

1st Ermington Unit Constitution

Updated February 2018

1. Name

The name of the Venturer Unit shall be 1st Ermington Venturer Unit and shall be referred to in this constitution as “the Unit”.

2. Objectives and Aims

The objectives and aims of the Unit are to:

- a) Provide unit members with friendship and a sense of belonging.
- b) Provide experience in working with a purposeful group and the opportunity to exercise leadership.
- c) Provide appealing activities designed to cater for the needs, interests and capabilities of members.

3. Basis in Scouting

The Unit motto is “Paddle your own canoe”.

4. Membership and Membership Qualification

The Unit is open to all males and females between 14 and 18 years of age.

To be invested as a Venturer Scout, the prospective member (unless previously a Scout who holds the Venturer Scout Link Badge) must satisfy the following Membership qualifications:

- a) Know, show an understanding of, and be prepared to accept, the Scout Promise and Law.
- b) Participate in at least three unit activities or meetings (at least one of which shall be outdoors).
- c) Have signed a written statement (Appendix B) saying that they have read the Unit Constitution and agree to abide by Unit Constitution, the Policy, and Rules of the Association, the Group and the Unit.
- d) Be accepted by the Unit.

New members are expected to complete their Venturing Skills Award within three months of joining. Scouts who have completed the Camp craft Target at Adventurer level may be considered for Recognition of Prior Learning. In some instances it may be necessary or desirable to ask the Youth Member to demonstrate these skills at an appropriate time.

All members are expected to attend a Unit Management Course within the first year of membership.

An Associate Venturer is a young person who may wish to join the Unit but are not already members of Scouts Australia and who remains an Associate Venturer Scout until invested. The maximum time as an Associate Venturer Scout will be 3 months from the first meeting or activity. Associate Venturer Scouts should pay participation and activity fees as nominated by the Unit Council. Association fees are not payable. A sponsor for the Associate Venturer Scout must be appointed by the Unit Council to act as mentor and teacher.

5. Meeting Nights

The Unit will meet each Wednesday night during school terms from 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM at the Scout Hall unless otherwise specified in the Unit Program.

The Scout Hall address is Cnr Bartlett Street and Kissing Point Road, Ermington.

6. Unit Council

The Unit Council is tasked with running the Unit, both the daily and weekly operation of the Unit, and its long term planning.

The Unit Council will:

- a) Plan and operate a balanced program that meets the needs and the aspirations of all Unit members.
- b) Manage unit finances including the keeping and maintaining of accurate records and conducting fundraising activities.
- c) Be responsible for unit membership and recruitment.
- d) Ensure the unit has a reliable method of communication to unit members, unit leaders, the District/Region Venturer Scout Council and the group.
- e) Ensure that the unit constitution is reviewed and updated by the Unit-in-Council on an annual basis.
- f) Be responsible for the management of unit equipment.
- g) Be responsible for the operation of the Award Scheme within the unit.
- h) Ensure representation at the District/Region Venturer Scout Council by the unit.
- i) Apply Unit policy in order to maintain an agreed standard of behaviour that is consistent with the Scout Law and Promise.
- j) Set a date and conduct unit elections for Unit Council positions.
- k) Set, adopt and enforce Unit protocol to ensure the Units management and proceedings are safe, appropriate and consistent.

Unit Council elections will be conducted every six months at the commencement of second and fourth school terms. Where there is more than one candidate a ballot will be conducted for each position on the Unit Council with a majority vote of invested members required for successful election. The voting system used will be a simple first past the post majority system. The Venturer Scout Leader shall have the casting vote. No member shall stand for the same position for more than two consecutive terms.

The Unit Council shall consist of the following office bearers:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Unit Secretary / Program Coordinator
- c) Recruitment/Scout Liaison Officer
- d) Unit Treasurer / Fundraising Coordinator
- e) Equipment Officer (Quarter Master)
- f) Other roles as determined by the Unit-in-Council.

The duties and responsibilities of some of these office bearers are published in the Venturer Scout Handbook. Where this is the case these descriptions apply except when they are altered by Unit protocol.

At least two elected members of the Unit Council together with at least one Adult Leader shall be nominated to attend each District or Region Venturer Scout Council.

The Venturer Scout Leader forms a part of the Unit Council providing advice and assistance to elected members and ensuring the effective operation of the unit.

The Unit Council shall meet approximately monthly. Meetings will be scheduled at the Scout Hall on a regular basis. The quorum for the Unit Council shall be a simple majority of elected members.

7. Unit Protocol

The Unit Council makes and enforces Unit protocol to facilitate the running of the Unit as an effective part of the Association, Group and Community. It is the responsibility of the Unit Secretary to ensure all current protocol is provided to all Unit Council members. It is the Unit Councils responsibility to enforce Unit protocol.

8. Unit-in-Council

A Unit-in-Council is where all the Unit members come together to discuss issues relating to the management of the Venturer Scout Unit. A Unit-in-Council can be organised from time to time whenever it may be deemed necessary for the whole unit to get together. A Unit-in-Council is normally chaired by the Unit Chairman, supported by the Venturer Scout Leader. A simple majority of financial members must be in attendance before any decisions are made during a Unit-in-Council.

9. Unit Finances

The Unit Treasurer is in charge of Unit Finances and must present a report at each Unit Council

Subscription fees are to be set and paid according to protocol negotiated between the Unit and the Group Committee. This payment covers the Annual Branch Registration and Insurance Levies as well as an allocation to section funds and is due at the beginning of every term.

