



Scouts Canada

Creating a Better World
Cr er un monde meilleur



SCOUTINGNOW

An Action Plan for Canadian Scouting

**The Chief Commissioner's
Task Force on Growth**

VERSION 2 - July 27, 2009



A message from your Chief Commissioner, National Youth Network Chair, and Chief Executive Officer



Friends in Scouting

We believe the time is right for us to grow Scouting in Canada. In many ways, we already know what we need to do. Those of you we have met in our travels are as passionate about Scouting's Mission as we are. If we truly believe in our Mission, we should also believe that more young people in our country deserve an opportunity to benefit from our efforts and our successes.

In order to grow, and in order to regain our rightful place in the eyes of the Canadian public, there are some things that we need to change. This action plan addresses the work that is essential to move Scouts Canada into the 21st century.

On behalf of the Chief Commissioner's Task Force on Growth, we respectfully ask for your support and involvement in bringing this plan to life. Each and every member of our organization can take part in this exciting work. We challenge you to do your part to take the action needed to revitalize Scouting in Canada.

This plan is a call to action and an invitation to help us develop solutions. We encourage you to have input into this process as we work together to grow Scouting and make some necessary changes in order to do so.

The Action Plan for Canadian Scouting is built on five key action items:

- **Making it Easier for New and Current Volunteers**
- **Enhancing Our Image, Profile and Expertise**
- **Enhancing Organization Capacity**
- **Achieving Meaningful Youth Involvement**
- **Recruiting New Members and Finding New Volunteers**

The plan builds on WOSM's strategic priorities and is also a framework for successfully achieving Scouts Canada's strategic directions.

We invite you to consider how you can help bring these action items to life.

We promise to do our best to revitalize this great movement, and we will do everything we can to support you in your efforts.

Thanks so much for your commitment to Scouting. Please join us as we strive to move this organization forward.

Yours in Scouting



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Introduction

While Scouting continues to grow throughout the world, and remains the world's largest youth movement, paradoxically, across the developed world, the Scouting Movement faces a declining Scouting population. Year over year, membership continues to shrink. This is, obviously, a significant concern.

From 1997 to April 2009, Scouts Canada has lost, cumulatively, about 138,000 members, or, on average, about 11,500 members per annum. If we project this annual average loss forward, as a worst-case scenario, Scouts Canada will have no members by 2017, a mere eight years in the future.¹

At least some of this decline, in Canada, can, however, be attributed to changing demographics and a shrinking youth population in a post-baby boom world. According to Statistics Canada, while Canada's population continues to grow, it is the result of international migration and not reproduction. Indeed, Canada's population grew by 5.4% from 2001-2006, the highest in the G8 and some two-thirds of that growth rate is fueled by immigration, with approximately 240,000 people arriving each year, on average, since 2001.

Yet, while Canada is growing, it is a graying population, with one in seven Canadians now a senior citizen -- a record level, according to Statistics Canada. If projections hold true, it is expected that the number of senior citizens in Canada will double in the next 25 years, and, within only about ten years, the number of senior citizens will outnumber youth.

The proportion of those under the age of 15 shrank, again, to 17.7% of the Canadian population - a record low - and the second consecutive intercensal period to see decline in this age group. By comparison, at the height of the baby-boom period, one in three Canadians was 14 years of age or younger. The median age of Canadians, as of 2006, is 39.5 years and is expected to reach 44 years by 2031.

This decline in the youth population is due, in part, to increased life expectancy and to birth rates of, on average, 1.6 over the last 30 years, which is, obviously, below natural replacement levels. Immigration does not affect this demographic shift because immigrants tend to come to Canada, on average, in their thirtieth year.²

As a youth servicing organization, a rapid decline in youth population hurts our ability to recruit members.

To make matters more complicated, younger people are less likely to volunteer for organizations and the volunteer sector itself is "graying" just like the population. As one commentator explained:

¹ Full extinction is highly unlikely but continued decline will have a profound effect on Scouts Canada to deliver its programs and provide effective outreach.

² This demographic information comes from Statistics Canada's analysis of the 2006 census. See Laurent Martel and Éric Caron Malenfant, *Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2006, by Age and Sex: Findings*, <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/agesex/index.cfm> (accessed January 4, 2009)

What is clear is that while many young Canadians volunteered their time on an individual basis to help other individuals (13-50 percent), **comparatively few (4-10 per cent) 15-34-year-olds joined service clubs, civic/community organizations, work-based, and environmental associations.** Whether volunteer work was performed individually or on behalf of associations, the 15-34-year-old cohort was generally less likely to be involved than older Canadians. These findings are in keeping with other studies identifying a positive correlation between age and measures of engagement in voluntary, civic or professional associations.³

And you can hardly blame young people for this. A recent Statistics Canada report noted that:

...averaged over the week (school and non-school days), teens [aged 15-19] did an average of 7.1 hours of unpaid and paid labour per day in 2005—virtually the same as the 7.2 hours adult Canadians aged 20 to 64 spent on the same activities. Only the distribution was different for adults, with an average of 8.3 hours of unpaid and paid work being done on weekdays, and 4.5 hours on weekends.

These teens also spend about 9.2 hours per week doing homework. Perhaps not surprisingly then, some 11% of teens report being very stressed due to lack of time, 39% report that they are under constant pressure to do more than they can handle, and 64% report cutting back on sleep to gain more time.⁴

Some additional facts (as of 2004):

- ➔ Most volunteering is undertaken by a relatively small group of Canadians: 11% of Canadians accounted for 77% of volunteer hours.
- ➔ More young people volunteer than those older, but generally give fewer hours than those who are older. Over half (55%) of all youth aged 15 to 24 volunteered, compared to one-third (32%) of seniors aged 65 and older). The exception to this trend is the 25 to 34 age group who were less likely to volunteer (42%) than either youth or those who are between 35 and 44 (51% of whom volunteered). The average number of hours volunteered generally rises with age, from 139 hours a year for youth to 245 hours for seniors.⁵ Part of this increase can be attributed to the requirement that teens achieve a certain number of mandatory volunteer in order to graduate.

In other words, we are servicing a generation (or cohort) that is in demographic decline and whom generally seeks to volunteer on an individual basis and not join an organization due, in part, to a workload that is roughly equal to an adult working full

³ See L.S. Tossutti, "Youth Volunteerism and Political Engagement in Canada." Canadian Political Science Association, <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/papers-2004/Tossutti.pdf> at 5-6. (accessed January 4, 2009). Emphasis added.

⁴ Katherine Marshall, "The busy lives of teens," *Statistics Canada: Perspectives* (May 2007) 5-15. This is available for download from Statistics Canada's website.

⁵ See *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2006).

time. Furthermore, when they do volunteer, teens do not contribute a significant amount of time, preferring more short-term and *ad hoc* opportunities.

We also face a number of other issues that affect our membership numbers, besides demography, which are, in no particular order:

1. Our Historic Sense of Self-Importance

We must shake off our own sense of self-importance. It is true that, once upon a time, Scouting had greater numerical strength, but this is not particularly surprising when you consider that Scouting's peak in the country coincided with the peak of the baby boom, when one out of three Canadians was a young person.

As much as we may, corporately, and personally, believe in Robert Baden-Powell's vision and the values of Scouting, we cannot assume that everyone will necessarily share these values and we certainly cannot continue to entertain the quaint notion that a member joins and is thereafter expected to remain a member throughout childhood and on into adulthood. For many parents, Scouting is just one option amongst many for their children; they may, if asked, put their children into a Scouting program, but just as easily take them out for a whole host of reasons, none of which have anything to do with quality. We now exist in a highly fractured youth activity marketplace (both for profit and non-profit). There is now an organization and an opportunity for every cause under the sun. Every one of them is competing with us for volunteers and youth members. A presumption of superiority, moral or otherwise, is fatal.

We must also recognize that not everyone is interested in camping and the outdoors. In order to reach out to these people, we need to reposition ourselves and leaders in youth alternative education. Parents, particularly immigrant parents need to understand that Scouting is a key factor in their children's development and is as vital as traditional schooling.

