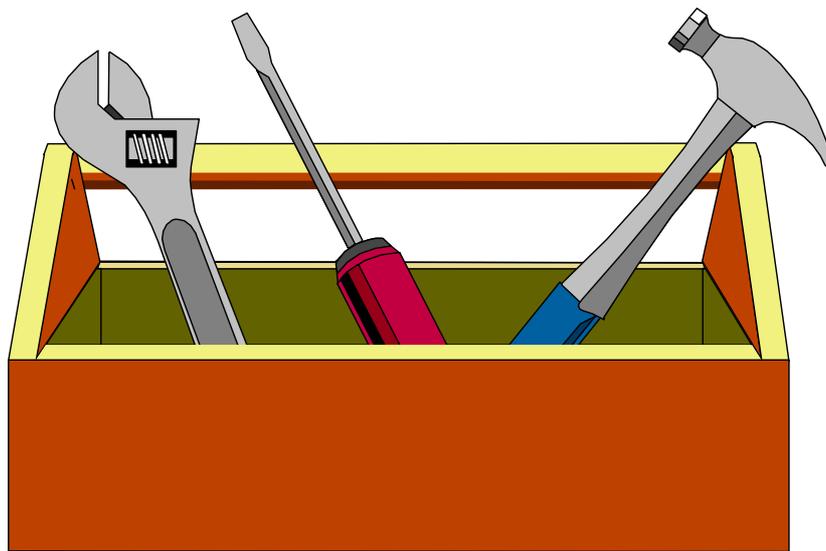


# ROVER ADVISER TOOLBOX



## **A GUIDE FOR ROVER ADVISERS AND ROVER CREWS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This toolbox has been produced with thanks to Murray Midlands Region Rover Council and the Victorian Branch Rover Council and may be reproduced. This toolbox has ideas and suggestions to assist Rover Crews in defining the role of their Rover Adviser (RA). It is designed to assist Rover Advisers to define their role in the Crew. It is designed as guide only and the role of the Rover Adviser should be negotiated between the Crew and the Rover Adviser. This guide also offers suggestions on the things an Rover Adviser should be encouraging their Rover Crew to consider ensuring they are functioning well.

## **WHY HAVE A ROVER ADVISER?**

The Rover Section of the Scout Association is self governing, meaning that Rovers run Rovers for Rovers. Why do we need a Rover Adviser if we run ourselves? A Rover Adviser is a valuable resource for any Rover Crew. As the name suggests they are there to advise the Crew when the Crew is unsure of their next step. They can provide guidance in difficult situations, they can provide resources for activities, and they can use their experience in providing suggestions to the Crew. Other benefits of having a Rover Adviser are:

- Someone who reserves judgment and keeps an open mind
- Someone who encourages different viewpoints
- Someone who can teach the Crew how to solve problems, without solving the problems for them
- Someone who helps the Crew reach consensus and strives for win-win agreements
- Someone who can ensure that individuals understand, and are able to take on, their responsibilities within the Crew.
- Someone who is not afraid to address conflict
- Someone who can ensure that fun is an integral part of the Crew's culture.
- Someone who, as member of the Crew, can have a lot of fun themselves.
- Someone who can maintain the consistency and integrity in a Rover Crew

## **WHERE ARE THESE ROVER ADVISERS???**

They are anywhere where good Leaders are found; the advantage of Rovers is the commitment of the Adviser can be less than that to another section of the movement. Rover Advisers do not need to attend every activity, but should be welcome at any activity. Rover Advisers should attend all Crew Business meetings. They should be available to advise the Crew at any time but this could be done via telephone, email or by Crew representatives visiting the Rover Adviser. This is a good selling point when discussing the role with a prospective Rover Adviser.

When looking for an Rover Adviser some useful resource people are Group Leaders, District Commissioners or other District Leaders. These people may know of a leader who has just resigned from the movement, but may be interested in continuing their involvement with a lesser commitment. There may be an ex-Rover who is keen to come back and put into the Crew what they received. Any ex-Rovers from your Crew should be at least 30 years old, as this gives them a bit of time away from the Crew and allows them to look at the Crew in an objective manner.

