



**Scout Association of Australia
Western Australian Branch**

BRANCH EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Summary

This Policy applies to all Volunteers and Staff of the Scout Association of Australia, Western Australian Branch (“the Association”).

This Policy deals with harassment, discrimination, bullying and other unacceptable behaviour. It looks at what is meant by these terms and what to do if a person is subjected to any of these forms of behaviour. All Volunteers and Staff are required to familiarise themselves with, and comply with, this Policy.

Traditionally, policies of this nature apply to an organisation’s employees only. However, in addition to the professional staff who support the Association in the day-to-day operation of the business, there are many volunteers who devote their time, passion and energy to ensure that youth members are provided with exciting programs that allow them to develop in line with the Mission Statement.

A breach of this Policy will be regarded by the Association as a serious matter and appropriate action will be taken to ensure that the Policy is effectively enforced.

Peter F. Jones
General Manager

for

The Scout Association of Australia, Western Australian Branch, Branch Management Committee

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Equity and Diversity Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This Policy applies to all members of the Association, whether an adult leader, adult support person, paid employee or a youth member.

All members have a right to participate in Scouting in an environment free of harassment, discrimination and bullying.

Equity means a fair go for everyone and Diversity means making the most of the differences people bring to achieving the Scouting aim.

This Policy details:

- § what constitutes “unacceptable behaviour”;
- § the means of dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour;
- § how complaints regarding unacceptable behaviour may be resolved;
- § the roles and responsibilities of various persons and the Association;
- § the consequences of a breach of this Policy; and
- § the measures to be taken to make all members aware of the Policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Association is committed to zero tolerance of harassment, discrimination, bullying and other unacceptable behaviour as outlined in this Policy.

Association members and employees are expected to act in accordance with the general standards of community decency and in accordance with the standards prescribed by relevant State and federal laws as outlined in this Policy. Sometimes, individual perceptions about what is 'unacceptable' may vary, particularly given the young age of some members. There may at times be a fine line requiring the exercise of common sense, maturity and clear judgement on the part of adults.

Some types of unacceptable behaviour will result in administrative or disciplinary action and/or charges under either civil or criminal law. Examples of such behaviour include behaviour that:

- is inconsistent with the objectives of Scouting, or is likely to damage group cohesion or leader relationships by affecting the mental and physical health or safety of the individual or the group;
- takes advantage of, or threatens, the person or personal integrity of a subordinate peer, superior, or minors;
- damages, or is likely to damage, the reputation of Scouting;
- is of a serious nature; or
- is unlawful under civil or criminal law.

Scouting is effectively 'in loco parentis' in relation to youth members under its care. This means that Scouting acts as a parent of the youth member in the care of the Association and must accept all of the responsibilities of a parent. Being in this position of responsibility means that any adult person involved in Scouting who engages in unacceptable behaviour in relation to another member of Scouting is committing a very serious act which may have severe consequences for that person and the Association.

WHAT IS MEANT BY “DISCRIMINATION”, “HARASSMENT”, “SEXUAL HARASSMENT”, “BULLYING”, AND “OTHER UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR”?

General

Behaviour which is belittling, offensive, intimidating or threatening, and is directed at an individual or a group is generally unacceptable. It may be the result of some real or perceived attribute or difference (such as age, disability, race, gender, religion or sexual preference). Unacceptable behaviour is unwelcome, unsolicited and unreciprocated behaviour that may be a ‘one-off’ or repeated, and may have been intended as a joke.

Unacceptable behaviour must not be confused with legitimate advice or comment (including negative comment or feedback) from leaders on the performance or related behaviour of an individual or group, and which is intended to assist persons to improve their performance.

Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome, unsolicited or unreciprocated behaviour that a reasonable person would find intimidating, offensive or humiliating. Harassment may be repeated or one-off behaviour and may be verbal, written, visual or physical. Importantly, harassment can occur even when the person engaging in the behaviour did not intend to intimidate, offend or humiliate the other person and/or was unaware that this was the effect of their behaviour. For example, a practical joke may be harassment of an individual even where others find the behaviour funny and non-offensive.