2. The Transformation of the Non-Profit World

From the 1800s until the 1960s and 1970s, most organizations followed a broad chapter-based organizational model. Scouting fits into this mold, with groups, areas, councils, and a national Operations Advisory Committee and Board of Governors. Beginning in the 1960s, "cause" focused professionally managed organizations emerged, which had the effect of disconnecting volunteers and encouraging them to donate money rather than time.⁶ Some of our competitors – the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Clubs, and even municipal youth programs – are an example of the highly successful shift away from volunteer-driven activities to those organized by professional staff, funded by "member" contributions and fund-raising.

In an age where people would rather give money than time, organizations rely less on volunteer hours and more on voluntary donations and government grants to provide professional services. Scouting has tentatively explored this transformation with its

⁶ See Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003) 127: "Professionally run advocacy groups and non-profit institutions now dominate civil society, as people seek influence and community through a very new mix of largely memberless voluntary organisations."

SCOUTSabout and the Schools and Scouting programs, but we need to continue to re-imagine how we can deliver our services and our values in ways that harness these possibilities.

We also need to think about what it means to be a member and how we define membership. Many other youth-serving organizations count every young person they ever come into contact with while we do not necessarily track non-members that we do serve. For instance, it might make sense to track both "members" and "youth served by Scouting". But, for world census purposes, "members" must meet certain criteria set out in the World Organization of the Scouting Movement's Constitution to be considered Scouts.

3. Our Inadvertent Abandonment of our Leadership Role in Canadian Society

Traditionally, Scouting was seen as an expert on informal youth education, the outdoors, and international peace and development issues. Over the years, we have become too inwardly focused and this shapes our programs, our activities and even our discourse.

We must retain our current focus on quantitative evaluation of outputs (i.e. the number of members, sections, groups, etc.) but also focus on outcomes, such as increased youth graduating high school, reduced dropout rates, decreased school violence, etc.

As a result, we have been forgotten by most Canadians who, if they are aware of us at all, hold inaccurate or old-fashioned opinions about Scouting. Canadians look to our competition in these areas for insight and comment. We need to claw ourselves back onto the national stage.

4. Communications

Without a doubt, there is a significant need to improve communications and relationships between some staff and volunteers and between some senior volunteers and those who work directly with youth every week. There is also need to encourage greater communication between our areas, groups, sections, and parents.

We need to move towards an integrated model of volunteer and staff management where paid staff and unpaid volunteers are treated as equal contributors to an organization.

5. We have Allowed Ourselves to Become Boring

As one astute political consultant observed recently: "For businesses, for unions, for any goal-driven organization, it's always the same: *you can't achieve great things without taking great risks* ... citizens and the news media, and just about any sentient being are astute. They know when you are playing it safe. They know when you are being timid. When they sense you are being deliberately boring, they tune you out, sometimes permanently."⁷

⁷ Warren Kinsella, *The War Room: Political Strategies for Business, NGOs, and Anyone Who Wants to Win* (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2007) at 136.

Now is the time, with challenges to Scouting all around us, to take the great risks and reap the great rewards that come in sharing our vision of creating a better world.

6. We must harness the Digital Age and understand the Digital Generation

The Internet is now a profound social and economic force in modern society and has significantly shaped the so-called "Digital Generation" (sometimes called the "Millennials" or "Generation "Y") of those aged, roughly, aged 30 and younger.

The prestigious Pew Research Centre, in the United States, reports that from 1993 - 2008, those people reporting that they received their news from newspapers declined from 58% to 34% and from the nightly network newscasts declined from 60% to 29%. Meanwhile, they report that during the same time span, those people who surfed the Internet from news increased from virtually nil to 37%.⁸ The Internet is now a major source of information and is rapidly threatening the "old media" hegemony on information. Indeed, the Internet is now more important as a place of news, than newspapers. It is no surprise that commentators are forecasting the collapse of the newspaper industry and this suggests that we would do well to marshal our resources, currently focused on gaining newspaper and television coverage, for the Internet.

In 2007, Statistics Canada reports that 73% of Canadians aged 16 years of age and older (about 19.2 million people) went online for personal reasons in the twelve months prior to the survey. Furthermore, Canadians used the Internet to purchase goods and services in 2007 worth a whopping \$12.8 billion, an increase of 61% since 2005.⁹ Younger Canadians are more likely to use the Internet for so-called "web 2.0" functions -- online sharing, collaboration and communicating.

There is no question, therefore, that the Internet is a significant cultural phenomena, which must be harnessed, but we must also be aware of how profoundly our new members and young leaders, part of the Digital Generation, have been shaped by the Internet. They have grown up immersed in a digitally rich environment.

Don Tapscott, the author of *Grown Up Digital*, is an entrepreneur and an adjunct professor at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. He has spent a great deal of time investigating this generation and this book, and his other texts, provide insight we can use.

Specifically, he identifies eight generational "norms" for the digital generation, which he called the "Net Gen", which we quote:

A. Freedom

"They want freedom in everything they do, from freedom of choice to freedom of expression...While older generations feel overwhelmed by the proliferation of sales,

⁸ Pew Research Centre, "Key News Audiences Now Blend Online and Traditional Sources: Audience Segments in a Changing News Environment", August 17, 2008, <http://people-press.org/report/444/news-media> (accessed January 5, 2009).

⁹ See Statistics Canada summaries at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/080612/dq080612b-eng.htm> and <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/081117/dq081117a-eng.htm> (date accessed: January 4, 2008)

channels, product types, and brands, the Net Gen takes it for granted. Net Geners leverage technology to cut through the clutter and find the marketing message that fits their needs. They also expect to choose where and when they work. They use technology to escape traditional office constraints and integrate their work lives with their home and social lives. Net Geners seek the freedom to change jobs, freedom to take their own path, and to express themselves."

B. Customizers

"They love to customize, personalize...Today's youth can change the media world around them--their desktop, website, ring tone, handle, screen saver, news sources, and entertainment. They have grown up getting what media they want, when they want it, and being able to change it. Millions around the world don't just access the Web, they are creating it by creating online content. Now the need to customize is extending beyond the digital world to just about everything they touch. Forget standard job descriptions and only one variety of product..."

C. Scrutinizers

"They are the new scrutinizers...Transparency, namely stakeholder access to pertinent information about companies and their offerings just seems natural to the Net Gen...Businesses targeting the Net Gen should expect and welcome intense scrutiny of its products, promotional efforts, and corporate practices. The Net Gen knows that their market power allows them to demand more of companies, which goes for employers as well."

D. Seekers of Corporate Integrity and Openness

"They look for corporate integrity and openness when deciding what to buy and where to work. The Internet, and other information and communication technologies, strip away the barriers between companies and their various constituencies, including consumers, activists, and shareholders. Whether consumers are exposing a flawed viral marketing campaign or researching a future employer, Net Geners make sure company values align with their own."

E. Combining Entertainment and Play

"The Net Gen wants entertainment and play in their work, education and social life. This generation brings a playful mentality to work. From their experience in the latest video game, they know that there's always more than one way to achieve a goal.-- This is a generation that has been bred on interactive experiences. Brand recognition is no longer enough, something leading companies recognize."

F. Collaboration and Relationships

"They are the collaboration and relationship generation. Today, youth collaborate on Facebook, play multiuser video games; text each other incessantly; share files for school, work, or just for fun....they also engage in relationship-oriented purchasing. Nine out of ten young people we interviewed said that if a best friend recommends a product, they are likely to buy it. They influence each other through what we call N-fluence Networks -- online networks of Net Geners who, among other things, discuss brands, companies, products, and services."

G. The Need for Speed

"The Net Gen has a need for speed -- and not just in video games. Real-time chats with a database of global contacts have made rapid communication the new norm for the Net Generation. In a world where speed characterizes the flow of information among vast networks of people, communication with friends, colleagues, and superiors takes place faster than ever. And marketers and employers should realize that Net Geners expect the same quick communication from others - every instant message should draw an instant response."

