in running the crew.

## Additional Counseling Tips

(Review as many of the additional suggestions from the “Counseling” chapter of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* as time permits.)

## Role-Playing

The instructor may want to design several role-plays of counseling situations with third-party observer/evaluators.

# Webelos-to-Scout Transition (MCS 307)

## Introduction

A vital commissioner task is to ensure that **every Webelos Scout continues his Scouting experience as a Boy Scout**.

Many Webelos Scouts go on to Boy Scouting with no help at all, but a lot of them need to know more about their opportunities for fun and adventure in the troop.

We also must let him know that he is wanted.

Distribute copies of *Webelos-to-Scout Transition* (available on [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org)).

## The Pack/Troop Relationship

The key factor in the transition process is the establishment of a working relationship between a pack and a troop—especially between the pack's Webelos den and the Boy Scout troop that most of the Webelos Scouts will join. The commissioner is often the connecting link between the pack and troop. Promote communication by planning a meeting of key leaders.

This relationship should be firmly in place by the start of the Webelos Scouts' fifth-grade year. Every fifth-grade Webelos den should be linked to a troop, and every troop should be involved with one or more Webelos dens.

A Cub Scout becomes more confident and enthusiastic about his Scouting future as he becomes more familiar with the boys and adult leaders of the troop he will be joining.

Of course, in many cases these relationships already exist and have been effective for many years. But some Webelos dens are not linked to troops and the commissioner's help is crucial in establishing a good relationship. Similarly, troops with no "feeder" Webelos dens might need help.

## Joint Activities

The troop may provide Webelos den chiefs for the pack, as well as assistance in planning and conducting outdoor activities.

The most important result of the den/troop relationship is the experience of joint activities.

The fifth-grade Webelos den and the troop should hold several activities together, including a joint campout. The den could also join the troop in a court of honor, campfire program, day hike, field trip, or Good Turn for the chartered organization or community. Visiting a camporee or other district or council Boy Scout event as guests of the troop might also be included. A district or council might conduct a Webeloree annually.

Through these joint activities, Webelos Scouts not only learn of the fun of Boy Scouting, they also get acquainted with the individual Scouts in the troop. When the time comes to move into Boy Scouting, it is no longer a leap into the unknown, but a step into an already familiar and friendly situation.

Commissioners are often facilitators between pack and troop for joint activities.

Work with packs and leaders to develop a crossover ceremony at the blue and gold banquet.

## Early Spring Graduation

Summer camp is a vital part of the Boy Scout experience, particularly for the new Scout. The expanded Webelos Scout program gives us a great opportunity to guarantee that graduating Webelos Scouts participate in summer camp by getting them into the troop in time to prepare for Boy Scout camp.

Webelos Scouts may become Boy Scouts as soon as they have earned the Arrow of Light Award.

## From Den to Patrol

Webelos Scouting and Boy Scouting have been designed to neatly dovetail together, and the Webelos den can move right into the troop as a new Scout patrol. When the whole den moves into Boy Scouting together, they continue to provide friendship and support to each other, which allows each boy to make a smooth transition with his friends into the troop.

## Webelos Tracking

Commissioners can have a system to identify and track each fifth-grade Webelos Scout to ensure that he has the opportunity to continue his Scouting experience as a Boy Scout. Follow-up should be planned to maintain contact with each boy until he is enrolled in a troop.

Be sure new Scouts have completed a Boy Scout application, that they have a copy of the troop's activities, and that they know when and where the troop meets.

Work with the pack and troop in their charter renewal process to help ensure Webelos Scouts are moved from pack rosters to troop rosters.

## Webelos Den Chief

The Webelos den chief is a registered Boy Scout, active in the troop and selected by the Scoutmaster to serve as a program assistant to the Webelos den leader. He should be skilled in conducting ceremonies, leading songs and games, teaching skills, giving demonstrations, and helping to prepare the Webelos Scouts for the troop experience ahead.

By his example, he may be the single most important person in influencing Webelos Scouts to join the troop.

## Summary

The unit commissioner provides continuing program support to the pack and the troop, and helps establish working relationships between the troop and the fifth-grade Webelos dens of the pack. He or she also encourages and supports joint activities, as well as graduation, and promotes participation in district and council transition activities such as Webelos Woods or Webeloree.

# Venturing and the Commissioner (MCS 308)

## The Commissioner's Commitment to Venturing

Venturing is one of the basic programs of the Boy Scouts of America. Because as a commissioner you are a key advocate of unit program, your commitment to Venturing is essential and your commitment to good unit service for Venturing crews is vital.

High school-age young adults are at a crossroads in life. They are confronted by an increasing number of challenges. Your council places the Venturing program at that crossroads to help youth find direction for their lives. Venturing helps young adults:

- Overcome nagging self-doubts.
- Lose feelings of extreme isolation.
- Reach for independence.
- Resolve questions of moral values.

The overwhelmingly positive response to Venturing by young people between the ages of 14 and 20 is evidence that these programs are effectively meeting the developmental needs of this age group. Venturing is a program that works. It provides ideals to last a lifetime, sets a solid course for the future, and lets young adults plan their own activities for positive recognition today.

## Commissioners Support Venturing Crew Program

Here are just a few of the things that unit commissioners can do to help crews succeed:

Be sure that elected youth officers, not adults, plan and run activities and meetings. The program must give Venturers adult-like experiences in adult-like roles.

Help the crew establish a balanced program that includes something during the year from each of the six experience areas, not just activity that is related to their crew specialty. Help crew leaders and officers brainstorm ideas for community service projects, outdoor activities, fitness projects, and crew social activities.

Facilitate communication. Give crew leaders information on the latest program resources, scholarships, training courses, and council- and national-level activities.

Help youth officers and adult Advisors participate in the council's activities and meetings for crew leaders.

Take the Venturing Leader Specific Training course with one of your Advisors.

Be sure that youth officers receive the crew officer briefing.

Read the *Venturing Leader Manual*.

Listen to the podcast on Venturing located on the commissioner website.

## Be Sure Crews Renew Their Charters on Time

Guide the crew leaders through the charter renewal process.

Help with the membership and leadership inventories.

Help the crew committee chair conduct the charter renewal meeting.

Present the new crew charter to the chartered organization.

## Commissioner Helps

Use *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*, No. 33618, which provides crew program standards, along with specific actions for commissioners and service team members to take in helping the crew. Walk participants through this book and point out the specific references to the Venturing program and commissioner actions.

Review the Unit Commissioner Worksheet (crew), No. 33660B, also found on the commissioner website. Discuss its use (after you leave the unit visited). Review each item.

Review the unit self-assessment tool to understand the quality program indicators important to providing a quality program experience.

## Questions and Answers About Venturing



# Good Commissioners Need Both Head and Heart (MCS 309)

The objective of this session is to help commissioners with at least a year or two of experience reflect on some of the important qualities of good commissioner service (the “head”). The session also provides a variety of inspirational anecdotes for them to share with unit adults as well as other commissioners (the “heart”).

(Be sure to prepare a variety of short handouts for participants to take home.)

## Service—A Hallmark for Commissioners

Derived from the Goldsmith’s Hall in old London, a hallmark is an official mark stamped on gold and silver articles in England to attest to their purity. Service is truly the hallmark of commissioners, which attests to the purity of Scouting.

Let’s look at some important ideas about service as it relates to commissioners.

Presentation steps:

- Copy and then cut apart each of the 12 service ideas below, and place them in a container.
- Have 12 participants each draw one of the service ideas.
- Each participant in turn reads their idea aloud.
- Invite group discussion after each item to elaborate its meaning.
- The instructor may also add comments highlighting the importance of each item.
- At the end, hand out a list of the 12 items.

Service ideas:

1. Unit service must be **unit-oriented**—oriented to the needs and goals of unit adults. Because units are so different, commissioner service must be flexible in adapting to unit needs.

Try to view life from the unit leader’s point of view. That’s called empathy. A commissioner with a unit-oriented attitude will not be overly district- or council-centered. Try to fit the service of the district to the unit, not forcing the unit to always fit the mold of the district. It’s a mistake to use a single strategy for multiple markets. Turn the organization chart upside down to put the unit on top.

2. **Be a good listener.** Listen intently. When we listen to unit people, we pay attention to what they are saying, but we are also alert to the feelings behind the words. Developing a good service attitude begins with listening.

3. The attitude of the commissioner dictates the quality and effectiveness of unit service **as perceived by unit adults**. Unit leaders want a commissioner who seems to be interested in their problems; that’s as important as resolving the problems. What works well is what is perceived to work well.

4. **Caring is a habit.** The more we view Scout units with a caring attitude, the more good service attitudes and behavior become a part of us.

5. Good unit service really means **exceeding unit leaders’ expectations**. Average commissioners will usually do those things most unit volunteers may expect. Excellent commissioners go beyond unit expectations.

6. Good commissioners **take ownership of service responsibility**. They are committed to service and they work to make units succeed.

7. In recent years, we’ve heard a lot about the contrast between “high-tech” and “high-touch.” There is a place in Scouting for high-tech, such as cell phones, iPods, fax machines, computers, video, and the Internet. But **unit service is an interpersonal event, and many people today strive for the high-touch contrast to technology**. Scouting is a very person-oriented service, and commissioners need good interpersonal skills.

8. **Commissioners must be available to unit people.** Good service requires frequent contact and opportunity for communication.

9. **Service providers know and use their resources.** For commissioners, that includes members of the district committee, the district executive, Scouting literature, and the commissioners’ initiative in locating other resources in the community.