Harassment can take many forms, including:

- Derogatory comments based on an individual’s sex, age, mental or intellectual or physical or psychiatric disability or impairment, marital status, parental status, nationality, race, political opinion, religion or sexual preference.
- Derogatory comments about the physical characteristics, abilities or the mannerisms of a person.
- Sexual harassment (see section following)
- The spreading of malicious rumours or public statements of a derogatory nature about a person.
- Unnecessary physical contact.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as “repeated inappropriate behaviour, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity”.

Examples of bullying can include:

- § Continuous exclusion of a person, or group, from normal conversation or work-related social activities.
- § Disparaging or unnecessary comments about a person’s work or capacity to work.
- § Interference with a person’s work space, work materials, equipment or property.
- § Abusive, insulting or offensive language
- § Behaviour or language that frightens, humiliates, belittles or degrades
- § Persistent teasing or regularly making someone the brunt of practical jokes or pranks

It is not 'bullying' for an adult to direct and correct the behaviour of youth members, where warranted, provided that the methods used are fair, yet firm, and not likely to give rise to complaints of harassment or amount to misuse of authority or abuse of power. Misuse of authority or abuse of power can take the form of abusive, belittling, bullying, offensive or threatening words and behaviour or bastardisation.

Discrimination

Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of an attribute or characteristic that they possess but the other person does not. Any practice that makes distinctions between individuals or groups so as to disadvantage some and advantage others is discrimination.

State and federal laws list a number of grounds on which it is **unlawful** to discriminate in certain areas such as employment and the provision of services, including services related to recreation. The Association is committed to identifying, discouraging and eliminating discriminatory practices on any of these grounds. Members of the Association are not to discriminate against other members of the Association or any individual wishing to join the Association on any of the following grounds:

- Age
- Criminal record #
- Juvenile record. [comment: shouldn't this have same exclusion as above?]
- Impairment*
- Intellectual disability*
- Marital status
- Medical record*
- Mental disability*
- Physical disability*
- Psychiatric disability*
- Political belief/activity
- Race which includes colour, nationality or ethnic origin
- Religious belief (although in the case of Scouting a belief in a God is a central theme in the Aims and Principles of the organisation)
- Sex**
- Sexual preference
- Trade union activity

unless the offence to which the criminal record relates is relevant to, and/or in contravention of, the rules of the Association and may be likely to negatively impact on the operations of the Association

* unless the disability or impairment would, in the reasonable opinion of the Association, prevent a person's full participation in Scouting without risk of harm to that person or to another person

**discrimination does not include the segregation of male and female members for certain Scouting activities. Parents have a right to expect the Association will comply with its legal and moral duty of care in relation to adolescents. To this end all adults in Scouting and support persons are required to enforce gender segregation of all activities that involve overnight accommodation and/or communal ablutions.

Sexual Offences

Certain forms of sexual harassment may in fact be a criminal offence eg sexual assault, indecent assault, rape, sexual relations with a minor, possession of child pornography.

Any allegation involving a potential sexual offence must be referred to the police and appropriate government department and will not be investigated by the Association under the terms of this Policy. Wherever possible, a member will be assisted and encouraged to report any allegation of a potential sexual offence directly to the police and will be offered immediate counselling.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome. It may be verbal, written, physical or visual and it may be repeated behaviour or a one-off.

Depending upon the circumstances, the following kinds of behaviour may be sexual harassment:

- An unwelcome request for sexual favours.
- An unwelcome sexual advance or proposition.
- Repeated unwelcome questions about a person's private life
- Badges, publications (informal and formal) and training materials that are sexist, sexually explicit or have sexual connotations.
- Comments that are sexually suggestive or concern a person's sexual orientation or their sexual appeal
- Staring or leering at a person in a sexual manner
- Computer images such as screen savers of a sexual nature.
- Offensive gestures of a sexual nature.
- Provocative posters, calendars or like material with a sexual connotation.
- Jokes or cartoons about a person's appearance, body shape or any other personal matter that may cause embarrassment and make people feel uncomfortable, including "blue" jokes.
- Unwarranted and unwelcome physical contact such as patting, pinching, touching or putting an arm around another person or simply standing too close to someone or brushing him/her as you walk past

Legally, the definition of sexual harassment is unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that the harasser in all the circumstances should have reasonably anticipated the other person would find offensive, humiliating or intimidating. This definition means that sometimes there is a very fine line between behaviour that is sexual harassment and behaviour that is not.