It is useful to look at the parents in your group and district and see if any of them would be interested, your Group Leader or District Commissioner will be able to help here. When looking at parents, look at their previous experience in life, career, Scouting and this may help you to target someone who can be useful to the Crew. You may wish to consider advertising in the local newspaper. If you plan this well, you may get the right person. A local business operator or someone of good standing in the community may also be worthwhile approaching, even if they are unable to commit, they may be able to refer you on to someone else.

When talking to a prospective Rover Adviser it is worthwhile setting up an interview panel to determine whether they will suit your needs. This panel should consist of at least two representatives of your Crew and an external member such as the Group Leader or District Commissioner. Rover Advisers still have to have police checks, Personnel interviews and other procedures that Leaders go through conducted on them, but this helps the Crew to determine if they are right for them.

# THE ROLE OF THE ROVER ADVISER

This section is designed to assist Rover Advisers in determining that their Crew is running well and what they can do to assist the Crew.

## THE IDEAL ROVER CREW

The ideal Rover Crew will have the following attributes:

- Enough active members to ensure that programs can run and are effective
- Good programs that look after everyone's needs
- A good Squire Training program that is completed in a reasonable time frame
- The BP Award is encouraged and individuals are challenged
- The Crew office bearers are aware of their roles and are performing them effectively
- Crew Business Meetings are useful, and include detailed reports from Region Rover Council
- Have a good, effective constitution in place
- Can deal with conflict in a quick and effective manner
- Communicates well with it's members
- Each member has fun and enjoys the company of other members

This of course is the ideal Crew and what all Crews should be striving to reach. A Rover Adviser can assist their Crew in reaching this target. The following is some areas where the Rover Adviser can work with their Crew to ensure they are performing at their optimum level.

## RECRUITMENT

Members are important to a Rover Crew. The more members you have the more chance of an active program and lots of worthwhile activities. It also spreads the workload among many Rovers and thus reduces the likelihood of burnout. An Adviser should ensure that the Rover Crew is looking towards it's future. Potential Rovers are everywhere you can look at:

- Your local Venturer Unit/s - Make sure the Crew is programming joint activities with the unit/s
- Your local Scout Troop/s - Start planting the seed early
- Attend Group and District activities - Helps gain a profile for your Crew
- Ex- Venturers Scouts and Rovers - Things may have changed and they may have time now.
- Your local Ranger Guides and Guide companies - Look at joint activities with these groups as well
- Universities, TAFES, Secondary Schools (remember VCE students are either 18 or will be turning 18 in the next twelve months) - A lot of the time these students will be away from home and looking for things to do. Set up a display and leave contact numbers.
- You may also like to advertise the Crew in a Real Estate Agent and many young people are in the midst of moving or even renting.
- Anywhere else in your local community where young people aged between 18 and 26 "hang out".

Your Crew may like to set up a promotional pamphlet or posters promoting the Crew, you can assist in distributing these. You can also talk to the District Council, Group Councils about the benefits of Rovering and get them to assist in your recruitment drives. Assist the Crew in setting up a promotional kit. This kit could consist of a promotional talk (for any types of community group), posters, brochures, promotional videos etc. Remember though, your role is to encourage and provide ideas, not to do the task. It is important that the Rovers produce the goods.

Once the members are in the Crew it is important that they are retained. Good programming will help in this area and that will be covered a little later on. It is the role of the Rover Adviser to ensure that everyone is heard in the Crew Meeting. It is important that no one is "belittled" or ignored because they will feel they are not valued by the Crew and leave. It is important that the Crew meets their needs. As a Rover Adviser you should be able to encourage them to have their say, even if it is in a one on one session with you and not in Crew meetings.

If members have left you should encourage the Crew to contact them and find out why. We need to find out why our members leave and if we can fix their concerns, will they come back? The Rover Adviser can play an important role in ensuring that the person is contacted, their views have been listened to and the Crew learns from the experience. The Rover Adviser can sometimes be the appropriate person to contact the ex-member, but this should be negotiated with the Crew.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAMMING

One of the first signs of a failing crew is the lack of a program and/or not following it, i.e. turn up to the hall and do nothing. Even if the crew has very few numbers, the crew should be planning activities, and then carrying out the programmed activity. As a Rover Adviser there are a number of things that you can ensure are happening in your Crew with regards to programming. It is vital that a Rover Crew meets regularly, weekly is strongly suggested but if that is difficult then a Crew should not leave it any more than a fortnight before they meet. Any longer and people start losing interest and find other things to do, and when it comes time to go to Rovers they just can't be bothered.