10. Good commissioners are **problem solvers**. They have the can-do attitude.

11. Good service providers **appreciate good humor** and enjoy the process of service.

12. Alert unit commissioners **provide feedback to the council** on its service to units. They often know what council improvements would better help more units to succeed.

**In the years ahead, council success will increasingly depend on the responsiveness of commissioners to unit needs. Service is truly the hallmark of commissioners and the assurance of Scouting’s future.**



## The 10 Commandments of Unit Service

1. A unit leader is the most important person in Scouting.
2. Unit leaders are not dependent on us; we are dependent on them.
3. Units are not interruptions of our work; they are the purpose of it.
4. Unit adults do us a favor when they call.
5. A unit Scouter is central to our team—not an outsider.
6. Unit leaders are not cold statistics; they are human beings with feelings and emotions like our own.
7. A unit leader is not someone with which to argue or match wits.
8. Unit adults bring us their needs; it is our job to help meet those needs.
9. Unit volunteers are deserving of the most courteous treatment we can give them.
10. A unit is the lifeblood of this and every other council.

(Present the above on a flip chart, overhead projector, or PowerPoint. Invite discussion. Distribute as a handout.)

## A Parable

This parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule.

The mule fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule "praying," or whatever it is mules do when they fall into wells.

After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving.

Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, HE COULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up . . . shake it off and step up . . . shake it off and step up!" he repeated to encourage himself.

No matter how painful the blows or how distressing the situation seemed, the old mule fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, STEPPED TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE WALL OF THAT WELL! What seemingly would bury him actually helped him . . . all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, THE PROBLEMS THAT COME ALONG TO BURY US USUALLY HAVE WITHIN THEM THE VERY POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT US . . . AND BENEFIT SCOUTING, TOO!

(Distribute the above. Have participants read. Invite three people to each share a one-minute implication for commissioners.)

# Everything I Need to Know I Learned From Noah

Don't miss the boat.

Don't forget that we're all in the same boat.

Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.

Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something really big.

Don't listen to critics; just get on with what has to be done.

Build your future on high ground.

Two heads are better than one.

Speed isn't always an advantage; the snails were on board with the cheetahs.

When you're stressed, float awhile.

Remember that woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than the storm outside.

(Distribute the above.)

## Anecdotes

(Distribute the following. Then elicit from the group how a commissioner might use one or more of these with unit adults, unit committee meetings, unit banquets, roundtables, etc.)

Prepare handouts of the following **words of wisdom**:

- "The only things we keep permanently are those things we give away." —Waite Phillips, Philmont Scout Ranch donor
- We cannot direct the wind, BUT we can adjust the sails.
- Life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you respond to it.
- Lead your life so you won't be afraid to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.
- To the Scouting world you might be one person, but to one unit leader, you might be the Scouting world.
- The bridge you burn now may be the one you later need to cross.
- Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.
- **A lesson from geese:** As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird following. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if one bird flew alone. A group of Scouters who share a common direction and sense of community can provide better service because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.
- Laughter is the shortest distance between two people.
- There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child; there are seven million.
- The mark of an effective Scouter is to see something in a mud puddle besides mud.
- No man stands so tall as when he stoops to help a boy.
- Character is what you do when no one is looking.
- Praise does wonders for a boy's sense of hearing.
- **More wisdom from geese:** Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation with those who are headed where it wants to go (and is willing to accept their help as well as give its help to the others).
- A bend in the road is not the end of the road—unless you fail to make the turn!
- If you always learn from your mistakes, then your mistakes will seem worthwhile.
- Remember this: When a person goes into a hardware store looking for a drill or a drill bit, what he or she really wants is a hole. As a commissioner, ask yourself, "What kind of holes do my unit leaders want?" Then make sure you are providing them with the holes they need.

# Just for ADCs (MCS 401)

## Introduction

The assistant district commissioner is the shining star of Scouting. The ADC carries a vision of effective Scouting and must communicate that vision through unit commissioners to every unit leader in the district.

ADCs make or break a district's ability to ensure that every unit receives competent commissioner service. Even the best district commissioner in the council can't personally train and guide all of the unit commissioners in the district (in a 60-unit district, that's at least 20 people). So, ADCs are responsible for an assigned share of units in the district, and they supervise the commissioners who serve those units.

## ADC Responsibilities

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.

A good commissioner staff has one ADC for every 15 units. That's one ADC for every five unit commissioners needed.

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:

- Recruiting enough unit commissioners to serve their assigned units and area.
- Conducting personal coaching and orientation sessions for unit commissioners.
- Maintaining regular contact with their unit commissioners to provide guidance in unit service needs.
- Serving units with no assigned unit commissioner.
- Helping unit commissioners evaluate and improve their unit service performance.

## Good ADCs Have Good People Skills

They help recruit the right people.

They provide clear instructions and specific ideas for their staff.

They listen to what people say and what people feel.

They never play favorites.

They coach unit commissioners through real unit problem-solving situations.

They treat all Scouters with courtesy and dignity.

They praise each commissioner often for specific achievements.

They don't try to take over for their staff but are always ready to support or assist them to be successful.

## ADC Work Sessions

Service to individual units is best planned and evaluated when an assistant district commissioner meets with his or her assigned unit commissioners, usually as a part of the monthly meeting of the district's commissioner staff.

**Be sure to allow time in these breakout sessions of ADCs and their respective teams of unit commissioners to review the health of each unit by:**

- **Sharing important observations from recent visits with units.**
- **Giving priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit.**
- **Identifying specific ways to help each unit improve its program.**
- **Determining who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually this is the assigned unit commissioner, but more challenging situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member, or even the district commissioner.**
- **Checking the progress on last month's assignments.**

Much of the ADC's effectiveness is also through personal coaching of individual unit commissioners.

## Evaluation

How is commissioner work measured? ADCs measure both their own and their unit commissioners' effectiveness by asking these questions:

- Do my units have effective unit leaders?
- Do my units have youth members enthusiastically involved in a good unit program?
- Do my units have active unit committees?
- Do my chartered organizations feel a sense of ownership for their units, and do unit volunteers have good relationships with their chartered organizations?
- Do all units reregister on time?
- Do units show membership increases?
- Are my unit leaders happy to see me visit, or are they counting the minutes until I leave?
- Are my units reasonably active in district events?
- Have my units met the Journey to Excellence Performance Award criteria?

Commissioner self-evaluation worksheets are a great yardstick for ADCs to help unit commissioners evaluate their effectiveness. Review this form from the back of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* with participants.

## The Commissioner's Commission

ADCs should see that all new unit commissioners are promptly oriented and attend Commissioner Basic Training so that they can receive their commission.

Use the orientation projects from the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Commissioner Basic Training should be scheduled somewhere in the council at least every other month.

Use the commissioning ceremony found in the appendix of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

## ADC Open Forum

At the beginning of the session, have participants place questions and concerns about ADC work on 3-by-5-inch cards. Use the remaining session time to share and find answers to these questions.

# Recruiting New Commissioners (MCS 402)

## Fielding a Complete Team

Quality programs flourish and membership grows in a Scouting district only when there is a complete team of quality commissioners. This avoids overloading the same few volunteers who rarely say no, but who may find it easier to drop out of Scouting than to complain, “That’s enough! I can’t do any more!”

Know the standard. Provide a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units. A good staff also has one assistant district commissioner for every five unit commissioners, plus adequate roundtable commissioners.

In order for a district commissioner or ADC to earn the Commissioner’s Key, he or she must develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan.

## Recruiting Commissioners—Step by Step

Distribute copies of the chapter on recruiting in the “Commissioner Administration of Unit Service” section of this manual.

Develop a flip chart or other device to walk the group through all eight steps. Encourage discussion on each step.

Why people volunteer—a great discussion question. (Reference Selecting District People, No. 34512.)

## Group Recruiting

Group recruiting is a special and exciting approach for a district. It involves bringing three or more people together to hear about Scouting and then asking them to serve in some capacity. Key administrative commissioners and the district executive meet to plan and accept assignments for the group recruiting event.

Group recruiting has several advantages.

There are two types of group recruiting:

- Leadership conference. This is best used when there are only a few existing commissioners. Decide on the date, time, place, and nature of the event. Develop a list of many prospects at an informal gathering of community leaders. Select a host who can attract the prospects. The host invites prospects to his or her club, office, living room, barbecue, or other attractive or prestigious location. A luncheon is an appropriate setting. The program inspires, tells the Scouting story, presents the need, and asks for a commitment.
- Group recruiting in a single company or organization. The company president or other organization leader is asked to list and bring together selected employees, often working through company department heads or

the personnel director. The meeting, usually held on company time, informs, inspires, asks, and gets commitments. District leaders match people to roles and follow up immediately. A company may be asked to “adopt” and fill the entire staff.

## Highlights of Recruiting District Volunteers

Show the video *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: Part 2—Recruiting District Volunteers*, inside *Commissioner Service and District Operating Support*, AV-06DVD08.

## Where Do You Find Them?

Wonderful people are available for commissioner service. Begin a project inventory of index cards listing potential commissioners. Jot down information such as occupation, hobbies, children, volunteer experience, membership in organizations, interests, and the right person to help recruit them. Don’t discount anyone.

