



SCOUTS ACT

STRATEGIC PLAN
2024–2027



Scouts ACT is a membership-based organisation that has delivered Scouting in the Australian Capital Territory since 1981.

This Strategic Plan sets out the high-level actions Scouts ACT will take over the next three years, building on the work undertaken over many years to strengthen our organisational foundations and program delivery. Scouts ACT will continue to evolve as an organisation to meet the changing social, legal, regulatory and financial environment in which we operate, and to take those decisions that will ensure the youth program will be delivered for many years to come.

The goal of these actions is a vibrant and growing youth membership enjoying Scouting in safe and contemporary-standard scout halls and the outdoors, supported by committed and well-trained adult leaders and backed up by professional staff. Scouts ACT strives to deliver a fun, challenging and engaging youth program that attracts young people and adults from across the community in the ACT, resulting in an organisation that aims to reflect all of Canberra's diversity.

Importantly, these strategic actions do not sit in isolation. Scouts ACT operates within the global Scouting family, where the overarching philosophy of Scouting is set.

As such, this three-year plan is intended to be neither over-broad nor detailed in scope. Its role is to guide the strategic decisions of the Branch Executive Council (BEC), along with the delegated governance, operational and program decisions of the President, Chief Commissioner, and Executive Officer.

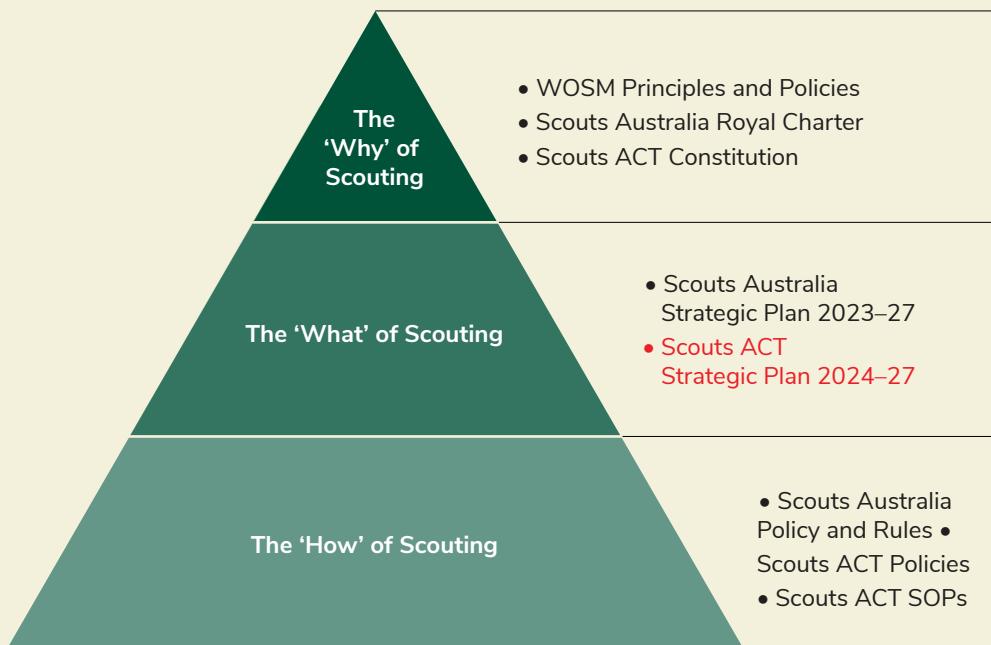


Figure 1. A Scouting Hierarchy



THE 'WHY' OF SCOUTING

Scouts ACT operates to deliver Scouting locally in the ACT consistent with the vision and mission of Scouting defined by Scouts Australia and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM).

The Mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

As an organization, Scouting aims to be relevant and respected, recognized and valued for our role in contributing to the development of young people as responsible citizens.

Box 1 (below) highlights the core principles by which Scouts ACT seeks to deliver on this mission. They were articulated in our previous Strategic Plan, and continue to serve us well.

Box 1: Scouts ACT Core Principles

In delivering on its mission, Scouts ACT is guided by a set of core principles

- **YOUTH AT THE CENTRE**

Scouts ACT embraces youth-leading, adult-supporting Scouting.

- **ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTH**

Scouts ACT is a sustainable, respected, well-governed and well-operated organisation.

- **A RELEVANT, QUALITY PROGRAM**

Scouts ACT develops youth and adult members' skills, knowledge and experience in a program that responds to the capability and interests of members. The program is fun, engaging and challenging.

- **INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

Scouts ACT leaves no one behind. We provide the opportunity for youth and adults to join and support Scouts.

- **PREPARED VOLUNTEERS**

Scouts ACT is an organization that is respectful, rewarding to belong to, easy to operate within, and that delivers the mission. We recognize and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers.