It is important to remember that the intention or motive or knowledge of the 'harasser' is irrelevant. It is the effect of the behaviour on the recipient and how that person feels about the behaviour that is critical.

Behaviour that may be acceptable in one context (eg at home or between a group of friends who all share the same sense of humour) may be unacceptable in another context (eg at Scouting activities or when other persons are present who don't share that same sense of humour). Conduct which may appear innocent to one member might be perceived quite differently by another. It is this difference in perception that may lead to a complaint of sexual harassment. To avoid such situations, conduct by all members must be above reproach, not only during a Scouting activity, but also during Scouting related social events wherever they occur.

Other unacceptable behaviour

‘Other unacceptable behaviour’ cannot be closely defined. Any activity that may compromise the efficiency, effectiveness or cohesiveness of the person or group or may cause loss of respect for any member of the Association could be unacceptable. Some examples are:

- Consensual sexual relations between superiors and subordinates, including adults and members over the age of 16 years.
- Public displays of affection or advocacy of a particular sexual preference, be it heterosexual or homosexual.
- Sexual activities conducted openly or in a communal environment.

FRATERNISATION

Sexual relations and intimacy between members are strongly discouraged in all Scouting groups, workplaces, activities and facilities. This includes not only within the precincts of the Association but during any Scouting activities wherever they are conducted.

Sexual relationships between adult supervisors and youth members outside Scouting activities are also considered unacceptable, as they may compromise the cohesive and effective management of Scouting.

This does not mean that camaraderie, non-sexual friendships and teamwork are unwelcome. These form part of the great strength of Scouting and are welcome.

Sexual relationships that are strongly discouraged include (but are not limited to):

- A close and exclusive emotional relationship involving public displays of affection or private intimacy.
- A relationship which involves, or gives the appearance of involving, partiality, preferential treatment or improper use of title.
- Voluntary sexual relations between persons in a position of responsibility or authority and a youth member.

The Association recognises that relationships will form between members and that it cannot control conduct occurring between two consenting adults outside of Scouting facilities, activities and workplaces. However, the Association does expect all members to bear in mind the Association's view on sexual relations between members and to take responsibility for their actions. To this end, the Association expects members to refrain from engaging in any conduct that is inconsistent with this Policy or that could reflect poorly on the members or the Association.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS, ALLEGATIONS OR COMPLAINTS REGARDING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

General

The Association believes that all members and staff have a right to be treated fairly and that everyone must work together to ensure that the Scouting environment is a supportive, safe and fair environment.

It is everyone's responsibility to identify and discourage unacceptable behaviour as described in this Policy.

Various options are available to deal with concerns, allegations and complaints regarding harassment, discrimination, bullying or other unacceptable behaviour. Ideally, the Association would like to resolve any concerns or allegations about unacceptable behaviour internally. However, this will not always be possible or appropriate. If a formal complaint is made, the Association will treat it seriously and will act promptly, impartially and confidentially to investigate and, where possible, resolve the complaint.

This section of the Policy deals with a member who wishes to raise a concern, allegation or complaint about the way they have been treated. The next section of the Policy deals with the situation where one member is made aware of or suspects that another member may be subject to unacceptable behaviour.

Informal Option – Self Resolution

If you feel you are being discriminated against, bullied, harassed or otherwise being treated unfairly or made to feel uncomfortable by another person ("the accused"), you should, **if you feel you can**, discuss it directly with the accused. You should let them know that their behaviour is unwelcome and unacceptable to you and ask them to stop. Don't think you just have to put up with it – you don't. Don't just ignore it and hope that it will go away as your silence may give the impression that the behaviour is OK.

If you don't feel comfortable about approaching the accused directly by yourself, seek the assistance of a suitable representative, such as a parent, and approach the accused together. Explain how their behaviour makes you feel and ask them to stop. You may also wish to seek the assistance of an independent third party to facilitate the discussion between yourself, your representative and the accused.