Consider such sources as:

- Your friends, associates, and business contacts.
- Chamber of commerce listings of organizations, major employers, boards of directors, and labor unions.
- Service club membership rosters.
- Educators; real estate brokers; shopkeepers; government employees; and other business, professional, and service people. Consider people whose activities cause them to travel through your district, as well as those who are permanently located in the district.
- National Eagle Scout Association members.
- The BSA Alumni Connection can provide names of alumni who have expressed interest in reconnecting to Scouting.
- Check boy applications for parents with previous Scouting experience.
- Former successful Scouters.
- Check FOS donor lists for people with special people skills.
- Neighborhood association leaders and other local opinion setters.
- Review past unit and district rosters with your district executive for names of former Scouts who are not now involved.
- Ask current Scouters, but don’t “steal” unit leaders; theirs is the most important role in Scouting.

- Concentrate on people who are no longer eligible for Jaycee membership because of the age limit of 35.
- Check with local presidents, managers, personnel directors, and owners for employees whose qualities match those for which you are looking.
- List other sources of commissioner prospects in your community.

## Recruiting Tool

Use *A Handbook for District Operations* to help recruit and orient new commissioners. It can help you make the sale. An online Fast Start can provide the prospect with information on the responsibilities of a unit commissioner.

## Recruiting Younger Commissioners

Do not rely on veteran Scouters. Go to sources of younger adults, i.e., Jaycees, new NESA members, younger professional people in the community, etc.

Younger prospects may be especially time-conscious.

- Be very specific and focused about what you ask them to do.
- Do not let their Scouting time get diffused in doing anything else in Scouting but unit service.

## And Remember

**Recruiting unit commissioners is a journey, not a final destination.**

# Orienting, Training, and Recognizing Commissioners (MCS 403)

## Introduction

One dramatic development in American society is the interest in 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:

• Online Fast Start or an orientation video	within 48 hours
• Personal coaching/ orientation	within two weeks
• Commissioner Basic Training	within two months, or use of the online modules with coaching sessions in between each module
• Arrowhead Honor	within one year
• Commissioner's Key	after three years
• Continuing education	every month/year
• Distinguished Commissioner Service Award	after five years

## Three Approaches to Training Commissioners

**Group training.** This is the most common and most effective approach. It provides fun and fellowship and builds Scouting spirit. These ingredients are as essential in Scouting training as is the knowledge imparted. Group training builds a team spirit in a group of commissioners dedicated to quality Scouting.

**Personal coaching.** Personal coaching may be used in a one-on-one situation or with an instructor and a small group of trainees. It is normally used to provide immediate training for new commissioners, as they will not be effective without training. This training method is sufficient to get them started, but they must attend a basic training course when it is available.

**Self-study.** The least desirable method, self-study should be used only when group training is not available and personal coaching is not possible. Self-study consists of reading assignments, etc., but must include contact with an instructor or coach.

## Orientation

Be sure the new commissioner views the online Fast Start located at [www.olg.scouting.org](http://www.olg.scouting.org) or the orientation video *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed*, AV-04V001R, within 48 hours of being recruited.

Coaching/orientation sessions for unit commissioners are usually conducted by district commissioners or assistant district commissioners, but sometimes by the district executive. Coaching sessions help develop good commissioner communication that extends far beyond training. Personal coaching is also on-the-job training.

Coaching sessions are short and related to the trainee's experiences on the job. Coaching breaks the total role of commissioners into bite-sized pieces for better digestion. Use the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* as part of your first orientation session with new commissioners. Review other sections of the fieldbook in subsequent sessions.

Review the orientation projects of the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Use the podcasts on the commissioner website as additional topics for further training of all commissioners.

## Basic Training

The new commissioner should participate in the three-session Commissioner Basic Training within two months of being recruited. The training involves actual visits to Scouting units and includes these sessions: "Units: The Commissioner's Greatest Priority," "How to Help a Unit," and "Why Commissioners?"

After completion of Commissioner Basic Training, the Trained Leader emblem may be worn below the badge of office.

Briefly review the latest edition of the "Commissioner Basic Training Manual," the second section in this manual.

Discuss and compare the two ways to do basic training:

- Three separate days with intervening supervised unit visits
- One-day course with unit visits just before and just after the course

Modules online can also be used with coaching sessions between each module to conduct practical or mentoring sessions.



## Arrowhead Honor

Only commissioners may wear the Arrowhead. It is a visible sign of competence. Arrowhead Honor 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.

Review the latest Arrowhead Honor requirements and projects.

Should be completed within a year of being recruited. Roundtable staff members earn the Scouter's Training Award.

## Commissioner's Key

Requires three years' tenure.

Review requirements.

## Continuing Education for Commissioners

Should occur every month at district commissioner staff meetings. Review the list of training topics in the appendix of "Commissioner Administration of Unit Service," section one of this manual.

The district commissioner and district executive select a topic each month that best matches the current skill needs of their commissioners. Parts of the training outlines in section one of this manual provide ready-to-go training topics for the district commissioner staff meetings.

Should occur every year at the annual council commissioner conference or the College of Commissioner Science. Review the list of suggested session topics.

## Distinguished Commissioner Service Award

The Distinguished Commissioner Service Award is designed to help upgrade commissioner service throughout your council and to recognize commissioners who have provided quality unit service and helped units succeed for at least five consecutive years. The award may be given to currently active council commissioners, assistant council commissioners, district commissioners, assistant district commissioners, unit commissioners, and roundtable/program forum commissioners. The requirements to earn the award are described in Chapter 10, Section I of this manual.

## Session/Classroom Techniques

Review the list of classroom ideas found in "Commissioner Administration of Unit Service," section one of this manual.

# Advanced Roundtable Leadership (MCS 404)

## Introduction

The roundtable commissioner's responsibility is to recruit, train, and motivate a staff.

## Recruiting a Full Staff

Steps in successful recruiting. Use Selecting District People to cover the steps.

View the video *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: Part 2—Recruiting District Volunteers*, inside *Commissioner Service and District Operating Support*, AV-06DVD08. Discuss the video to reinforce the steps.

Sources of prospects/where to look:

- Current Scouters
- Former Scouters
- Former Scouts
- Scouters who attend roundtables regularly
- Order of the Arrow members
- Pow wow leaders
- Day camp staff
- Recommendations of current staff
- Recommendations of district executives
- Recommendations of district commissioner
- Merit badge counselors
- Former Wood Badge staff members
- Alumni Connection listing of prospects

## Roundtable Evaluation

Evaluation is the first step to the next roundtable.

- We must know what we did right and wrong.
  - Do the right things again.
  - Improve and change the wrongs.
- Evaluations can be done by staff members and participants.
- Most of the time staff members do the evaluation.
  - Let the participants evaluate sometimes.

The best time to evaluate is immediately following the roundtable.

- This is when your knowledge is the sharpest.
- The 15 minutes immediately afterward will tell you more about it than a two-hour session a week later.

Things to consider:

- You asked the questions because you really wanted to know.
- Don't rationalize the answers.

- Use answers to make changes.
- Listen to what they say and give them what they want.
- How was the roundtable content (program features, games, projects, agenda order, etc.)? Was it complete, yet brief?
- How well did roundtable program items get carried out (clarity, enthusiasm, sense of purpose, usefulness)?
- How were the people relationships? (This is more important than the content.)
  - Staff members with participants
  - Participants with participants
  - Staff members with staff members
  - New people with experienced volunteers
  - Other relationships
- What percent of the agenda thoroughly involved participants?
- Was part of the program inspirational?
- Did everyone have fun?
- Cover any other evaluation items you think are important.

## Roundtable Finance

A large budget is not necessary.

Possible expenses:

- Name tags
- Handouts
- Recognitions
- Refreshments
- Project/activity material

Donated materials.

Free meeting place.

Consider a refreshment "kitty."

Council budget.

Districts do not have accounts.

## Roundtable Fine Points

Staff members must prepare for all situations:

- Always have a backup to units.
- Have more than enough material to handle any situation.
- Be flexible enough to make changes.
- Attendance is unpredictable.

Don't forget to start and end *on time*.

Once the roundtable is planned, everyone must have an agenda.

- This will ensure that they all know their responsibility.
- It will allow better transition and flow during presentation.

Provide the district executive with a copy of the plan.

- If they know what you're doing, they will be able to give you support.
- They will be aware of any time problems you're going to have.
- They will be able to inform you of any announcements you might be missing.
- They will be able to inform you of any special recognitions needed.

Support the staff.

- A supportive climate motivates people to do their best.
- Give your staff a call to see if you can be of assistance to them.
- Show confidence in individual staff members and in the staff as a whole.
- Let them know that you know they will do their best.
- Make assignments to fit their capabilities.
- They must realize how much the participants depend on them.
- Don't forget the two most important words:  
*Thank you!*
- Don't forget the five most important words:  
*You did a good job!*
- Open communication is important.
- Know their likes and dislikes.
- They must be able to say "I like that" or "I don't like that."
- They must know what is expected of them.
- Set the example.

## Case Studies

Split the group into small teams, each with a different problem to solve.

Regroup the entire class to report, exchange ideas, and draw upon the total group's experience.

Suggested case studies:

- A Scouter volunteered to bake a decorative cake for a special-event roundtable. The following week, this Scouter presents you with a \$30 bill for the cake. Who pays the bill?
- You just received a call from one of your roundtable staff members who told you that the building you normally use will be undergoing renovation for the next three months and cannot be used. Your next roundtable is two weeks away. What now?
- A guest speaker just used 20 minutes beyond his scheduled 10 minutes on the roundtable plan. It is now only 20 minutes before the scheduled closing ceremony. Yet, you still have 40 to 50 minutes of material to present. You need a plan—quick!
- You and your roundtable staff have been preparing a 30- to 35-page roundtable guide to hand out each month. A local business has been printing 60 to 70 copies a month, free. Now, however, they will need to charge for the service. What are your options?
- Create your own.