THE 'WHAT' OF SCOUTING

This Strategic Plan outlines the key actions of the BEC for the next three years and assigns accountabilities to key personnel within Scouts ACT.

This Strategic Plan will be implemented through the development of operational plans by the Chief Commissioner and Executive Officer, to be agreed, funded, and monitored by the BEC. Many of the actions require the allocation of branch financial resources, in some cases involving potentially substantial investment.

As the governance authority of Scouts ACT, BEC is ultimately responsible for delivering on these actions, and remains accountable through both Australian and ACT Government regulatory requirements, and annually to our membership through the Annual General Council meeting.



In developing and agreeing these actions, the BEC has reflected on the challenges put to all scout branches in Australia as part of the Scouts Australia Strategic Plan 2023-26. The Scouts Australia plan draws on the learnings and experience of delivering Scouting in all parts of Australia and sets a high-level agenda for branches to deliver.

Box 2 provides more detail on the Scouts Australia Strategic Plan 2023-26 actions for scout branches.

Box 2. Scouts Australia Strategic Plan 2023-26 actions for branches

1. Make delivering our youth program easier and more impactful

- Fully embed the youth program in Units.
- Select, induct and coach volunteers to support the program with current tools and benchmarks.
- Develop and deploy adventurous and specialist program expertise to make a full youth program available to Units.
- Streamline the experience and empower Units to manage risk and deliver safe program, including adventure, calibrating nationally-agreed risk tools to local regulations where compelled.

2. Build the recruitment and retention machine to grow our movement

- Deliver retention strategies addressing local youth experience issues.
- Establish or improve systems that enable successful conversion of enquiries into memberships and upskill volunteers in their use.
- Build a local culture that values growth and a capability to engage and onboard new members.
- Establish and action a pipeline of growth opportunities in geographical or cultural communities that are under-represented.

3. Reshape a contemporary volunteer model that drives Scouting

- Make it easier to sign up as a volunteer while maintaining the rigour of our vetting processes.
- Proactively recognise the existing skills that volunteers bring, within national frameworks.
- Maintain rolling programs of work to improve the adult volunteer experience within the Branch's context.

4. Unlock and steer resources to futureproof our mission

- Upskill our volunteers to engage with community and political representatives appropriately, productively and with consistent goals and messaging in line with our government relations strategy.
- Support Scout Groups to leverage state/territory and local funding opportunities.
- Proactively manage our facilities portfolios to ensure safe and attractive places for Scouting to be delivered.

5. Transform the organisational support of our movement

- Identify opportunities to share lessons, innovations, digital systems and services with other Branches, adapting to identified good practice and proactively contributing to more efficient and integrated services to members across Australia.

Many of Scouts ACT's strategic priorities for the next 3 years stem directly from the Scouts Australia Strategic Plan, which Scouts ACT played a role in helping to develop. Scouts ACT's strategic plan also identifies those issues specific to the branch, around governance and financial sustainability.

The Actions agreed as part of this Strategic Plan have been grouped around three key themes, each of which is core to the delivery of the Youth Program and good functioning of the organisation.



AN OVERVIEW OF OUR STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The Strategic Actions agreed in this Plan will strengthen the governance and financial foundations of Scouts ACT, allowing us to continue delivering an innovative and engaging youth program.

PEOPLE AND PROGRAM

The way people engage with volunteering is changing, and Scouts ACT needs to keep pace with the community's expectation for a contemporary volunteering experience.

The retention of youth members remains an ongoing challenge. While the delivery of a comprehensive and high-value youth program is a key part of youth retention, Scouts ACT needs to look at how we better explain and promote our value proposition to our existing members and their guardians, with the aim of reducing the churn in membership. Ensuring youth have clear pathways to older age sections is a key element.

During this Strategic Plan, new models of volunteering will be explored, to grow our adult membership and uniformed leaders, and to retain existing leaders and their wealth of experience and knowledge. This should be an evidence-led approach that preserves the essential character of Scouting, while ensuring leaders remain highly trained and safe in delivering the Scouting program.

Opportunities also exist to trial new modes of Scouting, including in areas where access to scout halls or physical premises remains a challenge, and developing strategies to recruit volunteers from underrepresented sections of the community.

As an organisation, Scouts ACT will implement those elements of the Scouts Australia Strategic Plan, further embedding the youth program in all units across all groups, while developing new opportunities for young people to enjoy the benefits of Scouting.

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

Scouts ACT operates in an environment of evolving regulatory requirements, modern governance standards, and membership and community expectations, and the current structure and delegations need to better serve our Scouting members.

The BEC will need to remain vigilant to the evolving regulatory and financial environment and the implications for Scouts ACT's legal structure. Work is required to update aspects of the Scouts ACT Constitution along with many of the current operational policies that govern the organisation. This extends to refreshing the BEC subcommittees, including the terms of reference under which they operate.