H. Innovation

"...A twentysomething in the workforce wants the new Blackberry, Palm, or iPhone not because the old one is no longer cool, but because the new one does so much more. They seek innovative companies as employers and are constantly looking for innovative ways to collaborate, entertain themselves, learn, and work."¹⁰

Tapscott's roadmap of the Digital Generation is a valuable one for Scouting. It shows us how important the internet is, and how we must expand our web presence in significant ways, and also how important that Scouting be open and transparent in its operations.

This is a cohort that appreciates peer/collaborate/experiential education. The old idea of a teacher broadcasting knowledge in a one-size-fits-all approach does not. Thus, in some ways, Scouting is well placed, because of its long history of "learning by doing" pedagogy. But we also have to think about how these cultural changes will affect other aspects of our program.

The future is right here. Right now.

While the issues facing Scouting are significant, and the changes taking place around us are increasing rapidly, all is certainly not lost!

First, it is important to note that, for the most part, our programs are sound, effective and time-tested while being capable of constant re-imagining to ensure freshness and dynamism. This Action Plan is about delivering our services better, not about the services themselves and makes no substantive program-related recommendations.

Secondly, it is important to note that one National Scout Organization (NSO) in the developed world has stopped their membership decline, and, in fact, is growing: The Scout Association in the United Kingdom ("Scout Association"). As of the end of April, 2009, the Association reported year over year growth for four consecutive years and have reached close to 500,000 members. Despite the largest growth in adult volunteers in 23 years, and opening up 13,000 new spaces, there is still a whopping 33,000 person waiting list.¹¹ It is, therefore, a useful experiential model to reflect upon and use.

¹⁰ These eight norms come from Don Tapscott, *Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009) at 34-36.

¹¹ See The Scout Association, "Scouting census records record growth", at http://www.scouts.org.uk/news_view.php?news_id=178

The key lesson we can draw from the Scout Association experience is the importance of shaping a modern, professional public relations experience and, thereby, shaping the Scouting discourse in the UK. An exciting new badge program was launched, including badges for public relations, mountain biking, and healthy eating, street sports, and even quad bike racing, which caught the media's eye.¹² They are even tackling the hot-button issue of childhood obesity.¹³ By taking up important issues facing the country, they attract media attention and build an image of expertise. They have a large public relations department and have reestablished their expertise.

To increase its membership and tackle their growing waiting lists, the Scout Association has launched its "Big Adventure" campaign to get parents and others associated with Scouting to become members. Its research has shown the "the most effective way of turning adults on the edge of the Group into volunteers is to give them an active role in the planning and running of a residential experience."¹⁴

We must continue to recruit volunteers of all ages, but a key focus must be on the recruitment and retention of young, dynamic and relevant leaders from the Digital Generation - they will be our future. Everyone is busy and it has to be easier to deliver our program! Good programming brings in the kids. Without good leaders, groups die. When volunteers fail to deliver on the promise of our program they create negative word-of-mouth advertising. We need to create a system to support new leaders, many who were not Scouts themselves, and help them integrate into existing groups or create new ones. We must also remember, however, that our training does not necessarily guarantee good leaders and good program.

Finally, we must enhance the way we deliver our messages, and deliver our services in keeping with the societal changes being driven by the Digital Generation. If we are to succeed in executing this Action Plan, a high priority must be the development of effective web and new media presences because our members, and potential members will expect and demand it. And corporate style websites just will not do. They must be technologically savvy and media-rich, with flash animation, video, and the opportunity to collaborate, share, and participate. While we have made some progress in recent months, our current, timid steps in that direction are not sufficient. We support the initial steps taken to provide Scouts Canada with a social media presence, but we need aggressive movement forward in this area.

We also recognize that we are not alone in our concerns. The World Organization of the Scouting Movement's *Action for Growth Report* contains a good conceptual framework. We also strongly encourage Scouts Canada's "Making it Easier to Join Task Force (MEIT-J)" and endorse online registration as a vitally important goal, a service the digital generation will expect and demand. While this is not a specific action item in the report,

¹² See, for instance, The Daily Mail's report at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-507780/New-Scout-badges-Be-prepared---make-fruit-salad.html>

¹³ See <http://kidsoutdoors.com>, which is organised by the Scout Association to get more young people active in outdoor activities and undertaking studies on the subject.

¹⁴ See The Scout Association, "Join the Big Adventure" at <http://www.scouts.org.uk/cms.php?pageid=1859&pagenotlive=1>.

it is vital that this process be completed as quickly as possible. We also endorse processes such as Backcheck that assist volunteers and groups in the volunteer screening process and reducing demands on volunteer time. We must move quickly.

If we fail to respond to these cultural pressures, we face the same decline facing other 19th and 20th century youth and adult organizations, designed for a particular time and place, that are unable to cope with change and that are collapsing, as a result.

Rather than present a grand plan, or strategy, this Action Plan for Canadian Scouting is recommending a whole host of relatively small activities, the whole of which should have greater impact than the parts. This is what Professor Gareth Morgan calls the 15% solution. We focus on small but significant actions that will leverage change:

The challenge rests in finding ways of creating transformational change incrementally: **By encouraging people to mobilize small but significant "15-percent initiatives" that can snowball in their effects.** When guided by a sense of shared vision, the process can tap into the self-organizing capacities of everyone involved.¹⁵

This **Action Plan for Canadian Scouting** is our way of triggering a national dialogue and a sufficient number of "15-percent initiatives" to snowball our growth. We want to spur conversations about how all of us can help spread Robert Baden-Powell's vision for creating a better world. It is not the end of the process, but the beginning.

¹⁵ See Morgan's webpage on the subject here:
<http://www.imaginiz.com/provocative/concept/solution.html>

ACTION ITEM #1

MAKING IT EASIER FOR NEW AND CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

WOSM Strategic Priority #5: Volunteers in Scouting - developing new approaches to broaden the base of adult support. This strategic priority aims at redefining the concept of volunteering as applied to Scouting and reviewing policies and practices to help NSOs recruit and retain a new group of adults in Scouting.

Scouts Canada Strategic Direction #2: Broadening Volunteer Support – Develop new approaches to attract and retain adult volunteers.

Background

For Scouting to grow, we must recruit new leaders, who will strengthen existing groups and help establish new groups.

There is a significant learning curve in being a leader. To keep new leaders in this highly competitive volunteer world, we need to make it easier to:

- ➔ Join in the first place and find the role that suits them
- ➔ Get oriented and trained quickly and easily
- ➔ Deliver the program at the standards we expect

If we do not accomplish this, they either never join in the first place or leave frustrated, all of which have negative cascading consequences. But this can be easily accomplished through prepared programming and easier training.

We must recognize that the old idea of a leader volunteering for most of his or her life is likely a myth. Many leaders, for a whole host of reasons, can only volunteer for a year or two, or until their child leaves. We cannot assume that a volunteer has several years to get trained. They need to be able to take a training course the instant they sign up.

All of the Orientation Course and much of a Wood Badge Part I covers knowledge that can be successfully shared through online training. Online training is becoming more common and accepted amongst younger volunteers and employees. Volunteers can pursue the course at their own speed, from home. It also offers a greater chance of engagement and learning through individual participation and interaction. Such a course would not, however, replace a traditional on-site training course for those who wish to take it. We cannot delay implementation of online training any longer.

New volunteers can be overwhelmed with the responsibilities of leading a section, particularly those who are new to Scouting. Planning and preparing meeting syllabi can be a significant increase in workload. Jumpstart programming is a great resource but is generic in nature. Why not create a yearly, customized, weekly program, for each section, that builds in and allows for youth involvement in program planning and decision

making? We also know about most major events in the Scouting calendar, and these can be embedded into the yearly Jumpstart to ensure attendance.

