

Group Committee Roles

The following are brief notes for the guidance of those who fill some important positions on the Group Committee

Chairperson

The Group Chairperson is appointed by the Group Scouter in consultation with the Group Committee. A Scouter may not be appointed to this position.

The Chairperson is the leader of the non-uniformed Scouting team in the Group, and it should be his or her aim to mould the Group Committee into an enthusiastic body of workers.

The Chairperson's responsibility is:

- (a) To exercise general control and overall oversight over the activities of the Group Committee.
- (b) To ensure that regular meetings of the Group Committee, and an Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association, are held; and to preside at these meetings.
- (c) To conduct the meetings referred to in (b) in a formal manner, and to ensure that Minutes are taken.
- (d) To present an Annual Report to the Parents' Association at the AGM, and to the Sponsoring Authority (if any), as well as to the Local Association.
- (e) To ensure that the office-bearers of the Group Committee discharge their functions efficiently, particularly in regard to the control of finance and the requirements for the annual re-registration of the Group at Provincial headquarters; and that the proper records are kept.
- (f) To represent the Group on the Executive Committee of the Local Association.
- (g) To ensure that the Scout Promise and Law are observed in spirit by the Group Committee in all its activities.
- (h) To lead the Committee in its general function of giving full support to the Scouters of the Group.

The Group Chairperson will naturally be primarily interested in the affairs of his own Group but, in the interests of the Group, he or she should create among the members of the Committee a keen interest and participation in the activities of the District, the Region (if any), and the Province.

The Group Scouter should ensure that the Chairperson has the opportunity to meet the Scouters and Scouts and of seeing the Pack and Troop in action. This will help him or her to appreciate the needs of the branches of the Group, what equipment is needed, and how it is being used.

Vice-Chairperson

The maintenance of contact and good relations with parents and Group supporters is essential for the effective operating of the Group Committee. It is well worthwhile making this the specific responsibility of the Vice-Chairperson.

The duties of the Vice-Chairperson are:

- (a) To promote parent interest and support of the Group and the Scout Movement by:
 - Liaising with the Group Scouter and the Group Committee in organising parent "get-togethers" (social, parents' evenings etc) at least once a quarter. Convene meetings of the sub-committee concerned with planning and organising these events.
 - Accompanied by a Scouter, personally visit the parents of newly-joined Cubs and Scouts and brief them on their responsibilities towards the Movement, the Parents' Association, and their child in Scouting.
 - Plan and activate visits to all parents in the Group from time to time to make parents "Scouting conscious" and to stimulate their enthusiasm and support for their child's Scouting activities.

- Liaise with the Group Scouter in encouraging parent participation in special Pack and Troop activities (e.g. Parents and Scouts Hike or Camp, Family Cookout etc).
- After consultation with the Group Scouter and the Chairperson, canvass prospective members for the Group Committee and ensure that such prospective members are able and willing to render effective service.

(b) To deputise for the Group Chairperson during the latter's absence.

Secretary

The Group Secretary plays a very important part in the smooth working of the Committee. It is useful, but not essential, if the Secretary is skilled in shorthand and typing.

The Secretary's duties include:

- Sending out the notices of meetings;
- Preparing the agenda for the meetings in consultation with the Chairperson;
- Keeping of the Minutes of meetings;
- Attending to correspondence;
- Keeping an up-to-date address list of members, parents, supporters, and others interested in the Group;
- Supplying any information required by the Local Association Executive and Provincial HQ;
- Attending to the completion of forms, such as applications for Warrants, the annual census, etc, as requested by the Group Scouter;
- Helping the Chairperson to draft the Committee's Annual Report;
- Generally assisting the Chairperson to keep the Group Committee working smoothly and efficiently.
- For the sake of continuity it is recommended that the Secretary arrange for a post office box for correspondence, where such a facility is available.

Treasurer

The Treasurer may be assisted by a Finance sub-committee of the Group Committee of which he or she will be convener. If there is a fundraising sub-committee, he or she should be a member of it, but not necessarily convener.

The duties of the Treasurer are:

- To keep a true and proper record of the Group's income and expenditure and accumulated funds;
- To prepare an annual budget for the year's estimated income and expenditure, and to assist the Scouters in preparing their own budgets for submission to the Group Committee. The budgets will give the Committee some guidance on expenditure and the need to raise funds during the coming year. Expenditure should be in keeping with the budget and the funds available. It is important that money raised should be used for the benefit of the contemporary generation and not hoarded unless, of course, it is raised specifically for the purpose of building a Group headquarters or other capital project.
- To receive and account for ALL moneys on behalf of the Group Committee and any of its members when acting in the name of, for, or on behalf of, the Scout Movement. All moneys received, with the exception of a very small amount for petty cash, should be paid into the Group's account at a bank, building society or post office savings bank without delay. The Group's account must be in the proper name of the Group e.g. "South African Scout Association – 1st Suburbia Group".
- To be responsible for payments, financial arrangements or investments as directed and authorised by the Group Committee, and to ensure that Group subscriptions to Provincial

headquarters, insurance premiums, municipal charges etc are paid timeously. Expenses of the Group must be paid from the Group account, and never by private cheque. Bank, building society, or other accounts should be operated by at least three signatories authorised by the committee, any two of whom must sign the cheque, withdrawal notice or other document. There must in addition be an authorised signatory at District or Provincial level, preferably the Provincial Manager.

- To present a financial statement at each meeting of the Committee.
- To draw up and present audited Annual Financial Statements as at 30th September each year, approved by the Committee, to the Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association. The Group Treasurer is responsible for sending a copy of these Statements to Provincial headquarters by the 31st December (or such other date as may be fixed by the Province). A copy of these Financial Statements must also be sent to the Treasurer of the Executive Committee of the District Local Association.
- To submit annually, current information with regard to any fixed property used by the Group, as required by Provincial Headquarters. Funds for the payment of the annual subscriptions to the Province should be raised during the year so that they may be paid promptly on due date, normally during October.