# Effective Unit Service in Low-Income Urban Communities (MCS 405)

Obtain copies of *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Low-Income Urban Communities*, No. 07-505, one for each participant.

## Introduction

This session refers to those urban communities where poverty is a prevailing influence, and where community considerations require refinement and flexibility for volunteer-led packs, troops, teams, crews, and posts to be successful.

Service to low-income communities is a part of our Scouting roots. Baden-Powell said, “Our aim is to give equal chances to all and to give the most help to the least fortunate.”

Distribute *Best Methods* samples.

## “Bottom Line” Success Stories

Have each person pull the “bottom line” folder out of the *Best Methods* samples.

Review the success stories.

- Have each participant read one of the stories aloud, or
- Divide into three teams. Assign each team one page and have them select one story to share with the overall group.

Present a list of benefits of volunteer-led Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, Venturing crews, and Explorer posts for the low-income urban community.

- The program provides young people a much-needed constructive relationship with an additional caring adult in the child’s local neighborhood. It provides an important contact with concerned adults outside the school.
- One of the greatest contributions of Scouting in low-income urban communities is the involvement of neighborhood adults in working with their own children. We strengthen local low-income urban adults’ abilities to care for their children.
- Scouting gives low-income urban people the opportunity and the help to come together to run their own lives. As an urban single adult in Rochester, New York, once said, “Scouting is an excellent vehicle for uniting inner-city neighborhoods—areas that are often divided by economic and social pressures.”

- The program gives adults a sense of self-worth and helps kids to develop self-esteem. Community volunteers help convince kids that they are worthwhile people.
- Packs, troops, teams, crews, and posts develop habits of good citizenship linked to the child’s real environment.
- The uniform, the name, the image, and the program of traditional Scouting places a low-income child on an equal status with youth everywhere.
- Scouting expands the urban child’s horizons beyond that of the home and school classroom.

While many things contribute to Scouting in low-income urban communities, two things are absolutely essential:

- A belief in the ability of low-income adults to contribute in important ways to Scouting for their children.
- A willingness to make an effort to use appropriate practices to involve low-income adults in Scouting.

## Recruiting Unit Adults

Use the “recruiting adults” folder from the *Best Methods* kit to help participants learn how to involve low-income urban adults in unit leadership.

## Overcoming Unit Financial Needs

Use the “unit funding” folder from the *Best Methods* kit to teach the participants ways to help units fund uniforms, equipment, summer camp, etc.

## People Considerations in Commissioner Service With Low-Income Urban Units

Use the “unit service” folder from the *Best Methods* kit. Develop an effective classroom technique or visual method for sharing the 20 statements.

# Effective Unit Service in Remote Rural Areas (MCS 406)

Obtain copies of *Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities*, No. 07-504, one for each participant.

## Introduction

Today there is a great variety of rural communities. Some are stable, high-growth areas, or otherwise responsive to conventional Scouting methods. The rural areas that pose the greatest challenge to normal Scouting operation are those characterized by poverty or isolation from urban areas. These areas are the special focus of this session.

Tailoring Scouting to rural areas is a part of our Scouting heritage. Baden-Powell taught that “what suits one particular troop or one kind of boy, in one kind of place, will not suit another within a mile of it, much less those scattered over the world and existing under totally different conditions.”

Distribute *Best Methods* kits.

## “Bottom Line” Success Stories

Have each person pull the “bottom line” folder out of the *Best Methods* kit.

Review the success stories.

- Have each participant read one of the stories aloud, or
- Divide into three teams, assign each team one page, and have them select one story to share with the overall group.

## Recruiting Unit Adults

Use the “recruiting adults” folder from the *Best Methods* kit to help participants learn how to involve rural adults in unit leadership.

## People Considerations in Commissioner Service With Rural Units

Use the “unit service” folder from the *Best Methods* kit. Develop an effective classroom technique or visual method for sharing the 20 statements.

## Rural Options

Present a variety of refinements for adapting Scouting to sparsely populated rural areas.

- Den aides instead of den chiefs
- Lone Cub Scouts/Lone Boy Scouts
- Wagon-wheel troops—weekly patrol meetings and monthly troop meetings (extended Saturday or Sunday meeting that includes an outdoor activity, community Good Turn, or family activity)
- School bus dens/school bus patrols
- Unit “mailboxes” at roundtables (folders or envelopes for each unit in milk crates)
- “Circuit riders”—using people who travel throughout a remote rural area on a regular basis, usually because of their job, to perform selected unit service tasks

# How to Remove a Volunteer (MCS 407)

Be sure each participant has the chapter on “How to Remove a Volunteer” from the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.

Present the following material with the help of a prepared flip chart or PowerPoint presentation. Allow plenty of time for discussion after each section.

## Overview

As a commissioner, you should be prepared to help guide volunteers with how to remove a volunteer.

**Note:** This session does **not** address removing a person for cause or grounds for legal action such as theft, misrepresentation, or committing an immoral act. (That information exists elsewhere.) This session will focus on the ineffective volunteer, the person who just isn't working out. First, here are some types of poor performance:

- **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.
- **Bad politics.** This volunteer is a poor team player who is not 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.
- **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 the coaching, training, or 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 other key unit Scouter make the change.

In the case of an elected officer, the local council may decide to go through the nominating committee process.

## Now Act

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

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 \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Your support in this transition would be appreciated as the \_\_\_\_\_ (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:
  - Be smooth and controlled.
  - Be shocked and emotional.

—Become angry.

—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 success.



# The Commissioner's Top 10 List (MCS 408)

## Introduction

Today everyone has their top 10 list, including commissioners. This session is designed to help experienced commissioners review their priorities and—for some of us—to get back to the basics.

This session summarizes key factors in good commissioner service. Most of the key points are covered in depth in other sessions.

## The List

(This session can be graphically enhanced with a banner, flip-chart page, or electronic portrayal of each of the 10 points.)

(Identify the chapter and page reference for in-depth information on each point.)

### No. 10—The Only Reason for Having Commissioners Is to Help Units Succeed.

(Have participants rapidly brainstorm as many specific ways in which a commissioner might help a unit as can be placed on a flip chart in five minutes. You may need to alternate with two recorders, each with a flip chart. If the group is large, hold a contest with two or three smaller groups.)

See *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, pages 15–23. Point out the nearly 300 commissioner actions in *Commissioner Helps for Pack, Troops, and Crews*.

### No. 9—Know the Standard: Provide a Ratio of One Unit Commissioner for Every Three Units. A Good Staff Also Has One ADC for Every Five Unit Commissioners.

(Share the ratio of units to unit commissioners for each district in the council.)

(Briefly review) The eight steps to recruit a commissioner (“Commissioner Administration,” section one of this manual).

(Briefly review) Group recruiting (“Commissioner Administration,” section one of this manual).

Fourteen sources for new commissioners (“Commissioner Administration,” section one of this manual).

### No. 8—Be Sure That Every New Commissioner Receives Basic Training Within Two Months of Being Recruited.

Why within two months?

Where and when will basic training be offered during the next six months?

See “Commissioner Basic Training” section of this manual.

### No. 7—Commissioners Must Continually Adjust Their Skills to Provide a More Valuable Service to Units. For All Commissioners, Training Is a Continuing Process—at Every Meeting, Every Month, Every Year.

(Dramatically present “Continuing Education” on pages 60–61.)

### No. 6—A Commissioner Plays Several Roles, Including Friend of the Unit, BSA Representative, Unit Doctor, Teacher, Coach/Counselor, and Mentor

(Take each of the six roles in turn and elicit from the group a couple of brief personal examples whereby participants have played the role.)

See *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, page 11.

### No. 5—Exceptional Commissioner Service *Exceeds Unit Leader Expectations* Rather Than Barely Meeting Their Expectations.

(Make a three-minute presentation on the concept of “exceptional service” as found on pages 24–25 in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*.)

(Ask for two or three examples of exceptional service from participants.)

## **No. 4—Commissioner Professional Relationships Should Involve the Finest Fraternal Qualities. They Both Share the Wreath of Service.**

(You may want to have a professional and a volunteer present this point together.)

Qualities of a good relationship:

- Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, respect, and recognition of each other's role and competency.
- When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth). In Scout districts, for example, mutual dependence results because district executives know they cannot possibly do all the work that needs to be done, and district volunteers know they need the coaching and experience of full-time professionals.
- If partners have complete confidence in each other, they will seek each other's counsel. Neither partner has a monopoly on wisdom, judgment, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision making, the combination is unbeatable.

(Have each participant give one short tip or guideline for developing good commissioner-professional relationships.)

See the "Commissioner Administration" section in this manual.

## **No. 3—"Commissioner Lifesaving" Is Providing Prompt, Intensive, and Often Persistent Care When Major Problems Occur. A Good Commissioner Is Prepared to Respond Quickly When a Unit Has a Unit Life-Threatening Situation.**

(See *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, section on "Be a Lifesaving Commissioner.") Definition of "commissioner lifesaving" (*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, page 27).

Typical hurry cases (*Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, page 28–29).

## **No. 2—Commissioners Have Many Tasks, But the Three Most Important Are:**

1. Coaching unit adults to enrich unit program.
2. Being an enabler for unit problem-solving.
3. Ensuring the annual on-time renewal of the unit charter.

## **And—Drum Roll—The No. 1 Way to Guarantee Good Commissioner Service: Although a Commissioner Needs Unit Program Information, His or Her Success Depends Largely on Good People Skills to Effectively Serve Unit Adults.**

(See *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, page 24, on "Frontline Diplomat.")

(Lead brief discussion on other people skills helpful to commissioners.)