This informal approach makes it clear to the accused that their actions are offensive and allows the situation to be remedied without taking formal steps. Sometimes the accused may have had no idea that their behaviour was making you feel uncomfortable and, as soon as they are made aware of it, that behaviour stops.

If your concern is not resolved by approaching the accused directly (eg the accused does not stop their behaviour) OR it is not possible to approach the accused directly OR in cases of serious unacceptable behaviour, a formal complaint should be made as outlined below.

Formal Option - Complaint

The Scouting Hierarchical Structure.

Where a formal complaint is to be made, use of the hierarchical structure is likely to be the most effective option, as there is an unequivocal responsibility on the superior to provide advice or seek assistance and act on your complaint confidentially, sensitively and swiftly.

You should preferably put your complaint in writing. No particular format is required, however, ideally you should provide details of:

- § what specific behaviour you are complaining about;
- § who the complaint is made against;
- § when it occurred (dates and times if possible);
- § where it occurred;
- § any witness/s;
- § whether an attempt to resolve the issue informally has been made;
- § your preferred outcome
- § how your complaint might be resolved.

When making a formal complaint, you may need assistance, especially if your complaint is sensitive and potentially embarrassing. You might like to seek advice from the Association's Branch Office, a legal person, chaplain, doctor or another support person of your choosing. It is however important to limit the number of people who know about your complaint to enable a fair and proper investigation to occur.

Upon receipt of your formal complaint it will be referred to the Association's General Manager who will make some initial, discrete inquiries. The General Manager will then determine whether your complaint should be investigated by either him/herself or the Chief Commissioner or whether it should be referred to an outside agency (such as the Child Abuse Unit) for investigation by them.

If it is appropriate for the Association to conduct its own investigation, the investigator will discuss the matter with you, the accused and any witnesses. All parties will be given a fair hearing and an opportunity to put their side of the case. If the facts show that you have been discriminated against, harassed or bullied etc, immediate action will be taken to stop the unacceptable behaviour and to ensure it does not occur again. Appropriate action will be taken against the accused as outlined later in this Policy.

Counselling

Members of the Association are entitled to counselling if they so desire. The Branch Office may provide a list of suitable counsellors, who can provide advice and moral support to members wishing to resolve a complaint internally. Members may wish to use their own contacts, such as their local priest, vicar or school counsellor. Members are reminded that most counsellors will not wish to become involved in settling the complaint; they merely offer support and guidance to the complainant.

Any costs associated with counseling will remain the responsibility of the member and not the Association.

External Resolution

Where all reasonable efforts to resolve a concern or complaint internally fail or your complaint cannot be satisfactorily addressed internally (using either the informal or the formal method) you may wish to make a complaint to the appropriate external body. This may be the police or the Equal Opportunity Commission

Formal Administrative Action.

When a member's unacceptable behaviour is contrary to this Policy, but is not an offence under criminal or civil law, formal administrative action may be taken by the Association.

Administrative action may include:

- Formal counselling as arranged by the Branch Office.
- Formal written warning issued by the Branch Office.
- Adverse written report by the Branch Office.
- Suspension from duties (until investigation is complete).
- Termination of appointment/membership.

Determining what action, if any, to take in any particular case will depend upon a number of factors including the nature and severity of the unacceptable behaviour, the offender's previous history, the offender's position and responsibilities, the relationship between the offender and the complainant, and the respective ages of the offender and the complainant.

Offences under Civil or Criminal Law.

Some forms of unacceptable behaviour may be unlawful and result in civil action and/or criminal proceedings.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ANOTHER MEMBER IS BEING SUBJECTED TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The Association aims to provide and maintain an environment in which any member who believes they are being subjected to discrimination, harassment, bullying or other unacceptable behaviour will come forward and raise their concern or make a complaint. However, the Association realises that this is not always possible and that sometimes other responsible members of the Association will need to be proactive where they become aware or suspect that another member is being subjected to unacceptable behaviour.