Programming (planning) and activities go hand in hand with increasing membership. People (Venturers and general public) don't want to come to Rovers to sit in an empty hall and do the same thing every week, or worse do nothing. People like to be associated with organisations that have fun and carry out activities. Ensure the program is balanced, taking into account things like cost, whether there are fun activities as well as service activities, there is a large variety of activities and not just the same thing. The Rover Adviser observes the planning process and make sure that these things are considered.

There is a need for the crew to plan their activities and develop a program for the coming six months. A Rover Adviser needs to ensure that Crew informs it members when it's planning meeting is and encourages everyone to attend. The Rover Adviser should ensure that everyone has the opportunity to offer suggestions and that the Crew listens to them. The Crew needs to produce a copy of the program and every member needs to have a copy of this. This ensures that every body knows what's going on and if there's any special requirement for that activity (i.e. time or place). It also allows people to plan work and family commitments around activities. This document then becomes a useful tool in recruitment, as it acts a flyer to get people interested in Rovers, and tells them where to go.

Other hints to assist with programming are:

- Allocate nights to individuals for them to organise the activity
- Look at old programs, BRC fixtures and region fixtures for ideas on what to do. These activities take a lot of pressure off the crew as other people do all the organising.
- Keep in mind items such as combined activities with other sections, crews and service activities.

There are many items to keep in mind when programming, it needs to be balanced taking into many factors including:

- The demographics of the crew, i.e. what types of people are in the crew? For example if the crew is full of students, cost of activities is going to be a major factor in the type of activities the crew does.
- The geography of the crew. If the crew is spread out over several towns, activities may need to be held in the same, so to spread traveling over the whole crew.
- The nights that the crew meets may be an issue, with member's employment, etc. The crew may need to be flexible with the program and consider member's family and work commitments. Also meeting nights may need to be varied according to the activity being held. For example, if you are going to go out in Melbourne, the activity may have to be held on a Friday or a Saturday.
- The sex of the crew. If the crew is made up of males, the activities will reflect this. The crew needs to take into consideration the make up of the crew and the mix of males and females.
- The crew needs to be aware of the personalities of its members. When programming the crew needs to consider personalities such as quiet vs outgoing members, fit / energetic vs those not inclined for active activities, etc.

A Rover Adviser occasionally needs to remind individuals of some points in order to keep the program working and effective. Even if you don't like the activity (or you think you won't like it) participate anyway, you may even enjoy it. At some stage you'll organise something that others won't like and they may not turn up. If activities are organised and people don't turn up, because they don't like the activity, the activity won't run. If programmed activities don't happen weeks on end, members will stop coming and new members won't turn up. If this happens the crew can have the best recruitment style in the world, but if they can't keep people interested, the crew won't exist.

Remember, when programming, be daring and crazy, but most of all make sure you have fun. Keep in mind service activities, thrills and spills and other crew member's needs.

## SQUIRE TRAINING

The best way for a new member (squire) of the Crew to understand the way the Crew operates and to understand Rovering is to complete a period of training for the Crew. Squire training should consist of a series of challenges that help the Squire gain a good knowledge of Rovering. The challenges should not be too difficult that they deter the potential member, but difficult enough to earn the investiture (making it a special occasion). The role of the Rover Adviser in the Squire Training will depend on the Crew, but they can play an important role. They can:

- Ensure that the Squires understand the reason behind the training
- Ensure that the Crew appoints a sponsor to assist the Squire in their training
- Ensure the Crew helps the Squire through their training, this can include programming Squire Training nights, attending camps/activities that need to be organised, participate in and assist in any discussions or practical activities.
- Lead a discussion on the Spiritual side of Scouting. Remind the Crew that they are now Adults and need to consider the spiritual side from a different viewpoint than a child's.
- Encourage the Squires to complete their training within the expected time frames (usually no more than six months)
- Provide support to the Crew and Sponsors in assisting the Squires

If you are the Adviser of a new Crew then you can assist the Crew in setting up their Squire Training program. Remember that it needs to be challenging but not a deterrent. It is suggested that the program can be easily completed in six months. It is worthwhile speaking to other Crews and Rover Advisers and gaining ideas from their Squire Training Programs. The Region Rover Council and Branch Rover Councils are good resources as well.