Perhaps Scouting is never that simple, but sometimes it's good to summarize our tasks in a few simple words.

# District Commissioner Basics—An Outline (MCS 409)

The following outline can be used to develop and localize a course for district commissioners. Be sure each participant has the latest edition of “Commissioner Administration,” the first section of this manual.

## Introduction

The district commissioner recruits, trains, and directs an adequate team of commissioners to assure that all packs, troops, teams, and crews of the district have a quality program so that young people will remain in the Scouting program.

## District Commissioner Responsibilities

(Using an interactive activity with course participants, review all of the responsibilities of district commissioners included in Chapter 4 of the “Commissioner Administration” section.)

## Commissioner Recruiting—An Overview

(Use a flip chart, overhead, or PowerPoint presentation to outline overall methods of selecting and recruiting a complete staff. Point out that a more detailed session is needed in this topic. See the “Recruiting New Commissioners” training session in this section.)

- Recruiting commissioners—eight steps
- Group recruiting
- Agenda for a recruiting event
- Sources for commissioner prospects
- Recruiting resources
- Ratios
  - Ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units
  - One ADC for every five unit commissioners
  - One roundtable commissioner for each roundtable

## Training Commissioners

(Involve the group in an activity to review the “Six Elements of Good Commissioner Training.” See Chapter 10 of the “Commissioner Administration” section.)

## Considerations in Assigning Unit Commissioners

(Cover this topic in detail using Chapter 6 of the “Commissioner Administration” section.)

## Your Monthly Commissioner Staff Meeting

This meeting is sharply focused on the needs of individual units, and how to help unit adults improve the program of individual units.

This gathering needs to be monthly and not held in conjunction with any other meeting of the district. Any other arrangement will prevent the district commissioner and district executive from fulfilling their defined roles at the meeting.

**The most important part of the meeting is concurrent ADC breakout sessions with sufficient time for assistant district commissioners and their respective unit commissioners to review the health of each unit.**

- **Sharing important observations from recent visits with units.**
- **Giving priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit.**
- **Identifying specific ways to help each unit improve its program.**
- **Determining who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually this is the assigned unit commissioner, but more challenging situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member, or even the district commissioner.**
- **Checking progress on last month’s assignments.**
- **During these team meetings, the district commissioner and district executive will each sit in on the ADC group where their direct input is needed the most.**

The other essential part of each meeting is a brief training topic. Training is a continuous process for commissioners. The district commissioner and district executive should select a topic each month that matches current skill needs of their commissioners. The course outlines in this section, “Continuing Education for Commissioners,” provide ready-made training topics for district as well as council commissioner meetings. You can also use the podcasts on the commissioner website.

(Distribute sample meeting agendas from appendix G of the “Commissioner Administration” section, which become the work plan for the month.)

(If time permits, use one of the commissioner meeting scenarios from the DVD *Meetings of the District*.)

# Selecting a Thesis/Project Topic (DCS 601)

## Introduction

The doctor of commissioner science degree requires the satisfactory development of a thesis or project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council, and which must be suitable for publication.

Thesis must be a minimum of 20 double-spaced, typed pages (8½-by-11-inch white paper).

It must be bound in a nonpermanent binder so that the paper can be reproduced if advisable.

Thesis must show evidence of meaningful research, project development, and study.

Thesis becomes the property of the \_\_\_\_\_ Council, Boy Scouts of America. If published, full credit to the author will be given.

Thesis must be submitted to the council by July 1 for review and acceptance if degree is to be awarded at the annual fall conference.

Thesis must include a complete bibliography.

Some persons may prefer to do an approved project not requiring a written thesis. That's OK.

## Definitions

Thesis

Hypothesis

Theory

Law

## Selecting a Topic— First Step

The topic should be in your area of interest.

It should be in your area of experience.

It should be in an area of need.

It should concern a problem you can research yourself.  
This is an individual project!

It should be limited in scope to allow completion in about one year.

## Discussion of Topic Selection

Area of interest:

- Why? More likely to be completed.
- Resources—More likely to have adequate personal resources.
- Knowledge—More likely to have current knowledge.

Area of experience and expertise:

- Why? More personal knowledge.
- Resource—Personal experience.
- May have greater value.

Area of need:

- Study should be useful to you and other Scouters.
- Study may be useful to the district, council, area, region, or National Council.
- Makes better use of your time and talents.

Area that can be accomplished by you:

- Availability of reference material.
- Availability of needed resources.
- Availability of experienced counselors.

Area of research limited by time constraints:

- Time required to complete research.
- Time required to analyze material.
- Time required to write, rewrite, and type in final form.

## Selection of a Typical Topic and Initial Development, in Teams of Three

Divide the group into teams of three. Each team selects a topic to work on for the next 20 minutes, or has one assigned from a pool of topics available. Each team is encouraged to develop the initial stages as far as they can go in the 20-minute period. This period is to be devoted to what would be done and in what sequence, rather than how it would be done or its content.

Hold a discussion of selected teams' accomplishments. Give at least three teams five minutes each to discuss what they did and why. Their approaches may be critiqued by the group.

## Preliminary Steps in a Good Thesis or Project

Develop a thesis statement or problem definition. The project should attempt to find out why something works the way it does or perhaps why not. For example,

- What are the motivating factors in Cub Scout advancement?
- Why don't some boys graduate from Cub Scouting into Boy Scouting? (Factors or reasons.) It must include a way to improve current procedures.

For example:

- A new joining night approach
- New recruiting techniques for adult leaders
- New recruiting techniques for commissioners

Review existing literature in the field. This would, of course, include literature published by the BSA. It might include publications by others in the fields of education, management, volunteerism, motivation, etc. Do not limit yourself to BSA literature alone.

Observations, surveys, and interviews.

Examples:

- Watching den, pack, team, troop, or crew meetings over several weeks to spot leadership skills used or not used.
- Interviewing youth members, parents, leaders, etc., on their feelings, attitudes, etc.
- Surveying—a sample of new leaders and/or experienced leaders, etc.

Field testing. The project may test some new technique or idea so that conclusions as to its value can be drawn.

# Limiting the Scope of the Topic (DCS 602)

## Reducing the Problem to a Workable Size

Why?

- Confines to the area of most experience
  - Limits the area of required research
  - Allows completion within time constraints
- Limit the scope of study as to:
- Place—distance and area that can be covered
  - Time
  - Number of cases studied
  - A workable aspect or factor of the overall problem
  - Financial cost
  - Feasibility of the project
  - Availability of data

## A Practical Example

Training—in what area?

Cub Scout training—in the area of experience?

Cub Scout training for new leaders—what part of training?

Immediate Cub Scout training for new leaders—when is it provided?

Immediate essential Cub Scout training for new leaders—what type of training?

A method of providing immediate essential Cub Scout training to new Cub Scout leaders.

## Another Practical Example

Commissioner responsibilities.

Commissioner responsibilities to improve Journey to Excellence Performance Award Unit status.

Analysis shows that only 40 percent of units attended long-term camp.

A commissioner program to improve unit summer camp attendance.

## Preliminary Exploration of the Problem or Topic

Will help further limit the scope of the topic.

May involve:

- Library research
- Exploratory interviews and visits

- Firsthand observation

Develop a preliminary outline of thesis report.

## Thesis/Project Research

Consider and select the best sources of information related to the topic:

- Library research
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Interview schedules
- Scouting literature
- Group interviews
- Consultants
- Review of other studies related to the topic
- Statistical data
- Experimentation

Distribute copies of a previously completed thesis. Have the group skim through and identify where the author obtained data and information. Brainstorm other sources the author might have used.

Preparation of questionnaires and interview schedules:

- Selection of question content to best satisfy the purpose and outline of the study
- Importance of unbiased wording
- Precoding
- Layout and order of questions
- Preliminary trial in the field
- Revision as a result of trial
- Preparation of instructions for interviewers or questionnaire recipients

Determination of samples:

- Size of sample
- Methods of sampling
- Selection and location of sample in the field

Transformation of information from tool of inquiry to tables or reports:

- Highest possible accuracy and reliability of data
- Uniformity/consistency of data
- Completeness of data
- Organization or coding of data, notes, etc.
- Tabulation of data
- Interpretation of results



# Developing the Thesis/Project Outline and Writing the Report (DCS 603)

## Types of Theses

Informative reference

Analytical report

Experimental project report

## A Sample Thesis Outline

Prefatory material:

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Lists of illustrations, tables, and charts
- Preface, foreword, or letter of transmittal

Text or body of report:

- Introductory chapters of background, purpose, problem, delimitation of subject, methods, and summary of study findings
- Analysis and interpretation of findings
- Conclusions and recommendations based on data presented
- Summary chapter

Supplementary material:

- Appendixes
- Bibliography
- Index
- Glossary of terms

## Writing the Thesis

Revise your preliminary outline.

Assembling material:

- Use of diagrams.
- Supporting material.
- What to put in appendixes.
- Preparing the bibliography.
- How-to and reference material.
- Should you include an abstract?
- Follow the outline—revise again if necessary.
- Organize notes according to the outline.

Write the first draft.

- Introduction—Make clear the purpose of the thesis and arouse the interest of the reader.
- Paragraphing:
  - Each paragraph should represent a new phase of the subject.

— Avoid excessively long paragraphs and very short paragraphs.

- Transitions between paragraphs:

— Use of transitional device at the beginning of each paragraph.

1. Repetition of key word.
2. Direct reference.
3. Connectives.

— The transitional paragraph.

- The conclusion: Summarize or reemphasize the major point of the thesis.

Compile the bibliography. When using factual material or the thoughts of others, be sure to give accurate and complete credit in the bibliography.

