



The Scout Association of Australia, Western Australian Branch website Policy

This Policy applies to the development of websites for all Scouting Groups, Districts and Activity areas, of the Western Australian Branch.

The purpose of this Policy is to protect the safety and privacy of our members, young and old alike. Ultimately, the end result promotes and enhances the good image of Scouting and provide a measure of guidance in composing any website content being delivered into the public domain. This will ensure the Western Australian Website complies with the National guidelines and presents a uniform look and feel to the public.

Scouts Australia strongly discourages the publication of residential addresses and phone numbers on any scout web pages. In contact directories and the like, only e-mail addresses should be published.

For Youth members

There must be no contact details made available on any Scouting Websites. (ie. this includes - e-mail address', physical or postal address, phone/fax numbers and any personal website address' or links.

This falls under the duty of care that all Leaders undertake while undertaking or supervising youth or youth activities. Youth safety in all it forms is our foremost responsibility. This includes captions and photos that can easily identify individuals.

For Adult members

To protect the privacy of Leaders and other adult members, personal contact details must not be made available on Scouting websites. This avoids risks such as nuisance calls, direct marketing and other unsolicited forms of contact.

Scouting's Image

Scout Websites must at all times promote the Aims and Principles of the Movement. There is no latitude here. It is every leader's responsibility to ensure that web content conforms to World, National and local requirements.

The Law and Promise will prevail at all times.

Copyright.

Intellectual Property and Copyright are very complex issues. Due diligence must be exercised with all web content. Copyright does exist in Cyberspace, just as it does with other publishing media. The easiest way to avoid copyright infringement is to be creative and develop original material. Remember, the rule is simple. If you didn't

think of the concept or create the material then it is not yours to use without permission. If in doubt, then leave it out!

It is very important that all web content carry a copyright statement indicating ownership for the Section. The Branch Office will have the up to date wording etc.

Slander and Libel.

Consideration of Slander and Libel are a must with web publishing. If you observe common sense, the Scout Law and Promise will prevent such issues being a problem.

Website Content and Content Responsibilities

Before considering web content first check for duplication. Any World, National or Branch official information must not be duplicated as part of a sectional site except as a link. Do your research first.

The responsibility for publishing all official information in the public domain remains with the World, National or Local Branch body. This makes it easy for policy and other key information in the public domain to be kept current.

This includes Policy Statements, Policies, Rules, Official forms and the Award Scheme.

This ensures current and correct information is available at all times.

Section Websites.

As Districts and Scout Groups is the representative presence of Scouting in the local community, Section websites must present themselves as part of the Group/District they belong to. Common information is to be linked to not recreated.

Some good practices to observe while developing web content.

Not all users have the "latest and greatest" versions of browsers and fast links.

Large images, Java apps and animation, can require fast internet connections that some users may not have. A slow site no matter how good will not get visited as much as one that loads fast on average link speeds.

Provide links to the next level up or down the hierarchy.

Each section should include an e-mail link to the webmaster that is responsible for the content.

It is no longer acceptable to display "Under Construction", it is annoying and discourages visitors to your site. If it isn't ready for publishing, don't publish it or just publish what is ready. You can always add to your content.

Remember to maintain and regularly updated the site. Displaying the date on content can be misleading. Some information is just as relevant today as it will be in ten years. Use dating carefully. Counters on pages/sites are very much overdone. People use them to lift their own ego and usually display wrong info if they display at all. Use counters to display relevant information as there are other ways to get visitor numbers and more meaningful information about the site.

Check your links regularly and remove links that don't work.

Keep your content informative. You are providing a service to the membership as well as the public.

Approval of web content.

All Western Australian Branch web content will be monitored by the Information Technology Development and Management Sub-Committee on a regular basis. The Internet is not a toy that we play with, it's a valuable tool. Scouting today is a business and perception is everything. We should be creative and dynamic while being responsible in our endeavors.