Some of the general requirements of Squire Training program may include:

- Taking part in a Crew Service project;
- Organise an activity for the Crew;
- Read Rovering to Success and discuss it with the Crew, Rover Adviser or Sponsor
- Discuss the Promise and Law with the Crew and Sponsor;
- Attend a Region/Branch Rover Council meeting with the Sponsor;
- Attend another Section of the Group or District with the Sponsor;
- Complete additional tasks as set by the Crew
- Attendance at an Introduction to Rovers Course (see your Region or Branch Rover Council for details of these courses.).

As a minimum a Crew should have the requirements of the Rover Skills Badge as their Squire Training Requirements

**Note: These items are not compulsory they are only recommended requirements.**

## BP AWARD

The role of the Rover Adviser in the BP Award is to assist the Crew in setting fair and reasonable standards. The Rover Adviser needs to encourage the Crew to consider the abilities of the applicant and whether they have been challenged. They need to ensure that individuals in the Crew do not impose their personal standards on others. They also need to ensure that the applicants don't pressure the Crew into accepting standards that are not too low

The Crew has a responsibility to encourage it's members to attempt the award and the Rover Adviser should ensure that each member is free to make their own choice, whether they want to attempt the badge or not. If a member chooses to complete the BP Award the Rover Adviser needs to remind the Crew of their responsibilities, they are to support the applicant, assist them where needed and ensure their badge is presented to Region Rover Council in a timely manner. The Rover Adviser may wish to instruct the Crew in the requirements of the BP Award and also in the spirit behind the badge.

The Rover Adviser should always be available to provide support and guidance to individual applicants, providing them with ideas and resources to help them attain the badges. The Rover Adviser should also be available to assist the Crew in setting standards. It is a good idea for the Crew

to set general guidelines of what they will and won't accept for each individual badge and the Rover Adviser can assist in this.

## **CREW BUSINESS MEETINGS AND OFFICE BEARERS**

It is important for Rover Advisers to attend Crew business meetings, as this is the main source of information on activities, issues and problems. The Rover Adviser can be called upon quite regularly at these meetings. The Crew Leader chairs the meeting and ensures that an agenda is set. The Rover Adviser has a responsibility to ensure that business meetings are held regularly (every four weeks is suggested) and that all Crew members are aware of when they are. The Rover Adviser should also observe these meetings and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to put their point of view across and that all opinions are considered when decisions are made. The Rover Adviser should also support the Crew in their decisions, having had the opportunity to have their say.

The business meeting should include reports from any Group or District Council. The Crew should be represented on the appropriate Council (Group if a group Crew, District if a District Crew) and the Rover Adviser can do this on behalf of the Crew. It would be preferable if the Crew Leader attended as well, but if the Rover Adviser attends then some consistency between the Group/District is maintained. The business meeting is also an ideal time to report on the Region Rover Council. This council is important as it passes on information about activities, helps solve issues and problems, passes information to and from Branch Rover Council and provides a good resource for the Crew. The Region Rover Council is an integral part of the Rover Government. The Rover Adviser should occasionally attend Region/Branch Rover Councils and should also ensure that the Crew is represented. The Rover Adviser should ensure that the representatives then report back to the Crew, the meetings' outcomes.

It is the responsibility of the Rover Adviser to ensure that the Crew has enough office bearers to run effectively. As a minimum each Crew should have a Crew Leader, Secretary, Treasurer and Program Manager. This is sufficient to ensure the Crew can operate to a reasonable standard. Each office bearer needs to have a good understanding of their role and needs to be comfortable with that role to ensure that they do the job to the best of their abilities. The Rover Adviser needs to have a close relationship with the Crew Leader and provide support and guidance when required. The Rover Adviser should also ensure that the other office bearers have a good understanding of their role. It is also important that the Crew understands the role of each office bearer and the Rover Adviser can play a role in this.

## **CONSTITUTION**

All organisations need rules and policies to operate effectively. If all the members understand what is expected of them, then they get on with enjoying themselves within the parameters of the guidelines. If we don't have these rules then members can do what they like when they like. Rovers put their rules into a constitution; it is devised, written and agreed to by the Crew. It is the Rover Adviser's responsibility to ensure that the Crew has an update and relevant constitution. The Rover Adviser will also be called upon occasionally to remind the Crew member's of the contents of the constitution. There are many mock constitutions around if you need help determining what you need to put in one, your Region/Branch Rover Council should be able to help you. You may also wish to speak to some more established Crews and use theirs as a guide. If you are advising a new Rover Crew that has been operating less than six months, it is suggested that you don't worry about your constitution yet. It is important to get the programming, recruitment and squire training right first. The Crew should have a constitution within 8 - 12 months of commencement.