## Reread, Revise, Rewrite

In revising the first draft, ask yourself the following:

- Have I made my purpose clear?
- Is the paragraphing correct?
- Do the paragraphs reveal the major points of the thesis?
- Is each paragraph unified and coherent?
- Are the paragraphs clearly related to one another?
- Are the sentences varied in structure?
- Can sentences be better written?
- Is my style too wordy?
- What expressions or words can be eliminated?
- Where is punctuation needed to make the meaning clearer?
- Are all words spelled correctly?
- What parts need to be rewritten for greater clarity?

Have a careful reader review your second draft and mark anything that is unclear or awkward.

Revise again.

## Type in Final Form, Edit, Correct, and Submit

# **Thesis Workshop (DCS 604)**

## **Individual Progress**

Have each person discuss their areas of interest and current progress in topic selection, definition, limitation, research, or writing.

Faculty and other participants provide help, counsel, and encouragement as needed.

## **Introduction of Scouters Receiving Ph.D.s and Discussions Led by Them on Their Research Projects/Theses**

# Advanced Commissioner Lifesaving (DCS 608)

Preferably, all participants have taken MCS 303 and MCS 304 on Commissioner Lifesaving. If they have not, spend more time on the introduction.

## Introduction

Briefly review the concept of “commissioner lifesaving” as found in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* and covered in MCS 303 and MCS 304.

A good commissioner becomes a “lifesaving commissioner.” Council and district commissioners may even help put together “lifesaving teams” for their districts. 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 a commissioner or a team of lifesavers, such a unit could become a “terminal case” and stop serving kids. Dead units, obviously, provide no help to youth. Perhaps district volunteers have made a pact not to lose another unit. Perhaps council commissioners have made a commitment never to lose a unit. In either case, major problems will require prompt, intensive, and persistent care. Have them use the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, especially the sections titled “Providing Unit Service,” “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner,” and “Counseling.”

Start by training your administrative commissioners. Be sure they understand the lifesaving concept. Obtain their commitment to carry the idea into their districts. Accent the training with unit success stories in your council.

## The Lifesaving Team Approach

Individuals can save lives, but paramedic teams are often better. Some districts may use a lifesaving team approach to save the most distressed or highest priority units.

It’s usually best not to organize lifesaving teams until a district’s basic commissioner structure is in place. Organize the commissioner staff first, then the lifesaving team. (But don’t wait to train individual commissioners in the lifesaving techniques described in the *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*. Most commissioners should still be qualified as individual lifesavers.)

There are two kinds of lifesaving teams: the strictly ad hoc, or temporary, team and the permanent lifesaving team.

## The Temporary Team

This is a lifesaving team of two or more people selected by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive, solely for the short-term goal of helping a

high-priority unit through a life-threatening situation. The selection of this ad hoc team is made on the basis of a single question: Who are the best people in the district to work with a particular unit during a particular crisis?

It may involve:

- The unit commissioner.
- An assistant district commissioner.
- A person in the community with special influence on the unit and its chartered organization.
- A key member of the chartered organization, perhaps the head of the organization.
- Another unit leader.
- Anyone who has the ability to help.

The unit commissioner may head the team. In some cases, however, it may be best for someone other than the unit commissioner to give team leadership. It depends on the situation and the people.

## The Permanent Team

A permanent lifesaving team works within the district to provide “Scouting CPR” and operate the district’s intensive care procedures.

Appointment is made by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive.

They select one person who heads the permanent team as his or her ongoing Scouting role. The team leader wears the badge of an assistant district commissioner. There may be a couple of people who serve only on the team as troubleshooting commissioners: they wear the unit commissioner badge. There may be other Scouters with other Scouting responsibilities who also serve on the team.

Units are assigned to the team by the district commissioner. The team works with the unit until its life-threatening crisis is over. The unit is then reassigned to a regular unit commissioner.

## The Decision

These different approaches are partly a matter of the philosophy of district leadership. One Key 3 does not want a hit team, a SWAT team, or any other kind of special team, permanently set up by the commissioner. Another Key 3 thinks a permanent team is a great idea. Some districts do well with the individual lifesaving commissioners.

Decide what plan best fits each district. What is indisputably important is that the council has some plan of action in every district to give special help to priority units with critical needs. Council and district commissioners are the key players in Scouting to virtually stop dropped units in the council. The decision is yours.

# Preventing Commissioner Burnout (DCS 610)

## Introduction

How many of you have at one time or another thought, “I can’t do Scouting one more day. I’m sick of it”?

What influenced you to change your mind and remain in the program? (Get participant responses.)

We all have those feelings from time to time. Whether we work with a unit or on the commissioner staff, we have to be ready to face the reality that everyone gets burned out with Scouting at one time or another. This course will look at some ways we can help overcome those burnout situations and motivate ourselves and others toward better tenure in the BSA.

What are some of the types of burnout that occur in people?

- Fatigue
- Boredom
- Lack of motivation
- Others?

## Fatigue

- What are some of the signs of fatigue?
  - Tiredness
  - Low energy
  - Lack of ideas and planning
  - Others?
- What might be some of the solutions to combating fatigue that you could try?
  - Take a vacation.
  - Have someone else take over for a meeting or two.
  - Share an idea or enlist the help of others on a project.
  - Go to bed earlier.
  - Get help with your late-night TV addiction.

## Boredom

- A person can be bored without being fatigued. Boredom means that you are no longer interested in the task or event.
- What are some ideas to prevent or cure boredom? List the responses. Be sure to include the following:
  - Look for a change of pace—change meeting places, learn a new skill.
  - Visit another commissioner or other Scouting function—see what others are doing, gather ideas from others.

— Plan for a special trip, such as a Philmont commissioner course or special activity.

— Teach a skill to others—be part of a commissioner training staff or help with a training event.

— Redevelop your enthusiasm—read inspirational magazines.

— Reflect on how far you have come over the past few years as a commissioner.

— If you have been serving the same units, perhaps you should ask your district commissioner for a change of assignment.

## Lack of Motivation

- Many times the cause for burnout is lack of motivation to keep trying.

What is motivation? Allow time for a few responses. Motivation is often misunderstood. The dictionary definition of *motivation* is something “from within, not without, that prompts or incites an action.”

- What is the only real way to motivate? (Allow time for responses.)

The only way to get a person to do something is to help that person to **want** to do it.

We can’t use money to motivate ourselves or others, so we must find other incentives to maintain motivation and prevent burnout.

— Keep up-to-date on your commissioner responsibilities. Take a new training course.

— A sincere, interested, helpful, and enthusiastic attitude will go a long way in motivating others.

— You need to realize how important your individual talents, interests, and skills are to Scouting.

— A sense of belonging to a group can create loyalty and motivate a person to continue. People will do a good job and remain active when they feel their voice is heard and their opinions are valued. Offer constructive ideas for improving commissioner service in your district. Help make decisions and solve problems.

— Provide and seek recognition.

## Time Management

Some burnout may relate to how we organize and use our time.

These tips will help in managing your commissioner time:

- Decide what’s important. Set your commissioner priorities. Do those things that will make a difference in the life of a unit—that will solve a problem or improve unit program.

- Make commissioner service your primary Scouting role. Don't try to do three or four other things in Scouting.
- Keep Scouting papers sorted out.
  - Organize and file the stuff you can use—key manuals and guidelines.
  - Throw out what you don't need.
  - Don't let mail accumulate.
  - Use your commissioner program notebook for key notes, things to do, names, and phone numbers.
  - Don't waste time always looking for the papers you need.
- Schedule appointments with long-winded people just before a meeting you must attend. This will cut down on time wasted by people who tend to overstay their welcome.
- Group your commissioner tasks and appointments. Going to the roundtable? Good. Make a delivery en route. Arrange to meet with a unit leader before the roundtable. Plan to visit with others during the break.
- Don't feel guilty about saying "no" (gracefully, of course). You just can't do everything that people may ask you to do.
- Don't procrastinate. If the job looks too big, break it down into manageable pieces.
- Listen carefully—it saves time and helps you get it right the first time.
- Make a weekly commissioner to-do list. Mark the priorities with an "A," other important tasks with a "B," other items with a "C." Do the As first.
- Make a schedule and stick to it.

## Commissioner Wellness

Learn to take it easy. Take time out for yourself to relax.

Keep your weight under control.

Get regular exercise. Stay fit.

Lead a balanced life.

Seek prompt medical help for problems.

# Consider Your Spouse and Family (DCS 611)

## Introduction

How many of you have known good, dedicated, hardworking volunteers who have left Scouting because they had difficulties dealing with their spouse and/or family regarding Scouting?

This course is intended to assist commissioners in ways to understand and strengthen their marriage and/or family relationships so that Scouting augments rather than detracts from the family and increases your personal happiness and tenure as a commissioner.

## An Analogy

Show a large wedding picture and a stringed musical instrument.

Ask the group to brainstorm for a minute and determine what these two items have in common.

Marriage and/or family relationships and this stringed instrument have a lot in common. They are both priceless in value and beautiful to look at. In addition, the value of both increases with age. If given proper attention, both can bring a feeling of satisfaction, exhilaration, and pleasure. However, both can get out of tune if not treated properly. Being out of tune does not lessen the value of either. Attention by the skilled hands of those who know them best are needed to adjust them so that they can produce the maximum amount of pleasure.

Although we will be talking more specifically about marriage during this course, the same types of problems would apply to family relationships in the case of an unmarried Scouter.