Any person in the hierarchical structure who has been advised of or becomes aware of or suspects an allegation of unacceptable behaviour **must** act to assist the member in its resolution. Care must be taken to listen to everything that is said and to treat the allegation seriously. It may have taken a great deal of courage to come forward in the first instance and the outcome could have far-reaching effects in the future if the complaint is not handled appropriately. As a general rule, the method of resolution adopted and the outcome sought should be that desired by the complainant, at least in the first instance. The complainant should be encouraged to remain in control of the process throughout (ie. the hierarchical structure should not impose a solution without first attempting mediation at the lowest level in all but very serious incidents).

The following checklist should be referred to when a member first becomes aware of an incident inconsistent with this Policy.

- As an adult with duty of care responsibilities, it is the responsibility of that adult to act when there is a suspicion on reasonable grounds, such as:
 - When a youth member advises that he or she has been harassed.
 - When any person advises that a youth member has been harassed.
 - When a youth member says something that could be taken to mean some form of unacceptable behaviour (often a child may be unable or unwilling to fully articulate their grievance).
 - When the observation of a particular member's behaviour and/or injuries, and the adult's knowledge of the individual generally, leads to a suspicion that abuse is occurring.

- If an adult suspects a youth member has been harassed, they shall:
 - Ensure that the individual is safe (if in the care of the adult).
 - Maintain the safety of other youth members, as appropriate.
 - Contact the Branch Office and be prepared to provide information and advice on:
 - Ø The names and addresses of personnel involved – care must be taken to provide this information **only** to the designated persons to protect all person's privacy
 - Ø The ages of the personnel involved.
 - Ø Name and address of the reporting person.
 - Ø The date, time and location of the alleged incident.
 - Ø During what activity, the incident took place, and a brief description of the incident.
 - Ø The reason the adult suspects that harassment has occurred (eg., information, injuries, observed behaviour).

- Ø The adult's assessment of immediate danger to the youth member, including information about the whereabouts of the alleged offender/s.
 - Ø What arrangements, if any, exist for the care and protection of the youth member.
 - Ø What involvement, if any known, those other agencies may have in dealing with the suspected harassment or neglect issues.
 - Seek advice on how to proceed or to make a report. The adult will be asked to provide sufficient information to help decide what to do next. Seek advice from the Branch Office concerning:
 - Ø Parental involvement/follow up.
 - Ø Police involvement.
 - Ø Medical treatment
 - Ø The Association's role.
 - Ø State Government Authority role.
- If in any doubt, always seek advice. In the event that the adult suspects abuse by someone outside of the Association (eg. within the child's own family), advise the Branch Office as it may be appropriate for the Association to report it to the relevant Government Authority.

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS, FALSE ALLEGATIONS AND VICTIMISATION OF COMPLAINANTS

Reporting Requirements

Adults in Scouting are to ensure that the Branch Office is informed of **all** incidents that breach or may breach this Policy. The check list in the previous section lists the procedures to be adhered to when a member first becomes aware of an incident inconsistent with this Policy. Ultimately, a report must be submitted to the General Manager of the Branch Office in strictest confidence.

False Allegations of Sexual Offences/Harassment

Where it is established beyond reasonable doubt that a complaint of unacceptable behaviour is false and malicious, mischievous or vexatious, then consideration is to be given to administrative or disciplinary action against the complainant.

The accused may also have the right to take action for defamation against the complainant.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated or threatened to be treated in an adverse manner because they have made or threatened to make an allegation or a complaint of unacceptable behaviour or because they have supported the complaint of another person.

Victimisation is itself unacceptable behaviour and a breach of this Policy and the appropriate administrative or disciplinary action will be taken against any person found to have victimised another person.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is provided as clear guidance on individual and collective roles and responsibilities.

General

Part of the purpose of Scouting is to encourage the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of youth members. This is achieved by the example and guidance of dedicated men and women who assist youth members in the fulfillment of the aim and objectives of Scouting.