While Scouts ACT remains financially sound, significant budget pressures remain, and now is the time to accelerate efforts to diversify Branch income through a more strategic approach to the business of Camp Cottermouth, and better use of our suburb-based halls to generate additional revenue. Regulatory requirements are also driving the need to strengthen the governance and accountability around revenue and expenditure by scout groups, including working towards fully consolidated Scouts ACT financial reports, underpinned by better budgeting and decision-making.

Following categorisation under the ACT Government State Organisation Support Program, Scouts ACT will accelerate governance reforms to remain competitive when tendering for government funds. Scouts ACT will set up its ongoing engagement with Governments as well as Canberra's philanthropic and business sectors, to better explain our value proposition to those looking to support us.



PROPERTY AND ASSETS

A new approach is needed to managing Scouts ACT's physical infrastructure - our scout halls, and Camp Cottermouth.

A lack of coordinated and strategic investment in our most visible assets has resulted in some halls having acute issues, while all halls require continual maintenance to improve the experience of Scouting for our members and meet community expectations of our organisation.

Driving greater revenue opportunities for Scouts ACT will continue to be a priority. Potential exists for greater commercial and community use of scout halls, and extending the business of Camp Cottermouth can provides a solid opportunity to strengthen Scouts ACT's revenue base. Work should be undertaken on options for building sustainable revenue streams to underpin the growth and development of Scouting.

A further key asset management program involves the digitisation of significant historical Branch records, which risk becoming inaccessible over time.



IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Each agreed action in the Strategic Plan has an assigned accountable officer:

- President
- Chief Commissioner
- Executive Officer.

They will work with their respective teams to finalise operational plans that will move Scouts ACT towards the achievement of these goals.

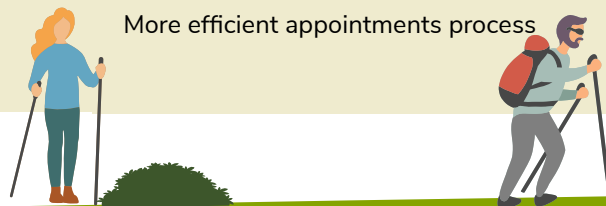
Both the Executive Officer and Chief Commissioner report at the monthly meeting of the BEC, and following these meetings the BEC reports to the adult membership of Scouts ACT by way of the Chair's Update.

The BEC will continue to monitor achievement of the Plan against the agreed deliverables and will report annually to the Branch membership.

PEOPLE AND PROGRAM

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

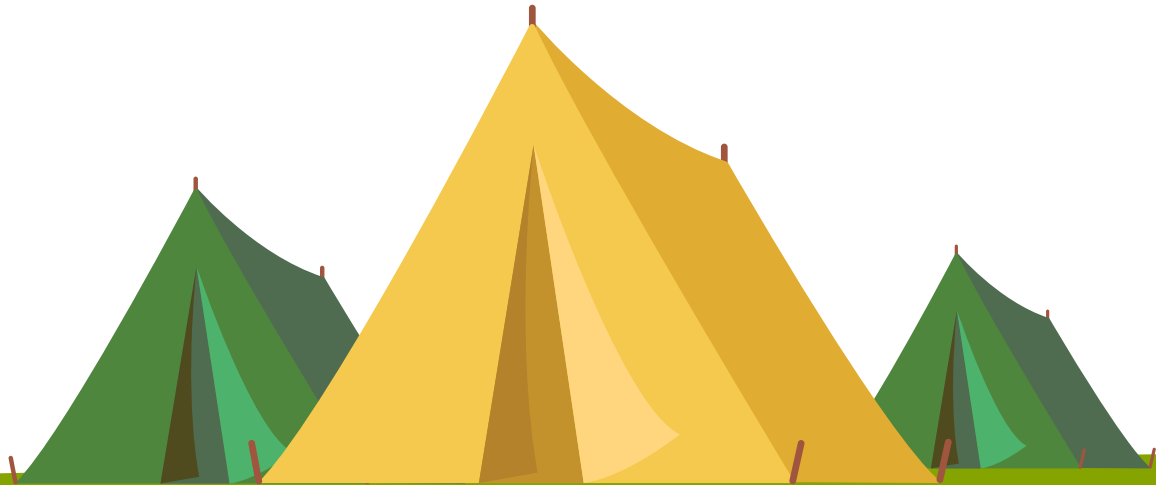
| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023–2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|---|--------------------|---|--|--|
| Improve volunteer recruitment, training and retention practices | Chief Commissioner | <p>Develop new models of adult volunteering (e.g. part-time Leaders)</p> <p>Develop adult member recruitment strategy</p> <p>Develop strategies to recruit volunteers from underrepresented sections of the community, including women, people from a non-English speaking background, and people with different abilities</p> <p>More efficient appointments process</p> | <p>Increased recruitment of new adult members</p> <p>A leadership team within scouting that strongly reflects the diversity of the Australian community</p> <p>Higher retention of existing adult members</p> <p>Stronger delivery of the youth program to grow membership in Scouts ACT</p> | Action 3 |



| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023–2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|---|--------------------|---|--|--|
| Improve training practices to build Leader capabilities | Chief Commissioner | More frequent and wider variety of training opportunities Youth members involved in the delivery of adult training courses where appropriate | Leaders complete training faster More Leaders completing their full training curriculum (e.g. Wood Badge) More Leaders completing RPL Stronger delivery of the youth program to grow membership in Scouts ACT | Action 1 |
| Succession planning and knowledge management | Chief Commissioner | Develop standard operating procedures Central repository of lessons learned More frequent use of IAVP process across the organisation | Scouts ACT has robust corporate knowledge and can continue operating effectively following the departure of members | Action 5 |



| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023–2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|--|--------------------|--|--|--|
| Trial innovative models of program delivery | Chief Commissioner | A trial and report to BEC on the viability of program delivery without physical infrastructure | Scouts ACT can deliver the youth program to members without the requirement for physical infrastructure (such as a scout hall) | Action 1 |
| Further embed the youth program in all units across all groups, while developing new opportunities for young people to enjoy the benefits of scouting. | Chief Commissioner | New Branch structures to support local Groups to deliver of the Scout Program Delivery of high profile branch, national and international Events that promote the benefits of the Scout Program to current and future members Adoption of IT systems (e.g. Terrain and Operoo) to support program delivery | Stronger delivery of the youth program to retain and grow membership in Scouts ACT | |



GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023-2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Enhanced governance arrangements for the governing bodies of Scouts ACT | President | Contemporary governance for the BEC and its sub-committees, including a Charter, Code of Conduct, and Conflict of Interest policy A review of sub-committee terms of reference | Our governance documents address issues raised by the Sport and Recreation Categorisation process in 2023, and the Scouts Australia 2024 Annual Standards Review | |
| Stronger delineation between volunteer and paid staff roles within the organisation | Executive Officer Chief Commissioner | A clear statement of responsibilities between the two primary office holders in Scouts ACT responsible for delivering on the Strategic Plan A delegations policy that documents how decision-making can be made by members of Scouts ACT | Responsibilities and accountabilities are clearly understood and agreed Duplication of work or effort is eliminated All Actions under the Strategic Plan are delivered as agreed | |



| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023-2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Business continuity planning | President Executive Officer Chief Commissioner | Review report Revised legal structure Revised Branch Constitution | A legal structure for Scouts ACT that best positions the branch for regulatory requirements and financial challenges A modern Constitution embeds governance best-practice Achievement of ACT Government SSO classification 1 in the next round | |
| Strengthening group financial management and accountability | Executive Officer | Report on strategy to implement 'One Xero' project, and strengthening financial management and reporting at the Group level | Scouts ACT has an accurate and comprehensive oversight of all branch finances, including in groups, with all groups moving to a full forward budgeting approach to financial management | |
| Grow the business of Camp Cottermouth | Executive Officer President | Business plan to add new income streams to Scouts ACT portfolio | Higher and more diversified Branch revenue and profitability | |



| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023-2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|--|----------------|--|--|--|
| Strengthen internal capabilities to develop grant applications | President | Clear internal guidelines about priority grants with regular funding rounds targeted by Scouts ACT A strategy for strengthening grant writing capability within the organisation | Scouts ACT increases the percentage of successful grants won | |
| Build ongoing relationships with corporate philanthropists | President | Comprehensive communication and engagement strategy to grow philanthropic and business sector revenue | Higher and more diversified Branch income | |



PROPERTY AND ASSETS

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

| | Accountability | Deliverable | Intended outcome | Link to Scouts Australia 2023-2026 Strategic Plan items for Branches |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Hall maintenance, remediation and rationalisation | Executive Officer | <p>A lifecycle plan for all scout halls, identifying critical maintenance and capital expenditure, and new funding and maintenance models</p> <p>Attractive and contemporary facilities that meet community standards and provide safe and inviting amenities that meet the diverse needs of youth members and adults in scouting</p> | <p>A sustainable revenue base and forward-looking maintenance and capital investment plan for Scout ACT halls</p> <p>Modern halls, camping and active recreation facilities that are safe and attractive for youth and adults to engage in the scouting program, with a particular emphasis on modern amenities</p> | Action 4 |
| Hall utilisation | Executive Officer Chief Commissioner | A plan for the use of scout halls currently not home to a scout group | Full and best utilisation of scout halls currently not home to a scout group | Action 4 |
| Digital assets preservation | Executive Officer | Grant application for funding to digitise essential branch records | Safe, secure and searchable historical branch records | Action 5 |

