

## 4.8 MAINTENANCE OF SCOUT HALLS AND OTHER MAJOR FIXED ASSETS

### Preamble

Branch Policy 4.1.2 relates to Group Financial and Asset Management. It makes only brief mention of the maintenance of fixed assets, particularly Scout halls.

This policy provides guidance and direction for Groups and the Branch generally on this issue.

The management and maintenance of the facilities at Camp Cottermouth are the responsibility of the Camp Cottermouth Committee.

A Branch Property and Assets Committee (the PAC) is established as a BEC committee. The purpose of the Property and Assets Committee is to provide advice and services pertinent to the planning, review and oversight of property and other major assets, and advising on issues related to property and assets. This includes assistance from fire, electrical, building, etc. regulatory authorities.

The PAC should be the first point of contact for anyone seeking general advice or guidance on property maintenance matters, including sourcing external assistance.

### Principles

1. Scouts ACT has an obligation to the Movement and our members to provide a safe, secure and fit environment for youth members, leaders, and volunteers to conduct Scouting activities.
2. All halls need to be compliant with applicable building and safety regulations, and the Branch needs to be able to assure parents, hirers and regulatory bodies that this is the case. It is important to recognise that while halls may have been compliant at the time of building they may no longer be so if regulations have changed. In other cases, alterations or upgrades to buildings and equipment may be the trigger for upgrades to achieve current compliance standards. Groups wishing to confirm compliance arrangements should ask the Branch Admin staff for the name of a PAC member who will assist them to contact the appropriate authorities.
3. The physical assets of the Branch as a whole need to be preserved for the future of Scouting.
4. A well-maintained and clean hall is also important to ensure the maintenance of the good reputation of Scouting in the local and broader communities.
5. Where a Scout Group is delivering its section programs in a building which is in the name of Scouts ACT then it would generally be the responsibility of the group committee to maintain that building in accordance with this policy statement. Other premises would generally be the responsibility of one or another formation or program of the Branch. The body responsible in each case is hereafter referred to as the “custodian” of that property.

## Detailed guidance

### Fire:

Each custodian is responsible for the detection and suppression of fire and general fire safety housekeeping. Key elements are:

- Smoke detectors: The custodian is responsible for the installation of smoke detectors and for ensuring that they are correctly located and are in working order.
- Fire extinguishers: The custodian is responsible for ensuring that fire extinguishers and any other fire appliances are checked annually – this is a condition of the Branch's fire insurance. The custodian is also responsible for ensuring that signs are clearly visible and include the intended use of the appliance [e.g. electrical fire].
- Exit signage: The custodian is responsible for ensuring adequate fire exits and that exit signs comply with the applicable code.
- Fire drills: The custodian is responsible for providing instructions for hall users to address any fire related incidents in the hall. This includes contact numbers for the emergency services and/or a Scouts ACT representative.
- Evacuation procedures. The custodian is responsible for establishing an evacuation assembly point near the hall and for having evacuation instructions (including map of routes to the assembly point) posted near each exit.
- Excess fuel: The custodian is responsible for ensuring that fuel is kept to a reasonable minimum. This involves reduction/removal of material such as flammable waste (paper and cartons) and old/obsolete equipment. There is also a requirement to remove/trim away vegetation from the hall – branches, shrubs and grass/weeds.

### Electrical:

The custodian is responsible for the safe condition of electrical wiring and appliances, and for ensuring that these comply with applicable standards:

- This may include installing a residual current device (RCD) or residual current circuit breaker (RCCB). These devices are designed to disconnect quickly in the event of electric shock and are recommended in situations where there are multiple users [hall hire], in premises with nominal supervision, and where older equipment is in regular use
- This may also include having all portable appliances tested and tagged at regular intervals.
- And it will include an inspection of the fixed wiring on a regular basis at least once every five years to satisfy the fire insurance requirements.

### Security lighting:

The custodian is responsible for ensuring that security lighting is both adequate and serviceable. This is important for ensuring both personal safety and building security, especially in the winter months.

### Building security:

The custodian is responsible for the security of the property. This includes perimeter security and controlling access keys.

- Perimeter security: A comprehensive risk assessment for each property should be undertaken from time to time. This should include the use of security glass, film and/or security screens/grills.
- Key register: there should be an agreed protocol for accounting for keys to the hall and clear responsibility for who is responsible for controlling the keys. Some groups have found it prudent to change the locks every five years or so to ensure that lost keys cannot be used by unauthorized people to gain entry.

### Heating:

The custodian is also responsible for ensuring that heating appliances/installations are adequate and are safe and serviced as required.

### Grounds maintenance:

In addition to reducing fire risk, the custodian is responsible for ensuring that vegetation is kept trimmed and away from electricity cables, gutters, and does not present a security risk, i.e. it does not provide a hiding place for persons seeking unauthorised access to the premises or to the youth members, but also to ensure easier oversight of youth members during out of doors activities.

Even if the security/fire risk is not on Scout property, a phone call to TAMS may arrange for nearby parkland to be tidied up and an approach to local householders can be very rewarding, especially if accompanied with an offer from the Group to assist in the clean up as a good turn.

### Toilet arrangements:

The custodian is responsible for ensuring that toilet facilities are hygienic and in good working order. Disabled access arrangements should meet applicable building standards.

### Programmed maintenance:

The custodian should develop a cyclical inspection and maintenance program. Buildings do not last for ever and the generally expected life of common elements of a public building are as follows:

External painting [as applicable]	generally this should not exceed a seven-year cycle if the intention is to preserve the integrity of the building materials [e.g. wooden doors & fascias]
Internal painting [as applicable]	a desirable cycle for heavy use areas should not exceed five years.
Floors	this is dependent on use, flooring material [carpet, concrete, tile, wood, etc.] and could quite easily range between seven and twenty years.

Wet areas [toilets & shower facilities]	fifteen years
Kitchens/food preparation	ten years
Electrical services [excluding HWS & appliances]	twenty five years
Roofing & guttering	forty years
Other [structural, glazing, doors, etc]	as required

An annual inspection program with a schedule of items to be included in the inspection is essential. This will identify and assist with planning, and budgeting for maintenance and repairs.

A sinking fund for repairs, maintenance and replacement has been found to provide the most realistic and supportable means of ensuring that suitable maintenance and replacement can be achieved. A generally accepted annual deposit to the sinking fund is 1% of the building's valuation for insurance. The PAC can provide detailed advice to groups on this.

#### AUTHORITY

This policy was approved by the Branch Executive Committee on 28 February 2013 and amended 22 October 2015.