Compliance with, and adherence to, the Code of Conduct is expected of all adults, uniformed and non-uniformed, and those who work within the Movement. Adults in Scouting must at all times act responsibly and exercise a duty of care to the youth members. This means:

1. Adults in Scouting respect the dignity of themselves and others.
2. Adults in Scouting demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility, recognising that at all times their words and actions are an example to other members of the Movement.
3. Adults in Scouting act at all times in accordance with Scouting Principles, thereby setting a suitable example for all.
4. Adults in Scouting do not use the Movement to promote their own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are not compatible with Scouting Principles.
5. Adults in Scouting act with consideration and good judgement in all interpersonal relationships both inside and outside Scouting.
6. Adults in Scouting respect everyone's right to personal privacy at all times. They take special care where sleeping, changing of clothing, bathing and ablutions are associated with any Scouting activity.
7. Adults in Scouting avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with youth members wherever possible.
8. Adults in Scouting, for their own protection, should avoid potentially compromising situations by ensuring, where reasonably possible, that at least two adults are in attendance whilst supervising and/or accompanying youth members.

It is recognised that, in certain circumstances, it may be necessary for a Leader or adult, whilst acting responsibly and exercising their duty of care, to be alone with a youth member.

9. Adults in Scouting realise that bullying, physical or verbal abuse, neglect or any other type of abuse, is unacceptable conduct by any member of the Movement.

Protective Practices of Adult Supervisors.

All adults involved with youth members are expected to act in a manner that is consistent with the Code of Conduct and duty of care to minimise the risk of their actions being misconstrued or misinterpreted. Whilst the following is by no means exhaustive, it is provided as a guide to foster a better Scouting spirit.

1. Do not encourage, incite, authorise, allow or permit others to do any of the following:
 - Engage in abusive initiation ceremonies.
 - Force youth members into ‘macho’ activities.
 - Get dressed or undressed in front of youth members.
 - Inappropriate and intrusive touching and hugging.
 - Invade the privacy of youth members whilst they are showering or toileting.
 - Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a youth member.
 - Photograph youth members in various stages of undress.
 - Engage in rough, physically hurtful or sexually provocative activities.
 - Sleep in immediate accommodation with youth members.
2. Maintain an ‘open door’ policy. Allow parents to attend as many activities as possible. Have other youth members, parents, friends or other leaders in support when in any situation that could be construed as compromising or questionable (eg., camps, training activities, private interviews or when transporting youth members to or from activities).
3. When undertaking Scouting activities, particularly overnight activities, when both male and female youth members are participating, it is mandatory that adults of both genders accompany the group. Leaders must endeavour to have sufficient adult supervisors to ensure adequate duty of care. If necessary, a parent roster should be used if leaders are unavailable.
4. Develop a group etiquette that allows for leaders to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out to each other any inappropriate attitudes or behaviours. Do not tolerate abusive or inappropriate behaviour – deal with it quickly. Encourage, but do not pressure. Be sensitive to each youth member’s individual capacity for physical activities and protect them from any untoward pressure to participate.
5. Don’t allow youth members to involve adults in excessive attention-seeking behaviour that is overtly sexual or physical in nature. Be particularly careful of the very needy youth member. Redirect the behaviour into ‘healthy’ activities and provide caring attention before it is asked for.
6. Do not bring individual youth members to your home or elsewhere without parental approval and without another adult present.
7. Maintain an adult role with youth members. Always set a good example in behaviour dress and language etc., as adults are taken as role models by youth members and other leaders alike.
8. Discipline and manage behaviour. Do not abuse the position. Be clear that when a youth member is difficult, it is the behaviour that is not acceptable and not the youth member. Respond to the problem not the person.. The task is to build self esteem not to shatter it. Be fair, firm and friendly, but not familiar. Avoid favourites or at least giving individuals more attention than others. Likewise, avoid concentrating only on disruptive behaviour. Learn appropriate disciplining and behavioural management skills. Encourage all personnel to be frank and mature enough to raise issues if they are concerned about another member’s behaviour, particularly that of the adult staff.

9. Do not exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues. Be on the watch for instances of all types of abuse of youth members by other youth members.

Rights and Responsibilities

The following is a general summary of the key rights and responsibilities of the Association, Adults in Scouting and Youth Members. This section should be read with the rest of this Policy and is not intended to be exhaustive.

The **Association** has a right to:

- Expect all adults that become involved with the Association to comply with all policies.
- Expect all adults and youth members to keep within the bounds of general community standards of reasonable behaviour.
- Take appropriate action with members that contravene its policies.
- Expect its members will not harass other members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Take appropriate action in the event of malicious accusations.
- Require Police checks of persons wishing to be involved or remain involved in certain Scouting activities and programs.