Action Item #1.1

Online Orientation/Wood Badge Training

We recommend the immediate establishment of an optional Online Orientation Course and Wood Badge Part I Training Course for new leaders. This includes:

- a) Reviewing the current Orientation and Part 1 Training Standards and learning outcome expectations for all Wood Badge courses in the Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections
- b) Creating online training syllabi for all sections, using reading, video and interactive elements (i.e., playful scenarios and games where you have to handle a Scout that is acting out, or plan a camp to maximize youth enjoyment)
- c) Launch the online course, test system, and advertise availability
- d) Investigate online course options for non-Wood Badge topics and, if appropriate, deliver them, even to non-members as a revenue stream
- e) Pursue development of training blogs and chat rooms where people can ask questions and share their experiences

This system, ideally, would share information with the MMS, so that a MMS number would be used to log in, and, upon completion, would automatically record completion in their records, thereby reducing staff labour inputs.

Online training has the advantage of being multilingual.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Orientation to be live by September 2009
- ➔ Training course to be live by the end of 2009-2010 Scouting year
- ➔ Additional courses going online by 2010-2011 year
- ➔ Ongoing evaluation of courses as needed

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO
- ➔ Executive Director of Program Services

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Staff or contract persons would have to be retained to write online training syllabi, film video and prepare other online resources, and create training website

Action Item #1.2

Prepared Programming

We recommend the immediate creation of an optional standardized September-June weekly syllabus for the Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections suitable for all Scouts Canada leaders, regardless of location. As well, we know that retention is much higher in groups that have strong summer camp programs. The weekly syllabuses can be created by the following:

- a) Review Program Standards and existing Jumpstart programming
- b) Identify holidays and special days that may impact program
- b) Review all existing Scouting events and determine which are appropriate for embedding into yearly Jumpstart program
- c) Prepare broad calendar year by theme and by section
- d) Prepare monthly and weekly programs by section
- e) Proof and prepare for online publishing and distribute
- f) Begin preparing new Jumpstart for next Scouting year
- g) Develop Council plans to ensure every section takes part in summer camp programs
- h) Develop programming to ensure effective use of Sixers' Councils and Courts of Honour

This could also be integrated with an enhanced program builder website as customizable templates, with helpful suggestions and hints. Linked with this would be a dramatic increase in available theme-based Jumpstart programs.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Prepared programming will be available for Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections by September 2010
- ➔ Ongoing evaluations are held as needed, but at least once every Scout year

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Director of Program Services

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Labour costs
- ➔ Production costs, which should be minimal if produced and circulated electronically

Action Item #1.3

New Leader Welcome Package

We propose that every new leader, upon registration, should receive a welcome pack, delivered by mail or email, containing:

- a) A document that builds on the orientation/welcome/first steps resources that have been prepared by various Councils
- b) A copy of the expanded Jumpstart program, Commissioner's video, information on how to access resources (such as Program Builder), Outdoor Activity Guide, Brand Manual, FAQs, etc.

- c) Details on how to register for their online Orientation/Wood Badge training
- d) A card with their MMS username and temporary password
- e) A list of contact information for resource people (Area Commissioner, service team members, etc.)
- f) Job description

Of course, this package should be supplemented with face-to-face mentoring provided by an experienced leader.

Action Deadline

September 1, 2009

Person Responsible

→ Director of Membership Development

Financial/Staff Implications

- Labour costs in preparing packages
- Production costs, if any, and postage, if sent by mail

Measuring Progress

- Monthly, beginning September 30, 2009
- Updates on a monthly basis (how many members and how many packages)

Action Item #1.4**New Group Action Kit**

While we do advertise our desire to recruit leaders, we do not do a good job of advertising the opportunity of starting a group. Many individuals do not seem to be aware that they can start their own.

To remedy this, we recommend the creation of an electronic New Group Action Kit with all necessary paperwork and information written for a non-Scouting audience. Two versions will be created:

- a) For individuals who wish to establish a group
- a) For organizations interested in using Scouting as their youth program

We must spend more time communicating Scouting to community associations as a ready-to-go template for creating dynamic and engaging youth groups.

The Group Action Kit can include materials from the existing Group Committee handbook, job descriptions, program standards, etc.

It would also be advisable to assign mentors from successful groups to assist new groups.

Action Deadline

→ to be written and distributed for website inclusion by the end of September 2010

Person Responsible

- Director of Membership Development

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of production

Action Item #1.5**Resource People Database**

There are many leaders, former members, and non-members out in the community who are willing to visit Groups to share their hobby, knowledge, or passion. These guests take the burden off of leaders who have to provide programming at every meeting.

We recommend an investigation into the creation of an online, self-managed database of such persons, which can be accessed by leaders. This would be made available to all Councils. The site should be interactive and engaging – “Do you have a skill to offer? Click here!”

Action Deadline

- June 2010
- Update to Board of Governors in September 2009

Person Responsible

- Executive Director of Field Services
- Director of Communications

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of production

Action Item #1.6**Making it Easier to Use Scout Camps and Properties**

What are we doing to ensure that all youth members are taking part in outdoor activities at least one every month? What barriers exist that prevent young people from using our camps? What are we doing to ensure that all youth in our movement participate in amazing summer camp programs?

One of the keys to recruitment and retention of members is exciting and challenging outdoor experiences. We already have extensive resources at camps, but not every group can get there, and leaders may be “scared off” because of the work involved in organizing such trips and their inexperience. Can we not take steps to make camping easier through prepared weekend programming?

Summer camps are an excellent recruiting tool. Young people can join Scouting for summer camp and have a positive Scouting experience.

Like in the UK, significant regional Scout Camps should become Scout Activity Centres. In the past five years the Scout Association has successfully managed to transform Scout properties from places for Scout groups to camp and play into Scout Activity Centres,

which offer a range of programs and activities. This makes these camps not only more attractive to Scouting youth, but also to leaders who do not have to create camp programs and activities in order to take the youth camping. These Centres are then available, during the week, for non-Scouting purposes such as corporate leadership retreats.

When it comes to camping and outdoor activities, we need to facilitate programs that help leaders engage youth in activities that enable them to learn leadership, environmental stewardship, and healthy active living. It's not enough to simply manage properties. We need to develop dynamic, quality camp programs. Scouts Canada should also consider developing a program similar to the Boy Scouts of America's National Camping School.

We recommend that our Councils (and Foundations where applicable) investigate:

- a) Designating a staff person to prepare regular outdoor adventure activities and summer camp programs within their Councils and Scouts Canada camps, (rock climbing, canoeing, etc.) for every section
- b) Arranging transportation if required
- c) Sharing learning outcomes with other Councils

We also recommend that Councils strengthen camping capacity by:

- a) developing a one-stop Scout camp website, that would include:
 - i) detailed camping information about each Scout camp across their provinces, with maps and photos of services available
 - ii) online reservations for camping
- c) developing opportunities to rent Scout properties to other organizations to increase revenue by offering our facilities to corporate clients as retreats, leadership training, and team bonding and supported by available team building programs that can be delivered with minimal effort
- d) developing on-site program opportunities for visiting Scout groups, schools, and other organizations
- e) Reducing garbage output at all Scout Camps in Canada by 50% by 2011 and by 90% by 2014 through the introduction of rigorous recycling and composting facilities

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigation to be complete by September 2010
- ➔ Implementation by September 2011

Persons Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of new staff, and cost of adventurous activities
- ➔ Cost of bus service
- ➔ Cost of new provincial/Council camp websites

Action Item #1.7

Reducing Barriers to Participation

We recommend that all Councils and Areas explore initiatives that make it easier for our volunteers to participate in Scouting.

For instance, if child care is identified as a barrier, it may be helpful to provide a SCOUTSabout-style program for the children of volunteers who are participating in training or other Scouting meetings. In urban centres, a Council or Area could ensure that meetings and training are close to public transit, where available, or, alternatively, that car-pooling/sharing is organized to ensure that everyone can attend, regardless of car ownership.

The Task Force is asking Councils to consider how we can reduce barriers to participation and encourage more people to volunteer.