A finely tuned marriage that is maturing will add greatly to your success as a person and as a commissioner. It has been said, "As the marriage functions, so functions much of the rest of your relationships." Scouters are the kind of people who make good marriage partners. They know how to give love and build character, two essential ingredients of a marriage.

## Let's Talk About It

The following are three short skits to present problems to be resolved. These can be ad-libbed.

Perform the skits.

*Skit 1* Cast: one male, one female  
Materials: Briefcase, man's BSA hat, feather duster, table  
Scene: Man holding briefcase and wearing hat is prepared to leave for evening.  
Woman is holding a feather duster.

As man speaks, woman tries to interject with "But . . . but . . . wait."

Man: Boy! What a day I've had! I'm not sure if I'm coming or going! Oh sweetheart, I'm on my way to the district commissioner's meeting. I'll just grab a bite to eat on the way. Don't wait up for me. I'll be late. Kiss the kids goodnight . . . see you later, dear. (Man exits. Woman stands with her hands on her hips or with her arms folded, and speaks with frustration in her voice.)

Woman: I didn't even know he *had* a meeting tonight. He's even forgotten the Browns are coming for dinner! *Now* what do I do? We simply *must* improve our communication!

*Skit 2* Cast: one male, one female  
Materials: Woman's BSA uniform, books or briefcase, newspaper, chair, vest and glasses for man, soup can, small table with telephone  
Scene: Woman is preparing to leave in uniform. She holds books or briefcase and a can of soup. Man is sitting at the table reading the newspaper. As the woman begins to speak, the man looks frustrated and looks at her rather than the newspaper.

Woman: John, I'm leaving now for the troop charter renewal meeting. Here is a can of soup for supper. (Puts soup on the table.) Make sure the kids are in bed by 8:30 sharp and don't let them get into anything! Don't forget to take all my phone messages. You know where I'll be. See you later, dear. (Woman exits.)

Man: (Lays paper down angrily on table.) I wish she would tell me in advance where and when she is going! Sam, get out of the refrigerator! Kathy, stop hitting your brother! (Answers phone and pauses.) Yes, yes, I'll tell her when she gets home. (Slams down the phone.) We need to make better plans.

*Skit 3* Cast: One woman, one female teenager  
Materials: Phone on table, BSA uniform, radio with headphones, books or briefcase  
Scene: Teen with headset on ears swinging to the music. Mother is leaving with books or briefcase.



Woman: Jan, I'm going to roundtable. (As she speaks, her voice gets louder.) You know the number at the church. Please take good care of your little brother . . . now, no friends over . . . lock up the house when I leave. I'll be late. (Pause.) Be good! I love you. Did you hear what I said?  
(Woman exits.)

Teenager: (As she listens to the music, she nods her head like she's listening to her mother. As soon as her mother leaves, she picks up the phone and dials.)

Hi, Susan! Hey, Mom has gone to one of her gross Scout meetings again. (Pause.) Yeah, she's always gone. I wonder if she really does love us, she's gone so much of the time. Sometimes I wish Jimmy had never gotten into Scouting.

together, we keep the house tidy, care for the children, and share good meals. Then I can perform my commissioner duties more effectively. My spouse can pursue her activities more effectively. We care about each other and *show it often*.

3. I involve my spouse in my commissioner responsibilities. It makes for a better relationship.

### Skit 3

What was different about the type of problems shown in the third skit?

### Possible Problem

I am a single parent. I don't have time for everything.

### Solution

As a single parent, I must plan ahead and carefully budget my time. I am careful not to take on too many responsibilities outside my home.

## Solving the Problems

Explain that the skits will now be evaluated to identify the problems and possible solutions. The problems and solutions will be drawn from the participants.

As you evaluate each skit, write participants' comments on a flip chart.

**Skit 1** What were two problems portrayed in this skit?

**Problems** 1. We never communicate with each other; that way, we never argue.

2. Family is getting in the way. I don't have time for Scouting.

**Solutions** 1. Communication is the key to good organization within the family. All family members are then aware of what is happening when it happens.

When you know things have gotten off track, speak up. Smart couples look for ways to ease tensions before they get out of control.

2. Family *must* come first, but Scouting is important, too. I always schedule time accordingly.

**Skit 2** What about the second skit? What type of problems existed there?

**Problems** 1. There is no organization in my household, only confusion and frustration!

2. My spouse does not care for me!

3. She just does her own thing.

**Solutions** 1. We plan together and try to keep our priorities in proper order.

2. Consider your spouse! By working

## Other Problems to Discuss

There are other areas, with regard to Scouting, that often cause friction and problems that we should address.

(Have these prepared on a flip chart with space available to write comments.)

**Finances.** There is never enough money. It all goes to Scouting.

*Solution:* Plan a budget.

**Time together.** We never go on family vacation because vacation time all goes for Scouting.

*Solution:* This year we go on family vacation and Scouting next year. But we always do fun things together!

**Values.** What she does for Scouting is a waste of time.

*Solution:* What she does for Scouting is important and I support her! We communicate our values.

**Overload.** If I get asked to hold one more position or take on one more role in this organization, I will quit.

*Solution:* Scouting is important to me, but I know my limitations. To avoid overloading myself, I may have to say no without feeling guilty.

## Spouse Recognition

It is important that we recognize the spouse and family. Many things can be done in small but meaningful ways. Show just how much a spouse/family is appreciated by the Scouting program.

Ask for suggestions of ways a spouse can be recognized and encouraged.

Try these ideas:

- Use a spouse appreciation certificate: the Scouter's Husband Award, the Scouter's Wife Award, or a "thank you" pin.



- At unit, district, and council functions, select one spouse to represent all and present flowers, candy, plaque, poem, or song.
- At recognition dinners, place a card, poem, or flower near each plate.
- Ask an executive or key commissioner to send a thank-you letter to each spouse.
- Recognize spouses at all events and activities.
- Have a Scouter testimonial for and on behalf of the spouses.
- Conduct an annual commissioner spouses' recognition day—barbecue, picnic, or other appropriate activity.
- Schedule a spouses' day at camp.

# Assessing Council and District Health (DCS 620)

Learn about the resources necessary to assess a council's or district's health related to providing quality unit service. Learn how to use the tools available to commissioners in evaluating success.

## Resources:

1) A Plan for Functioning Districts; 2) District Key 3; 3) Standard District Operations Structure; 4) District Nominating Committee Worksheet; 5) District Executive Job Description; 6) "Staffing the District" CD-ROM Online Course; 7) Selecting District People manual; 8) Council and District Plan Book; 9) A Self-Evaluation Guide for Successful District Operation; 10) Objectives Kit—a) Objectives Kit Contents flyer, b) Council and District Growth Plan Workbook, c) Centennial Quality Commitments Chart (formerly Index of Growth), d) Membership Growth Opportunity Index; 11) Self-Evaluation for Commissioners; 12) Unit Visit Tracking System Use; 13) Centennial Quality Award Discussion Guide; 14) Guidelines for Unit Self-Assessment and Action Planning Meeting; and 15) Unit Self-Assessment Tool

## Objectives of Session:

- Discuss who is involved with assessing council and district health.
- Review the district operations structure.
- Discuss how goal setting helps in guiding success.

Standard District Operations Structure (Review organizational chart)

(Reference District Nominating Committee Worksheet and District Executive Job Description)

1. Use what works, 2. Ideal district, 3. Ways to make it work.

Reference "Staffing the District" CD-ROM Online Course.

**A Plan for Functioning Districts:** 1) District Executive's Day of Planning; 2) Key 3 Meeting (Reference flyer "District Key 3"); 3) Meeting with Chairman of Each Operating Committee; 4) Commissioner Staff Meeting; 5) District Committee Meeting; 6) District Roundtables.

### **Selecting District People (Reference Six Tasks for Volunteer Success)**

Discuss "cultivation" (pages 11-12)

Talk about "volunteer retention" (pages 23-24)

Discuss contents of Council and District Plan Book (reference page 13)

A Self-Evaluation Guide for Successful District Operation (reference page 10)

### **Review District and Council Objectives Kit Contents:**

1) Objectives Kit Contents flyer, 2) Council and District Growth Plan Workbook, 3) Centennial Quality Commitments Chart (Previously Index of Growth Chart), 4) Membership Growth Opportunity Index

### **Key Steps to Success in Commissioner Service:**

1) Self-Evaluation for Commissioners, 2) Measuring Progress, 3) Unit Visit Tracking 2.0 System Use, 4) Journey to Excellence Performance Award Discussion Guide, 5) Working with Units to Assess Their Program—a) Guidelines for Unit Self-Assessment and Action Planning Meeting, and b) Unit Self-Assessment Tools

# Beyond BCS 114: The Commissioner and Professional—A Working Relationship (DCS 701)

Learn more about the relationship between the commissioner and the professional. How can the two work closely together to reach a common goal of providing quality service to units?

## Resources:

1) Good Commissioner-Professional Relationships (BCS 114) Outline; 2) A Guide for Volunteers on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships, No. 14-144; 3) A Professional Workshop on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships, No. 14-145; 4) Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships: A Strategic Issue for Professionals, No. 14-146; 5) The Scout Executive's Code; 6) The District Executive; 7) Current information on the "OMS—The Operational Management System" or its replacement; 8) Information on "Critical Achievements for Professionals or Goal Setting Information"; 9) Six Major Tasks for Volunteer Success; and 10) Council and District Relationships flier.

## Objectives of Session:

1. Discuss the importance of building relationships between volunteers and professionals.
2. Review how professionals are evaluated for their achievements and how volunteers relate to those accomplishments.