The Crew can also consider a code of conduct. This is a clear set of rules on behavior expected by Crew members for each other.

The Rover Adviser is also responsible for reminding the Crew of the Scout Associations rules and regulations, to ensure that all members are operating within the rules of the organisation. This should become clear after completing the Wood Badge training.

## **CREW RELATIONSHIPS**

It is important for the Crew dynamics that the Crew works well together. It is important that any issues, problems or clashes be dealt with quickly and efficiently. The Rover Adviser advises solutions, guides the Rovers, offers options available and can mediate between two individuals if needed. The Rover Adviser should encourage open discussion but also respect for each other's opinions, views and feelings. If the Crew Leader is struggling to control a situation then the Rover Adviser should remind the Crew of the Constitution and the code of conduct, the Rover Adviser should support and encourage the Crew Leader in these situations.

The Rover Adviser should sit on, but not chair, any Court of Honour proceeding or disciplinary hearings the Crew may conduct and ensure that each party has a fair hearing. The Rover Adviser would advise the Crew on any options they may have, including referring the matter to the Region Rover Council or Branch Rover Council, whichever is the more appropriate.

The Rover Adviser should also ensure that the Crew is communicating well with each other. Are the Crew members aware of meetings, are they aware of where an activity is, are they aware of any major issues in the Crew and are they comfortable raising issues with the Crew? The Rover Adviser should be able to advise of better ways of communicating such as Crew Newsletter, detailed minutes, a phone tree and effective business meetings.

## **FUN FUN FUN**

All the above tips and suggestions are fine for making the ideal Rover Crew but if your Crew members and you are not having fun there is not much point, is there? All Crews need someone to remind them to enjoy themselves, not to take themselves too seriously and to have fun. Sometimes it is easy to forget that we are there for the fun and friendship that Scouting can give us. Sometimes we get too involved in our problems or create mountains out of molehills and we need someone to remind us that it is not that serious, that's where the Rover Adviser comes in to the equation. It is important to sit on the outside and look in when an issue is being discussed, provide some options or suggestions. Encourage the Rovers by letting them know that a solution can and will be found. Sometimes the Rover Adviser just needs to listen and not say anything, this also makes the Rover feel comfortable and look at the situation in a better light.

Make sure you have fun as well. The Crew should welcome you along to any activity they run or attend. You should be a part of the Crew and join in where you can. If the Crew discourages you from attending activities then discuss your feelings with them and try to negotiate a better deal. The Rover Adviser/Crew relationship is a two way street, both parties need to be happy and comfortable with the relationship. We are constantly reminded that the Crew can ask the Rover Adviser to leave if they don't meet their needs anymore, but the Rover Adviser doesn't need to stay on if the Crew doesn't meet their needs.

If there are members that are not enjoying themselves and no matter what you do still don't enjoy Rovers, ask them "why are you here?" Sometimes it is better for the Crew if these people found other interests, especially if they are responsible for negative vibes around the Crew. As an Rover Adviser you may need to speak to these people and get them to make a choice, provide positive input to the Crew (make a difference) or find other interests. This means that the other Crew Members can get on with having fun.

## **RESOURCES**

You are not alone in this job and there are many resources that you can refer to if you need to. List below are just a couple of those resources.

Assistant Region Commissioner - Rovers (your Crew should have the contact details)

Region and Branch Rover Councils

Other Rover Advisers and Rover Crews

District Commissioner/Group Leader

Other District Leaders

Updated 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008

## ROVER ADVISER CHECKLIST

Your Crew	Yes	No	Further Action
Meets regularly			
Has a balanced program			
Has fun and varying activities			
Adheres to the program most times			
Regularly plans the program			
Involves all members in planning			
Actively Promotes themselves			
Has more active members than not			
Has Service included in program			
Has a good Squire Training plan			
Promotes the BP Award			
Is aware of the or has Crew standards for BP Award			
Encourages the BP Award			
Meets the needs of its members			
Holds regular business meetings			
Has effective meetings			
Has an effective Crew executive			
Has an understanding of the role of the exec			
Reports on Region Rover Council meetings			
Has a Crew Constitution			
Has a code of conduct			
Has procedures for dealing with disputes			
Has clear communication lines			
Has an approachable Crew Leader			
Are comfortable in being open and honest			
Respects each other			
Enjoy each others company			
Has Fun together			

# ROVER ADVISER

The Rover Adviser is responsible to the Group Leader (for a group Rover Crew) or the District Commissioner (for a District Crew).