Action Deadline

→ Investigation completed by June 2010

Person Responsible

- Director of Field Services
- Council Commissioners

Financial/Staff Implications

→ Cost of providing additional services if required

Action Item #1.8

Eliminating Leader Registration Fees

We recommend that Councils adopt a policy to reduce and ultimately eliminate leader registration fees. Several Councils have already done so, and the response from volunteers has been very positive. This is an action that requires further discussion and research.

Action Deadline

→ Policy to be in place for the 2010-2011 Scouting year

Person Responsible

- Council Commissioners
- Executive Commissioner and CEO

Financial/Staff Implications

→ Lost revenue – there is a need to adjust other fees and develop alternative revenue sources to offset the leader fee revenue – more discussion is needed

ACTION ITEM #2

ENHANCING OUR IMAGE, PROFILE AND EXPERTISE

WOSM Strategic Priority #4: Reaching Out - *breaking down barriers and working with broader segments of society. The aim of this strategic priority is to support NSOs in identifying and responding to the needs of young people, adults and society where Scouting is currently not having an impact. This should result in an increase in membership and increase Scouting's impact in the world today.*

WOSM Strategic Priority #7: Scouting's Profile - *strengthening communications, partnerships and resources. This strategic priority aims at strengthening Scouting's communications, partnerships and resources at all levels, as these are vital in supporting the work to achieve the mission.*

Scouts Canada Strategic Direction #3: Strengthening Scouting's External Profile — *Build a positive image of Scouting through communications, partnerships community and corporate involvement.*

Background

Many of the other action items deal with strengthening our profile, in a variety of different ways. This section focuses on building our profile from a media and public relations perspective.

The most important element, as discussed above, is web development. Jim Marggraff is the executive vice president for worldwide content for the educational toy company Leapfrog, one of the fastest growing toy companies in history. He has developed a seven-second rule. Essentially, the human attention span consists of seven second blocks.¹⁶ Any web experience must follow this rule.

Scouting suffers from a lack of "news" as the movement has long ago lost its novelty. Watch your nightly newscast. The reports either cover events that happened or they deal with the release of studies or information. This informational news is something easily generated and captures media attention because of an infatuation with facts and figures. The Scout Association has used this concept to great success in the UK, by focusing on childhood inactivity/obesity¹⁷ and volunteerism (the Morgan Report).¹⁸ The Girl Guides have also had success with such public awareness programs, focused on

¹⁶ Josh McHugh, "LeapFrog's Wild Ride", *Wired.com*, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.11/leapfrog_pr.html (accessed January 5, 2009).

¹⁷ See note 7, above. For news coverage see the BBC's coverage at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7231930.stm

¹⁸ In December, 2007, a cross-party panel of British MPs, headed by Baroness Morgan of Huyton, launched the Morgan Inquiry to investigate young adult volunteering in the UK and why this group faces so many barriers to volunteering. The Inquiry was supported by the Scout Association. See: www.morganinquiry.org.uk.

empowering young women.¹⁹ The Scouting movement is in a unique position to leverage its experience, knowledge, and privileged access to a key demographic cohort.

The value of what Scouts Canada offers must be communicated to youth, to parents and guardians, and to adults of potential members. In particular, we must convey to parents and guardians why Scouting is a valuable investment in their child's growth.

Action Item #2.1

Web Development

We recommend the:

- a) Immediate redesign and re-launch of the Scouts Canada website, with new content, video, downloads, social networking opportunities, web apps, podcasts and loyalty promotion tools aimed at young people
- b) Development of a Commissioner/leader password protected Intranet, using the Greater Toronto Council's proposed Commissioner's e-handbook as a starting point
- c) Preparation of more video content for web and DVD (to be used at outreach events)
- d) Production of applications and micro-sites suitable for mobile phones (Blackberry/iPhone, etc.)
- e) Production of camping "how-to" videos on various topics and post on YouTube, etc. (e.g., how to light a stove, how to set up a tent, etc.)
- f) Development of texting and Instant Messaging services, and greater utilization of social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and integration of all of these experiences with e-newsletters (Remember, email is effectively "old-fashioned" now)
- g) Development of online collaboration/mashing tools for Scouting (i.e., design your own Scout video)
- h) Development of online, customizable badge recording and tracking program
- i) The development of a new collaborative Program Builder program, with self-created username/password, and constructed in an open, wiki-style format, allowing everyone to post and share program ideas, of all kinds, with editing, rating and comment features to prevent inappropriate posting
- j) The development of an Intranet site for marketing and communications resources
- k) The introduction of search engine optimization and Google/web analytics – when people type "volunteering in Canada" into a search engine, for instance, Scouts Canada should be one of the first results!

Our websites must encourage collaboration and input from members. We need a central website where youth and volunteers are encouraged to post their own images of themselves doing Scouting activities.

¹⁹ See, for instance: http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/media_kit/news_releases/2004/girl_guides_award.cfm

Action Deadline

- Marketing audit due by August 1, 2009
- Update to Board of Governors in September 2009
- By December 2009, new website is launched
- By September 2010, new videos launched

Person Responsible

- Director of Communications

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of contract staff person(s) to deliver web redesign coding, and other applications and produce video (may be one person or two persons depending on ability and cost)

Action Item #2.2**Youth Research and Advocacy Initiative**

We recommend an investigation into the funding of public research and issues resources to weigh in on issues related to youth. This would likely involve commissioning or aggregating research and surveys and/or compiling existing research suitable for public disclosure. We should be a mouthpiece for youth engagement.

Action Deadline

- Results of investigation released by October 2009
- Implementation of program by September 2010

Person Responsible

- Executive Commissioner and CEO
- Director of Communications

Financial/Staff Implications

- Minimal for investigation
- Significant for implementation, as a staff person may have to be hired for coordination and report production

Action Item #2.3**Improving the Image of the Scout Uniform**

The idea of a uniform, at least in a formal sense, does not sit well with the digital generation, although most would embrace the egalitarian rationale for it. The current uniform is not necessarily bad but we propose that we examine ways to "relax" it, as well as ensure that it is both functional and affordable. As any leader working with kids knows, it is virtually impossible to get a youth member to tuck in the shirt so, perhaps, we should have the shirts cut to allow for the uniform to be worn un-tucked? It could still be tucked in on formal occasions. A move away from formal uniforms has been very positive in the UK, with the de-emphasis on epaulets, tucking, and pleated shirt pockets. To save on cost, changes to the shirt can be minimized so that older shirts can be used

until they are worn out. We also need to promote the alternative uniform option that already exists within Scouts Canada.

We recommend:

- a) An investigation to make changes to the uniform, including changes to the cut, removal of pleats, and other elements to make the uniform more casual, along with cool branded non-uniform, section-specific clothing options (t-shirts, hoodies, etc.)
- b) An investigation of the entire badge system to ensure that:
 - (i) These images send the correct visual cues, and create a cohesive branding experience (too often badges are designed in isolation) in conjunction with uniform and other related materials
 - (ii) Group, Area, and Council badges be limited in size and colour to reduce cost burden on groups
 - (iii) All designs be vetted for insensitive cultural depictions (e.g., inaccurate images of Aboriginal and First Nations people and culture or other inappropriate imagery)
- c) The encouragement of the "friendship knot" as a casual alternative to the woggle, as adopted by the UK Scout Association

Action Deadline

- ➔ Results of investigation released by January 2010
- ➔ Implementation of program by September 2010

Person Responsible

- ➔ Director of Retail Services

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Minimal for investigation, but increasing with cost of production

Action Item #2.4

Working with Government and other Funders

It is vitally important that Scouting identify and take advantage of government funding opportunities, along with those offered by other foundations and organizations.

The lack of a provincial body/representative means that, in some cases, we are effectively shut out of government funding opportunities.