All activity fees will be collected and recorded by the Activity Organiser. The Unit Treasurer will arrange with the Activity Leader for any payments to be processed. The Venturer Scout Leader will arrange for a cheque to be supplied by the Group Treasurer for any expenses.

The Unit will conduct fundraising activities in accordance with Scout policy. Funds will be allocated to Venturers as they participate in fundraising activities and can be released by filling out the funds release form on the group website. Funds raised but not spent remain the property of the unit when the Venturer leaves the unit.

All purchases made with unit funds must have the approval of the Unit Council and be endorsed by the Venturer Scout Leader.

10. Unit Program

The Unit Council will publish an annual calendar of major events at the beginning of every year, and a term program of weekly activities three weeks before the beginning of every term.

The Unit will not specialise in any one activity and will attempt to explore all activities available to Venturer Scouts.

Consistent non-attendance (4 weeks without reason) at Unit activities will be classified as inactive membership. Members are expected to notify the Unit Chairperson and/or the Venturer Scout Leader of any absence from the Unit Program.

Unit members are permitted, and encouraged, to join with activities hosted by other Venturer Scout Units. Prior to attending such activities, the member must notify the Unit Chairperson and/or the Venturer Scout Leader.

The Unit shall endeavour to arrange one visit or joint activity with a each other section at least once a year. Furthermore, older Scouts shall be invited to all appropriate unit outings and activities and be encouraged to undertake the Try Venturing Award.

Attendance at all activities outside of the immediate vicinity of the Scout hall (as dictated by scout policy; 2km or what would be expected over the reasonable course of the night) requires Part 1 of the Activity Notification Form to be completed in its entirety by the parents or guardians of all attending participants and returned to the Activity Leader before the activity commences.

11. Unit Property

All Unit equipment remains the property of the Venturer Scout Unit.

All Unit equipment is made available to all fully subscribed members. Unit equipment can be borrowed by Unit members, after arrangement with the Equipment Officer. All equipment must be signed in and out and its condition checked on return. Equipment must be returned as soon as possible after cleaning and drying.

The purchase or replacement of equipment may only be approved by the Unit Council following a discussion on the needs of the unit.

All Unit equipment is to be treated with respect, in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Any damage is to be reported to the Equipment Officer immediately.

Personal equipment remains the responsibility of the owner and no liability for repair or replacement will be met by the Unit.

Group equipment is the responsibility of the Venturer using it and can only be borrowed in accordance with Group protocol.

It is recognised that normal wear is an expected result of use on Scouting activities. Should the nature of the damage be assessed as misuse or from deliberate harm, compensation for repairs or replacement may be demanded by the Unit Council in accordance with current retail cost.

12. Rules of Conduct

All members must abide by the Scout Law and Promise.

Venturers are expected to behave in accordance with the law, the policies and rules of the Scout Association, 1st Ermington Group and the Unit.

Venturers are expected to represent the Unit when in public and acknowledge that their actions reflect on the Unit and impact on the Units reputation, trust and ability to gain support from the community.

Venturer Scouts are not permitted to smoke or consume alcoholic drinks at Scouting meetings, activities or any other function they attend as a representative of the Scout Movement or whilst in Scout uniform. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco products or other illegal drugs by any Venturer Scout will result in the product being confiscated immediately and will lead to removal from the

event according to Scout Policy. Any Venturer Scout involved in illegal activities will be reported to their parents potentially the relevant authorities.

Close relationships formed between Unit members are to be pursued outside of the Unit and must not be allowed to affect the functioning of the Unit Program.

Mixed genders are not permitted to share a tent on overnight Scouting activities. When communal sleeping facilities are used (e.g. hall, cave, etc) there should always be a clear physical separation between males and females and between adult and youth members.

Whenever Venturer Scouts with provisional driver licences will be assisting to transport members *during* an activity or meeting, the Activity Leader must advise this fact to parents in their activity notification and parents must have the option to indicate in writing that they don't want their child to travel with a P-plate driver. Parents should instruct their child appropriately, and the Unit should take *reasonable* steps to ensure that all members comply with any instruction given.

13. Discipline

When a Venturer's actions contravene this constitution, the program should be suspended, and a Unit-in-Council conducted where the matter should be discussed and appropriate action taken.

14. Uniform

The official uniform of this unit shall be that prescribed by NSW Branch in accordance with the Policy & Rules of Scouts Australia. In addition, the preferred headwear for all official Scouting functions is the Venturer Scout Beret fitted with the Venturer Scout Beret Badge.

Full Scout uniform must be worn to and from all meetings at the hall, all official Scouting functions, and all Scouting activities, unless otherwise advised by the Activity Leader. At all other times the Unit scarf shall be worn.

15. Unit Leaders

The Venturer Leaders are a resource which facilitates the effective running of the Unit. All Venturers are encouraged to see the Leaders as a resource. As the Leaders are volunteers the Unit recognises the contribution of the Leaders in supporting the Unit and accepts that they have the right of veto over Unit decisions and membership as required.

16. Alterations to the Unit Constitution

Proposed amendments to the Unit constitution shall be distributed to all Unit members no later than 14 days prior to a meeting of the Unit-in-Council.

Proposed amendments to the Unit constitution may only be passed with a two-thirds majority of the invested members of the Unit. The Venturer Scout Leader has the right to veto any decision to amend the Unit constitution if such decisions are contrary to official Scout Association policy and procedures.

Appendix B – Statement of Acceptance

This document needs to be signed and returned to the Unit Secretary prior to the investiture of the Venturer.

1. I have read the Unit Constitution and agree to abide by Unit Constitution, the Policy, and Rules of the Association, the Group and the Unit.

Signed: _____

Date: _____