The **Association** is responsible for:

- Assisting youth members and adults to resolve any complaint of unacceptable behaviour and supporting them during the process.
- Continuing to develop policy and training that reduce and eliminate the likelihood of any unacceptable behaviour occurring.
- Encouraging open discussion of child protection issues.
- Making every effort to identify and prevent access to the Association's members through a police check and interview procedure.
- Providing maximum safety to its members.
- Providing support to members who report suspicions of child abuse.
- Providing appropriate referrals for members who report suspicions of child abuse.
- Taking appropriate action if any member of the Association is involved in activities which contravene general community standards of reasonable behaviour.
- Treating information of suspected child abuse with confidentiality and disclosing information only to those who need to know or are required by law to know.
- Widely promoting this policy to members and parents and the community.

Adults have the right to:

- Access support agencies.
- Be protected from abuse by youth members.
- Be protected from abuse by other adults and parents.
- Fair and equitable treatment from the Association.
- Have any complaint of unacceptable behaviour actioned confidentially, sensitively and swiftly.
- Ongoing training and information on all aspects of child protection.

Adults are responsible for:

- Believing in and responding to youth members' statements concerning alleged abuse.
- Ensuring the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Only disclosing sensitive information to appropriate authorities and/or designated internal personnel, on a 'need to know' basis.
- Reporting suspicions of child abuse to the Branch Office or the delegated authority within the Association.
- Trying to prevent the emotional, sexual and physical abuse of youth members.
- Using appropriate youth behaviour management.
- Working as a team to ensure the safety of youth members in the care of adults.

Youth members have the right to:

- An inclusive environment.
- Be listened to.
- Be protected from abuse by youth members and others.
- Be referred to appropriate professional assistance and guidance if needed.
- Be respected.
- Be safe.
- Have any complaint of unacceptable behaviour actioned confidentially, sensitively and swiftly.
- Privacy.
- Take calculated risks in a protected setting.

Youth members are responsible for:

- Accurately reporting inappropriate behaviour or 'at risk' situations for youth members.
- Keeping themselves safe.
- Showing respect to other youth members, leaders and adults.

It is the **responsibility of all adults in positions of authority** to:

- Ensure there is no recurrence of unacceptable behaviour or victimisation.
- Maintain an environment where victims and witnesses are confident they will receive support.
- Respond promptly, seriously and with sensitivity to allegations of harassment, discrimination and unacceptable sexual behaviour.
- Take all possible action to prevent or eliminate prejudice, discrimination and harassment. This includes the requirement that all adults are to sign-off that they have read, and understood this Policy and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct. Adults must understand that a breach of the Code of Conduct may result in termination of appointment.

Adults in Scouting are to ensure that all youth members are made aware of this Policy and that new members are informed of it as part of the orientation procedures. Awareness training is to be included in all training courses. All members of the Association are to be made aware of sources of advice, counselling and information regarding management of complaint procedures.

Where educational material appropriate to this subject is available from local resources, such as schools or Local Government Authorities, leaders are encouraged to incorporate this into the education process.

CONCLUSION

The Association neither condones nor accepts any behaviour which constitutes harassment, discrimination, bullying, fraternisation or other unacceptable behaviour (as outlined in this Policy).

All members of the Association are entitled to participate in an environment free from harassment, discrimination, bullying and other unacceptable behaviour.

It is the responsibility of adult members and persons acting in a responsible role within Scouting to lead by example and not compromise the very high standards required by this Policy. If any adult becomes aware of, or suspects, a breach of this Policy, whether by an adult or minor, they must take immediate appropriate action as outlined in this Policy, including providing appropriate assistance to the person/s subjected to any unacceptable behaviour.

Any person who raises a concern, allegation or complaint about unacceptable behaviour can expect that their concern, allegation or complaint will be treated seriously, confidentially and sensitively and that they will not be subjected to any form of victimisation merely because they have raised a concern or made an allegation or complaint.

The contents of this Policy shall be given the widest dissemination to every member of the Association.

All members of the Association are expected and required to comply with this Policy.