We recommend the:

- a) funding for the development of alternative non-governmental funding sources to grow Scouting's programs, camps and SCOUTSabout in all Scout Councils
- b) appointment of provincial "point people" to aggressively pursue provincial government funding to expand SCOUTSabout and other program opportunities across the Councils in each province
- c) execution of a strategy to meet with every Ministry of Education in Canada regarding Chief Scout's and Queen's Venturer Awards

Action Deadline

- By October 2009, new funding identification and applications underway
- By September 2010, provincial funding development underway
- By December 2010, meetings held with all Provincial/Territorial Governments

Person Responsible

- Scouts Canada's Executive Director of Program Services (for awards project)
- Executive Commissioner and CEO

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of staff to pursue funding opportunities

Measuring Progress

- CEO to present report and recommendations to Board of Governors in September 2009

Action Item #2.5**Advertising, Public Relations and Multi-Media Outreach**

An integral aspect of this entire plan, and the various outreach activities envisioned in it must be a coordinated multi-media experience; all of these activities serve to reinforce each other, and increase awareness of Scouting.

We call on Scouts Canada, the Scouts Canada Foundation and other Scouting bodies to partner and:

- a) retain top-level advertising and public relations firm(s), and develop a marketing plan and communications plan for Scouts Canada
- b) develop local, provincial, and national advertising strategy, including television and web ads (i.e. Google, Facebook, etc.), and the creation of alternate web sites as needed
- c) Implement advertising strategy
- d) Develop and launch a national "Good Turn for Canada" campaign that's modern, dynamic, and worthy of national media coverage
- e) Challenge every group to appear in a positive media story in their local media at least once annually
- f) Set up an editorial board for *Scouting Life* magazine

We must develop different messages for different groups. The internet is perfect for this; youth and adults must be targeted in different ways and in different places.

Action Deadline

- By December 2009, new advertising strategy developed
- By September 2010, advertising strategy implemented

Person Responsible

- Director of Communications

Financial/Staff Implications

- Significant in terms of strategy development and implementation

ACTION ITEM #3

ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

WOSM Strategic Priority #6: An Organization for the 21st Century – *becoming flexible, lean, innovative, and participatory. This strategic priority aims at assisting NSOs as well as WOSM itself at world and regional levels, to adopt a strategic approach, reviewing their structures, systems and management to enable them to be sensitive to the changing needs of society and to respond quickly and effectively.*

Scouts Canada Strategic Direction #7: Scouting - Canada's 21st Century Youth Organization — *Structures, systems and management organizationally accountable to members, sensitive to changing needs of society, and capable of quick response.*

Background

Open participation by all members is integral to our volunteer recruitment and management. There is a common misconception that Scouting's management is opaque and secretive, which breeds feelings of resentment and disengagement. We must work harder to make Scouting open, transparent and democratic; this will encourage people to join and remain members because they feel like they are "part of the team."

The World Organization of the Scouting Movement has noted:

Democracy is a condition for the development and the unity of the Scout Movement, because if active adult leaders are not involved in decision-making, they will not have the feeling to share a common purpose and they will be tempted to quit the Movement or to create dissident organizations.²⁰

Studies have shown that the decline of membership based organizations and the rise of professionally managed organizations has led to a democratic deficit in American society.²¹

World Scouting has just launched an extensive governance review. The WOSM Governance Review Task Force released its report in December 2007, and it proposes a new democratic structure for World Scouting.²²

Furthermore, the best person for a particular job may not readily be apparent to the person making the appointment. It may not even be a current member of Scouts Canada. We must give up the notion that one "advances" in Scouting based on working with a section, working at the Area level, and onwards up the chain to the national level.

²⁰ "Document 7: Governance of WOSM. 37th World Scout Conference" (Geneva: WOSM, 2005) at 5-6. Adopted as a reference document.

²¹ See Skocpol, above.

²² The GRTF report can be downloaded from www.scout.org.

Action Item #3.1

Public Appointments Process

Too often, volunteer job vacancies are filled within Scouting, by “who you know” but that person may not necessarily be the best person for that job. The UK Scout Association has recently moved to a public appointments process.

We recommend that all Scout bodies:

- a) Designate a Deputy Commissioner or staff person responsible for public appointments, in each level of Scouting, of committee members, group, area, council and executive commissioners, deputies and assistants
- b) Determine such vacancies as may exist, from time to time and prepare job descriptions
- c) Post such vacancies on websites and other such websites (such as charityvillage.com) and encourage members and non-members to apply
- d) Interview applicants and pick successful candidate as necessary
- e) Set timelines to allow for adequate succession planning and transition

Action Deadline

- ➔ Immediate implementation and ongoing review

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO
- ➔ Commissioners at all levels

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Minor implementation costs

Action Item #3.2

Ensuring Greater Democratic Participation

To further encourage and increase democratic participation, and to address WOSM's call for greater democratic involvement, we recommend the:

- a) Investigation of introducing online election systems
- b) Investigation of a model for electing delegates where every member 16 and older is entitled to vote for delegates
- c) Investigation of other opportunities for greater member participation and increased communication and dialogue

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigation to be completed by November 2009

Person Responsible

- ➔ Chief Commissioner and Chair of the Board of Governors

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ minor implementation costs

Action Item #3.3

Enhancing our Service and Support Capacity

We need to make it easier for our leaders to lead. We need to make it easier for our professional staff to focus their time and energy on supporting leaders and growing our membership.

To strengthen our capacity to serve and support our volunteers, we recommend the following:

- a) A regular schedule (i.e., annual or semi-annual) for updating to Bylaws, Policies & Procedures (BP&P), and a revised index section for the online BP&P that is more interactive and user-friendly
- b) The production of a pocketbook version (both in paper and electronic) of BP&P for Scouters
- c) The development of an effective performance management system
- d) A moratorium on new program initiatives and badge programs until the Task Force presents its final report
- e) The re-establishment and re-focusing of the Area Service Team model, with teams of Groups Commissioners and other resource Scouters, appointed for their ability (and not years of service) to support sections
- f) Each section will be visited at least twice per year – Service Scouters will act as a support network and mentors for Section Scouters
- g) A realignment of staff roles to refocus Council Field Executives on support to Section Scouters, Groups, and Areas, and on growth and outreach
- h) An increase in our ability to serve members in French
- i) An exploration of networking, outreach, and cost-sharing opportunities with L'Association des Scouts du Canada (L'ASC)
- j) Begin quantitative evaluation of organizational outcomes (increases in youth leadership, decreases in school violence, etc.), and establish an ongoing program evaluation system
- k) An internal organizational review – re-alignment of roles, capacity study/audit, formal ongoing performance management
- l) Development of a simplified guide to risk management for leaders
- m) Development of a national program quality awards program for sections that includes emphasis on regular outdoor activities
- n) Enhance our formal and informal volunteer recognition processes to ensure that more volunteers receive some form of recognition each year
- o) Establishment/re-establishment of Deputy Council Commissioners for Membership Development, Deputy Council Commissioners for Outdoors/Camps, Council membership development committees, and Council communications committees.

Action Deadline

→ immediate implementation, followed by ongoing review

Person Responsible

→ Executive Commissioner and CEO

Financial/Staff Implications

→ minor implementation costs

ACTION ITEM #4

ACHIEVING MEANINGFUL YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

WOSM Strategic Priority #1: Youth Involvement - revitalising the Scout Method.

This strategic priority aims at assisting NSOs in revitalising this fundamental element of our Movement, which is crucial to its effectiveness and its ability to achieve its mission.

Scouts Canada Strategic Direction #4: Involving Youth —

As a continuing integral part of Scouting's Mission, Principles, Practices and Method, optimize youth engagement in policy determination, management, promotion and program design and delivery at all levels as appropriate to their age and experience.

Background

The "Scout method" of youth involvement, through sixes, patrols, and Venturer and Rover executives, is long established, but it is not clear how often it is really being used. Youth involvement in key leadership roles (not including Youth Commissioners) is important from a communication and visual imaging perspective. It is worthy to note that in many countries, leaders face mandatory retirement ages of 35 or lower, even at the national level. However, we are certainly not advocating such an approach in Canada. The Task Force believes that we need more young people playing leadership roles in Scouting, and efforts should be made to recruit young people to participate in our decision making structures and leadership positions.