## BROAD OBJECTIVES

To promote Rover activities at Group/local Level.

To strongly encourage progression of Venturer Scouts into Rovers

To encourage and facilitate the development of each individual Rover in the Crew

## FUNCTIONS

- Advise and assist the Crew as required in its planning, organisation and conduct of the Crew's activities.
- As required advise Rovers in skills appropriate to the Crew program and the Award Scheme, and/or identify suitably qualified instructors/advisers
- Encourage and advise Rovers in their progress in the Award Scheme.
- Ensure a high degree of co-operation with other Sections, especially the Venturer Scout section and encourage Venturer Scouts to progress to the Rover Crew, and suitable Rovers to adult leader roles on completion of their Rover Training
- By personal example set a high standard of behaviour
- Attend all Crew meetings and District and/or Region Rover Councils as required
- Overview and give advice to Crews on correct administrative requirements in line with Scout Association and Branch policies.
- Through the Group/District/Region Rover Council and at other appropriate times or as the need arises keep the Group Leader/Commissioner informed of all matters relevant to the Crew.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Be able to set a high standard of behaviour through personal example and encouragement.
- Enthusiastic and be able to motivate and enthuse others.
- Have a strong commitment to Rover philosophy and activities
- Not less than 26 years old
- Be suitable for any additional requirements as set by the Rover Crew
- Have a general knowledge of Scouting for Boys, Rovering to Success, the Rover handbook and other Rover publications.
- Be prepared to complete all modules of the Leader of Youth Development Program
- Be prepared to share leadership and develop other Leaders.

SOURCE: PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

**“YOU DON'T BECOME A LEADER BECAUSE YOU SAY YOU ARE; IT'S MUCH MORE WHAT YOU DO THAN WHAT YOU SAY”**

# EXPECTATIONS OF A ROVER ADVISER

Rover Advisers build open and honest relationships with Rovers in order to allow them to maximise their Physical, Intellectual, Social, Spiritual and Emotional development.

- PROVIDES A CLEAR SENSE OF DIRECTION
  - Provides the Crew with the skills to enable them to solve problems without solving them for them
  - Acknowledging that making mistakes is part of a learning process and that when mistakes are made, they are not ignored and the Crew learns from them
  - Is proactive in assisting the Crew to provide interesting and relevant activities for its members; including taking on an organising role when required
  - Maintains the consistency and integrity of the Rover Crew
  - Ensures that the Crew are aware of the moral, legal and ethical obligations
  
- LEADS BY EXAMPLE
  - Reserves judgments and keeps an open mind
  - Behaves in accordance with the Adult Code of Conduct
  - Sets a high standard of behaviour and acts positively
  - Demonstrates drive, energy, initiative and personal accountability to get results for their Crews
  - Develops constructive relationships with Crew members
  - Completes all appropriate training in a timely manner
  
- CREATES AND SUSTAINS AN ENVIRONMENT FOR ROVERS TO BE SUCCESSFUL
  - Acts as a mentor for the Crew
  - Develops the Executive to operate an effective Crew
  - Ensures a climate exists where Rovers feel comfortable in raising issues
  - Understands the learning needs of Rovers and provides them with opportunities to achieve success both for the Crew and individually
  - Ensures that fun is an integral part of the Rover Crew.
  
- DEMONSTRATES INTEGRITY WHEN DEALING WITH DIFFICULT ISSUES
  - Takes a leading role in addressing difficult situations and works towards resolution in a quick and efficient manner
  - Is not afraid to address conflict, ensuring it is dealt with quickly to avoid unnecessary escalation.
  - Provides sound advice based on accurate information and listening in an unbiased way to what people say
  
- IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THEIR ROVER CREW
  - Ensures that the Crew has a well-balanced active program.
  - Actively encourages all Rovers to participate in relevant training
  - Develops and maintains a good working relationship with their Group/District
  - Empowers the Crew to be accountable for their actions.