Group Quartermaster

The Quartermaster has a very important job, especially in times of inflation and high prices. Adequate training of the Scouts needs adequate and good equipment, especially in the Troop. Camping, hiking, and pioneering gear is expensive. With proper care, however, it can last for years. Without proper care it can become useless in a very short time, and without proper control and security equipment "disappears" very easily.

The Quartermaster is responsible for all Group property, and he should have a subcommittee to assist him. If the Group has immovable property such as its own headquarters, the Quartermaster will certainly require others to assist him with its control and maintenance.

The Quartermaster is responsible to the Group Committee and his duties are:

- In co-operation with the Group Scouter, to control the equipment belonging to the Group, and to ensure that an inventory of property and equipment is kept. Each year a copy of this inventory must be submitted to the Treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Local Association in terms of Rule 623 POR, and a copy handed to the Group Secretary for record purposes. The Scouters are responsible to the Group Committee for Branch equipment (e.g. Pack and Troop flags, totem pole etc), but these items must appear on the Quartermaster's inventory.
- To work closely with the Group Scouter and the Group Treasurer in the purchase of new equipment for the Group as a whole and for the Branches, in accordance with the decisions of the Group Committee.
- To arrange for the proper control and storage of the Group's movable property. He will supervise the proper storing of it, and see that items drawn out of store (by a Patrol for a weekend camp, for instance) are returned promptly in good, clean condition. Quarterly checks of all equipment are recommended with records reflecting the condition, value, and where items are kept. It is suggested that in the storing and checking of the kit he should have the assistance of the Patrol Leaders, other senior Scouts, or other responsible assistants.
- To ensure, through the Group Treasurer, that Group property and equipment is adequately insured and protected against fire, damage and theft.
- To inspect the Group's property regularly each month and make recommendations to the Group Committee on any points requiring attention e.g. maintenance, cleanliness, litter removal, care of grounds, improvements etc.
- To ensure that the name of the Group is displayed prominently on the property (e.g. noticeboard) and that an emergency telephone number is displayed in case of fire or burglary.

Group Information Officer

The blanket term “Information” embraces public relations, publicity, communications, publications, and any aspect of the complex business of obtaining and passing-on ideas and information, both within the Group and to a wider public.

The Group Information Officer (GIO) may be a Scouter, but it is preferable that he or she should be a non-uniformed member. The GIO’s functions are to assist the Group Scouter and the Group Committee by organising and maintaining effective means of communication within the Group and to the local public. Briefly, his duty is to see that essential information reaches its destination promptly, whether it be to the Scouters, the Scouts, the parents, the members of the Committee – or the lot! How is this to be done? The following items’ are listed for consideration:

- Circular letters. These should be sent in cooperation with the Group Secretary, who should have a complete address list of parents and supporters.
- Such items as invitations to the AGM and other events should be mailed, not handed to the Scouts to take home.
- Information Boards. Encourage the Scouters to have and to use effective Information Boards – Group, Branch and Patrol. Help in making them meaningful, interesting and up-to-date.
- Group Magazine, Newsletter, or Bulletin. The GIO is not necessarily the editor, but it is his duty to see that information goes out to the Scouts and their parents, and this is one of the most successful methods. Copies of these Group publications are appreciated at Provincial headquarters and national headquarters.
- The GIO should send any newsworthy items from the Group to the editor of the Provincial magazine for possible publication.

The Group Information Officer should regularly see such sources of information as District, Province and national publications magazines, newsletters or circulars. If he does not receive copies direct, then copies sent to the Chairperson or Secretary should be passed on to him.

Entering the Group magazine or newsletter for judging for the “H V Marsh Award for Scout journalism” also falls within the sphere of the Information Officer. Details of qualifying requirements are obtainable from Provincial headquarters.

Transport Officer

The Transport Officer can be of great assistance to the Scouters of the Group by making himself responsible for all transport arrangements when it is necessary to transport Scouts to and from camps, competitions, trail-heads for hikes, or for any other reason.

The Transport Officer’s duties are:

- To contact all parents and friends with cars, vans or lorries and to compile a list of their names, addresses, and telephone numbers, together with details of when they are prepared to assist from time to time and when they will not be available.
- To organise the transport arrangements when required in liaison with the Scouters.
- To control any Group-owned vehicles and to ensure that all requirements for roadworthy, licence, insurance etc are met. Vehicles should be registered in the name of the South African Scout Association, ... Group, c/o Provincial headquarters.
- To brief drivers on the basic rules to be observed when transporting SCOUTS (see rules for the transporting of SCOUTS by road).
- To make arrangements for travelling by public transport, hiring of buses, or rail bookings when necessary.
- To ensure that all drivers of vehicles are licensed to do so.
- To arrange, through the Group Treasurer, for the insurance of passengers travelling by road when necessary. All vehicles in which Scouts are carried must be covered by comprehensive insurance.

Convener of the Moms' Subcommittee

This is an important position calling for the services of a lady good at organising, able to instil into the mothers of the Scouts and other willing helpers an urge to do all they can to work amicably together in the interests of the Group.

The duties may include catering at special functions, fund-raising in a small way and assisting the Group Committee in big fund-raising stunts. Building up a "Mothers' Union" in the Group for social and work parties can do much to build up the family spirit of the Group. Remember the mothers who need transport, who do not push themselves but nevertheless are willing to work hard in the background. Curtains may be required for the Scouters' Den, it may be necessary to make scarves for the Group, to act as examiners or instructors in some badge subjects, particularly among Wolf Cubs. From among mothers, too, may be found Scouters for the Pack.