The UK Scout Association has developed an innovative "Youth Spokesperson" program so that young people are the public face of the Movement in the UK. They are being interviewed in local and national media after being trained in public relations and have become the public, modern face of British Scouting. Sadly, in this country, there have been too many examples of inappropriate older persons being interviewed on behalf of Scouting, which sends the wrong visual signals.

In Toronto and Calgary, events known as "timeraisers" have been introduced. The under 35 target audience has been invited to silent auction events where they can bid on incentives in exchange for committing their time. Perhaps if the prizes were camping and outdoor related items, we would attract the right people to lead our young people in exciting outdoor programs. This is an example of the kind of new approaches we could explore in order to recruit more young leaders.

Action Item #4.1

Focusing the Role of Area Youth Commissioners

The role of the Youth Commissioners at the Area level should be clarified, and focused on the following:

- a) Area Youth Commissioners are responsible for ensuring that youth involvement is taking place at Six, Patrol, Court of Honour and Venturer Executive levels by

- visiting the sections within their Area and encouraging such activities and ensuring the appointment of Keeos and Kims in each Group.
- b) Area Youth Commissioners will assist in ensuring program quality standards are being met.
 - c) Area Youth Commissioners will lead Area FOCUS training and be involved with Council FOCUS training/events.

In addition, Group Committees should be encouraged to recruit youth members.

Action Deadlines

- See above
- Ongoing yearly evaluation and reporting

Person Responsible

- Deputy Executive Commissioner – Youth (assisted by EC/CEO and each of their DEC's)
- Director of Program Services – Scouts, Venturers and Rovers

Financial/Staff Implications

- None

Action Item #4.2**Youth Involvement Ratios**

We encourage greater youth participation in decision making and program planning at all levels of the organization.

We encourage all Councils to work towards the following targets:

- a) By September 2011, 90% of Cub Packs will utilize Sixers' Councils and 90% of Scout Troops will have an active Court of Honour
- b) By September 2014, all Youth Commissioners/Representatives will be under the age of 18.
- c) By September 2011, 10% of Group Commissioners, Area Commissioners and Deputy Area Commissioners and Service Teams will be under the age of 35.
- d) By September 2014, 20% of Group Commissioners, Area Commissioners, Area Service Teams, and Deputy Area Commissioners will be under the age of 35.

The action item does not suggest that we are going to reduce the number of volunteers who are over the age of 35. It simply sets goals on finding younger people with whom the youth can identify to help run the exciting programs they deserve. Energetic area and group commissioners and service team members will bring energy back to our groups. Younger people contribute to succession planning which also benefits our experienced adults. The experienced adults can then move into roles to support and provide knowledge, skills and training to our younger members. It's about finding a balance.

Action Deadlines

- See above
- Ongoing yearly evaluation and public disclosure

Person Responsible

→ Council Commissioners and Council Youth Commissioners

Financial/Staff Implications

→ None

Action Item #4.3**Creation of Youth Spokesperson Program**

We recommend the development a Youth Spokesperson Program, available to all members of Scouts Canada by:

- a) Developing a training syllabus for young media spokespeople, modeled on the UK program, that includes a role description, as well as key messages formulated that highlight our mission and our three key positioning statements;
- b) Holding a training course by setting a course date, advertising the program and recruiting participants;
- c) Distributing the program/syllabus to all Scouts Canada bodies and provide ongoing funding for the program;
- e) Encouraging a communications policy that requires a trained and prepared Youth Spokesperson be used, wherever possible, for all media requests/interviews and other public appearances;
- f) Incorporate elements of this program into the FOCUS training course.

Action Deadlines

- First training course to be completed by end of the 2009-2010 Scouting year
- Evaluate outcomes by end of the 2010-2011 Scouting year and adjust program as needed

Person Responsible

→ Director of Communications

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of outside communication consultants, if necessary
- Cost of developing syllabus, and the cost of the weekend(s)
- Cost of promotion

Action Item #4.4**Connecting More Youth to International Opportunities**

We are the largest youth movement in the world. For many years, Canadian youth have been participating in international Scouting activities, in an effort to create a better world. We believe that our movement would be stronger if more of our young people know about the international work we are doing and also have the opportunity to take part in international projects.

We recommend that:

- a) The International Commissioner and International Relations Committee explore, enable, and develop increased opportunities for youth members to take part in international projects
- b) The international projects undertaken by Canadian youth be better promoted to our youth members
- c) The International Commissioner and International Relations Committee review past and present international projects in order to identify best practices and resource people, and to develop a system for promoting our international projects

Action Deadlines

- Investigation completed by December 2010
- New initiatives developed by September 2011
-

Person Responsible

- International Commissioner
- Executive Director of Program Services

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of international projects

Action Item #4.5

Youth Leadership Development

The youth involvement structures that are built into our programs do not seem fully understood by every single leader. We need to develop training initiatives to encourage and support leaders in developing youth involvement processes at the section level.

We need to place greater emphasis on strengthening our Scout, Venturer and Rover sections – by doing so, hopefully we can retain more of these young people as leaders.

The FOCUS Youth Leadership program has been around for almost twelve years and has been successful in most Councils. We see this as an opportunity to be leaders in youth leadership – we could hold annual youth leadership conferences across the country and invite youth from outside Scouting to join us as well.

We recommend that:

- a) Training guidelines be established for youth leadership courses such as Sixer/Second workshops, Patrol Leader/Assistant Patrol Leader training, Kim and Keo training, Court of Honour training, Venturer executive training, etc.
- b) FOCUS youth leadership conferences be organized annually in each Council, and that youth from outside Scouting be invited to join us

Action Deadlines

- Course guidelines and resources gathered and developed by June 2010
- Council FOCUS courses running by 2010/2011 Scouting year

Person Responsible

- Executive Director of Program Services
- Deputy Executive Commissioner – Youth

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of leadership conferences
- Cost of course development

ACTION ITEM #5

RECRUITING MEMBERS AND FINDING NEW VOLUNTEERS

WOSM Strategic Priority #4: Reaching Out - breaking down barriers and working with broader segments of society. The aim of this strategic priority is to support NSOs in identifying and responding to the needs of young people, adults and society where Scouting is currently not having an impact. This should result in an increase in membership and increase Scouting's impact in the world today.

WOSM Strategic Priority #5: Volunteers in Scouting - developing new approaches to broaden the base of adult support. This strategic priority aims at redefining the concept of volunteering as applied to Scouting and reviewing policies and practices to help NSOs recruit and retain a new group of adults in Scouting.

Scouts Canada Strategic Direction #2: Broadening Volunteer Support — Develop new approaches to attract and retain adult volunteers.

Background

In many ways, Scouting has lost an entire generation of members, who are now just becoming old enough to volunteer. In order to grow, we need to outreach to this cohort of 20-somethings on their terms, in their venues, and counteract stereotypes of Scouting in addition to our standard recruitment processes. These potential recruits need to be reassured that Scouting is exciting, relevant, pluralistic, co-ed, multi-cultural, and diverse. We have been forgotten and we need to show them that we exist. Of course, the same reassurance must also be delivered to parents and potential members as well! We need to be in places that are unexpected that, by our presence, counteracts stereotypes about Scouting.

A "static booth" is just not enough and a "fake campsite" is just plain boring. We need fun event-style activities and promotional items as giveaways that draw people in – a portable climbing wall, for instance.

We also have to remember that undertaking these activities do not automatically result in membership, but that these activities must be part of a larger public outreach campaign to reinforce our image and expertise. This is not about 1+1 = new member recruiting, but, rather, it is about re-branding Scouting as young, fresh, and exciting. Only then will Scouting grow.

We need to be developing partnerships with all kinds of organizations and reminding them that we have a program for their youth. Scouting could partner with hockey and/or soccer leagues to form combination Scouting-Soccer or Scouting-Hockey teams. With sufficient numbers, we could even form our own league. You join and get the best of both, without the scheduling conflicts. As of 2005, some 51% of young Canadians participated in some form of sporting activity. About half of these children participated in

more than one such activity. Yet, children in Canada's three largest cities are the least likely to participate in sports.²³

It is no accident that schools, universities and other organizations spend a great deal of effort in managing and cultivating their alumni and we should do the same; it's a tremendous pool of donors, leaders, and general volunteers who can provide the materials and/or services we need to execute our programs.