Overview of Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships: A Strategic Issue for Professionals (reference No. 14-144, No. 14-145, and No. 14-146)

**Qualities of a Good Relationship—**1) Partnership; 2) Understanding what the other brings to the table; 3) Seek each other's counsel; 4) Enjoy each other's company; 5) Understand the philosophy that we use tools and things, but not people. We involve volunteers, rely on them, empower them, or enable them; 6) Human relationships (looking at each other's role and competency); 7) Mutual trust; 8) Mutual respect; 9) Mutual recognition; 10) Communication—Being a coach, not the boss; 11) Open communication constantly; 12) Clearly define what you expect from them in their position; 13) Provide them with the resources they need to carry out their job; 14) Knowing each other's strengths; 15) Value their available time; 16) Match their interest and talents with the task at hand; 17) Hard work; 18) Know when to ask them to help and get out of their way so they can fulfill their role; 19) Know when they need assistance and training; 20) Know when to be a "mirror" and when to be a "candle;" 21) High tech/high touch; 22) Technology brings new power and efficiency;

23) Creates a need for face-to-face interactions; 24) Create a non-judgmental relationship; 25) Make them comfortable to ask for help; 26) Be objective and impartial.

### Tricks of the trade:

1) Do what you say you are going to do; 2) Make sure you write down any commitments; 3) If you cannot accomplish what you say you will do, be professional and call them to let them know when and what you can do to help them; 4) Always say "thank you;" 5) Get to know their assistant in business, their spouse, and who their family is; 6) Know whether they like communications by e-mail, telephone, or personal visit.

## The Scout Executive's Code (Read)

### Role of the Professional/Volunteer

The professional recruits, trains, and guides capable and dedicated volunteers to carry out the various programs. He/she works with volunteers in setting goals and forming plans. He/she provides administrative guidance to obtain the greatest result from the volunteers' investment of time and effort. He/she serves as advisor to officers and committees. He/she maintains a good relationship with community groups that are present or potential chartered organizations. He/she helps units provide a quality program.

The volunteer on the council level is responsible for forming and carrying out plans to promote Scouting. This includes setting membership goals, budgets, training programs, and other details. The volunteer on the district level works to help units succeed in the areas of program, membership, and finance. Volunteers make a difference in the lives of youth and have a hand in shaping our future citizens.

### Together:

Volunteers make the vital decisions of Scouting at the district, council, and national levels.

Professionals counsel and help prepare volunteers for decisions to be made, but they never lose sight of where the final authority rests in major decisions.

Reference the phrase—"volunteer-driven and professionally guided." (Discuss what this means and how it can be accomplished at its best.)

**DISCUSS AND GET COMMENTS FROM GROUP:** What do professionals expect from volunteers? What do volunteers expect from professionals?

Details about the responsibilities of the district executive (Use the handout on the district executive from *The District* manual.)

Discuss the professional goal-setting and evaluation process, which includes: 1) operational management system, 2) critical achievements, 3) goal-setting process, 4) quarterly interim reviews, and, 5) the annual performance review process.

How are commissioners and professionals similar?

1) Wreath of service on badge of office, 2) carry out their responsibilities as a “commissioned” volunteer or professional, 3) first professionals were unpaid commissioners.

### **Six Major Tasks for Volunteer Success (reference brochure and in Selecting District People)**

1) Define responsibilities—a) Concise role descriptions in writing;

2) Let them know what is expected;

3) Don't minimize the commitment;

4) Match short-term and long-term commitments to the individual;

5) Select and recruit—a) identify, recruit, and engage a full team of volunteers, b) involve others who can assist you in recruiting others, c) fit the right person to the right position at the right time;

6) Orient and train—a) Provide an orientation of their job within a few days of them saying “yes”, b) give them enough to get started as quickly as they can to keep them engaged, c) use fast start and online training for immediate connection to the program, d) use informal and defined training courses to help them with the tools they need to be successful;

7) Coach volunteers—a) enable them to do their assigned tasks, b) remove roadblocks, c) serve as a sounding board, d) reassure them as to what they are doing, e) show them how what they are doing connects to the overall success, f) it is ongoing, g) it helps them succeed, h) builds confidence and their self-esteem, i) recognize achievement, j) be prompt, k) be consistent, l) thank them often, m) be personal, n) praise them for successes they accomplish, o) be specific in your praise—it motivates, reinforces, and inspires, p) evaluate performance.

Use the self-evaluation tools to help with them knowing how they are doing. Self-evaluation is the least threatening and sometimes can be motivating. It helps keep things going well and helps improve what is happening. Failure to evaluate implies you don't really care about what they do. Be quick to listen, slow to speak.

### **Critical to success—a good working relationship (reference handout Council and District Relationships)**

A. Who is responsible?; B. Responsibilities of—

1. Professional 2. Volunteer; C. Tips for better relationships—1. Be positive, 2. Be enthusiastic, 3. Be well prepared, 4. Be accessible, 5. Always return calls and e-mails in a timely manner, 6. Know their names, what their interests are outside of Scouting,

7. Create a welcome environment in your district at all levels, especially for new Scouters to feel like a part of the group, 8. Make efficient use of their time, 9. Plan meetings to be on time, follow the agenda, stay on tasks, end the meeting on time, 10. Keep your commitments, 11. Match talents with interests with abilities to lead or follow

Professional Development Level 1 (PD-L1)—A. Part of every professional's basic training; B. What is offered?

1. District Operations, seven hours; 2. Key 3 Plan, one hour; 3. District Committee Meeting—role play, one hour; 4. Art of Volunteerism, six hours; 5. Nominating Committee Process, one hour; 6. Commissioner Service, one hour; 7. Roundtable, one hour.

Have each participants complete a personal action plan to set some goals of what two to three things they are going to do when they return to their district or council related to this session—

A. What can I do to create a better relationship with my professional counterparts?

B. What suggestions can I make to my professional to help us have a better relationship?

# Quality District (DCS 715)

Learn about “Elements of Being a Quality District—to ensure success in every area, what does it take?”

## Resources:

Quality District form, Implementation Guide, Membership Validation Procedures, Commissioner worksheets, and Unit Self-Assessment forms

## Objectives of Session:

1. Determine what it takes to have a quality district that provides quality program support to the units in their geographical area of service.
2. Discuss what “quality” is and why it is important to our success.

Elements of being a quality district—to ensure success in every area, what does it take?

The criteria to qualify for the Quality District award.

### What does the word “quality” mean?

A. When you look it up in the dictionary—1. Peculiar and essential character; 2. degree of excellence; 3. a distinguishing attribute; 4. an acquired skill; 5. synonyms of “quality” property, character, attribute; 6. applicable to any trait or characteristic whether individual or generic.

B. Primary focus—“To improve the QUALITY of program in every unit in America!”

What tools do we use to measure quality in a district? (Talk about what is available. Solicit the list from your participants.)

**Membership Validation Procedures:** 1) Fees paid for membership by council and approved by board, 2) agreement to follow procedure by volunteers and professionals, 3) certification by council and district Key 3, 4) criminal background checks, 5) mailing of registration cards, 6) personal welcoming call, 7) semiannual “unit health” reviews and action plans, 8) unusual changes in membership—additions and losses, 9) standards of membership and leadership, 10) all youth registered, 11) open door policy.

**Commissioner worksheets**—one for each type of unit.

What is purpose in using the form? Allows commissioner to evaluate what they saw at a meeting.

How do you use this after completing it?

**Unit Self-Assessment forms**—one for each type of unit

What is the purpose in using this form? Involves the unit leadership and the commissioner in looking at the unit’s program, their vision, and what we can do to help them.

How do you use this to your advantage?

### Quality Unit status

What is its purpose?

How do we integrate this program into our annual, monthly, and daily operation plan?

**Criteria for success**—1) Review commitment and achievement form, 2) reference the Implementation Guide, 3) review frequently asked questions, 4) discuss Implementation schedule.

**What Key Ingredients Does It Take To Achieve Success?** 1) Attitude, 2) commitment, 3) involvement, 4) a listening ear, 5) what else? 6) finally—a smile and an added thank you!

## Closing Thought

“Act or be acted upon”—Stephen Covey in *Daily Reflections for Highly Effective People*

# Chapter 6—Commissioner Conferences at Philmont Training Center

The national commissioner conferences that take place each summer at the Philmont Training Center near Cimarron, New Mexico, offer commissioners:

- A mountaintop training conference with a topflight faculty.
- The inspiring ambiance of a big sky sunset over a working ranch in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.
- Family programs for all groups from nursery through adult; the whole family benefits.
- Recreation and personal time in an area rich in history and natural beauty.
- A week of Scouting fellowship.

Council commissioners and assistants, and district commissioners and assistants should attend the **Administration of Commissioner Service or Advanced Administration Commissioner conference**. Send the most talented and promising unit commissioners to the **Unit Commissioner or Advanced Unit Commissioner conference**. They can also attend an actual College of Commissioner Science

course at the Philmont Training Center. Select people to attend who will return home and set a positive example in quality service to units in the council. District commissioners might also attend the **District Key 3 conference** with their district chair and district executive. Council commissioners should consider attending the **Council Key 3 conference** with their council president and Scout executive. The Key 3 conferences are a great team-building experience.

The following quote sums up the attitude of many commissioners who visit Philmont each summer: “The courses at Philmont offer an extensive look at the commissioner service team. You leave Philmont with so much more enthusiasm, higher expectations, and eagerness to apply what you have learned. Visiting Philmont with your family is exciting—there are so many activities, hikes, and tours for children, spouses, and even for you between class times. The classroom experience is filled with fun, laughter, and lots of knowledge.”

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