Scouts Canada has, internationally, been a key supporter of the Extension Scouts program (also known as Street Scouts), particularly in Kenya and Nigeria. Perhaps its time we brought the program to Canada for our own street kids.

Today, we only reach a small percentage of Canadian youth. Simply put, if we increase our market share, we increase our membership numbers. The same is true when it comes to retention – if we keep members for a longer period of time, our membership numbers will grow.

Action Item #5.1

Creation of an Outreach Team

We call on Councils and their Foundations (if applicable) to establish an Outreach Team of part-time young community development workers (CDWs) and volunteers. This team will focus on three areas: (i) Events (ii) Significant Venues, and (iii) Colleges and Universities. Outcomes will be shared with other Councils.

Essential to this plan is the establishment of a stable of part-time community development workers (i.e., Venturers and Rovers), who will be paid small honorariums per event. Using web-based technologies, these team members would sign up for events they wish to work for, based on their availability. These part-time CDWs could also be used to deliver school talks.

We should also learn from the experiences of several Councils, such as Pacific Coast Council and New Brunswick Council, who have already formally engaged Rovers in membership recruitment and retention initiatives.

(i) Events

In each Council, the Outreach Team will:

- a) Identify major non-traditional events to set up booth/interactive activities
- b) Identify the exciting activity (i.e., portable rock climbing wall) to share
- b) Attend events and meet the public to show modern face of Scouting

Action Deadline

➔ By January 2010, a list of major events are identified and chosen as strategic priorities along with proposed activities and promotional items which are budgeted.

²³ Statistics Canada, *The Daily: Study: Organized sports participation among children*, <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080603/d080603a.htm> (accessed January 4, 2009)

- ➔ By Spring 2010, the team attends their first event.
- ➔ By August 2010, evaluate progress and begin planning for next year.

(ii) Significant Venues

The Team will:

- d) Identify significant venues/locations where we can set up informational and/or activity booths in high traffic areas such as major private buildings aimed at employees, particularly over the lunch period.
- b) Book venues.
- c) Attend venues and meet the public to show modern face of Scouting with exciting activities.
- d) Ensure follow-up with prospective volunteers (i.e., getting them in contact with a specific group and/or section).

Action Deadline

- ➔ By November, 2009, identify several venues, book, and host activities.
- ➔ By February 2010, evaluate project.

(iii) Colleges and Universities

The Team will:

- a) Identify one or more possible venues/opportunities at orientation/"frosh week" events
- b) Host information activities
- c) Invite visitors to attend a fun weekend at local Scout camps
- d) Visitors/potential recruits are bused to campsite where they take part in camping and fun activities and are recruited as leaders
- e) Develop alternative volunteer opportunities that encourage post-secondary students (including those who have never been involved in Scouting) to support Scouting in some way
- f) Explore the establishment of Rover crews at colleges and universities

Action Deadline

- ➔ Identify orientation/frosh weeks and schedule participation for September 2010
- ➔ Evaluation of project by December 2011

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO
- ➔ Councils and Foundations

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of staff, if hired
- ➔ Cost of booking venue space, if applicable
- ➔ Cost of activities/pamphlets, insurance, etc.
- ➔ Cost of busing and activities along with cost of campsite, if applicable

Action Item #5.2

Partnership Development and Renewal

For too long, Scouting has focused on traditional partners. That focus is important and these partnerships need to be renewed and managed, but we must recognize that many of these traditional partners are suffering decline as well. So many organizations exist to support youth and many could be encouraged to work with us, instead of competing with us. Why not, for instance, form hockey or soccer Scout groups? The Boy Scouts of America have done some work in this area, and we should consult with this association as we move forward. In rural areas in particular, we should explore non-traditional meeting models. For instance, in a large rural area, a monthly all-day Scouting activity may work better than a weekly evening meeting.

We recommend an investigation into potential partnership development by:

- a) Identifying potential partnerships with kindred organizations and sports leagues
- b) Researching how best the organizations could work with Scouting
- c) Identifying persons who would be willing to take the lead on developing the partnership program, such as a Cub Pack-Soccer team

Further, we recommend a strategy to:

- d) Recognize our current partners/sponsors on an annual basis
- e) Meet annually with our local and national partners/sponsors
- f) Develop a packaged presentation for service clubs and other community organizations
- g) Develop models for non-traditional meetings, in order to better meet the needs of rural communities

Action Deadline

- ➔ Preliminary research due by February 2010
- ➔ Partnership development is ongoing
- ➔ Partner/sponsor visits and recognition to be carried out by June 2010

Person Responsible

- ➔ Director of Membership Development
- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for membership development

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Some staff support
- ➔ Production of promotional materials if partnership programming moves forward

Action Item #5.3

Extension Scouts

We recommend an investigation into the development and operation of an Extension Scouts program for disadvantaged and/or homeless youth by:

- a) Undertaking research on homelessness in major cities and speak with existing service providers
- b) Investigating different models of Extension Scouts and determine which is best suited for Canada's urban centres: (i) African model (ii) A SCOUTSabout/Extreme Adventure program version for homeless youth
- c) Determining funding, and alternative revenue streams, and operational details, such as location

Action Deadline

- Investigative report due by September 2010, followed immediately by a decision to proceed or not
- If the program is approved, first Extension Scout program will be operational by September 2011

Person Responsible

- Director of Membership Development
- Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for membership development

Financial/Staff Implications

- Staffing
- Cost of program delivery

Action Item #5.4

Alumni Development

For too long the B-P Guild and Scouting Auxiliary programs have languished, the forgotten cousins of the Scouting Movement; yet there is tremendous potential for adult recruitment and liaison.

Some work has taken place in networking recipients of the Chief Scout's Award, Queen's Venturer Award, Queen's Scout Award, etc. through the new Chief Scout Association, organized by the national Scouts Canada Foundation. Its social networking, in scope and branding, will likely appeal to older people. We recommend the establishment of a broader alumni program.

To take advantage of these opportunities, we recommend an investigation into:

- a) The creation of a Scout Network program, similar to the one in the United Kingdom. This program would not replace Rovers; rather, it would be a social networking program for people interested in maintaining a connection with Scouting but are not yet ready to join Rovers or become a leader. This could be

- extended as a kind of Extreme Adventure program for young adults or as working vacations, which is a growing trend in sustainable/eco-vacationing.²⁴
- b) The transformation of the Auxiliary concept into something similar to police and fire department auxiliaries. Persons with special skills or limited time could be registered as a Scouting Auxiliary member on a part-time basis to assist at Scouting events or even come into sections to help if leaders are away/unavailable/sick perhaps in connection with the Resource Database program. This would build on the growing trend of part-time leaders in groups. Such Auxiliaries could be organized at the Area or Council level.
 - c) A strengthened relationship with B-P Guilds, including the possible establishment of a special membership fee that results in all B-P Guild members becoming special members of Scouts Canada.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigation report due by September 2010
- ➔ Implementation of program by September 2011

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ staff time for investigative phase
- ➔ staff, production and promotion costs once activated

²⁴ Participants pay to go a vacation but, rather than sunning on the beach somewhere, they undertake good works from feeding the poor to assisting in archaeological digs.

Action Item #5.5

Investigation of New Group Model

The “tried and true” model for delivering Scouting's programs consists of individual groups, existing as self-contained entities, supported by Area/Council/National teams and “sponsored” by another organization that may or may not have much of a role.

The expansion of the SCOUTSabout program demonstrates that there are other ways of delivering Scouting's programs. Perhaps some groups or sections could be “sponsored” directly by the Area or the Council? Perhaps the Area could organize teams of volunteers to run sections across the Area and thereby take the SCOUTSabout concept and apply it to a core program? In the UK, Explorer Units (i.e., the equivalent of Venturer Companies in Canada) are organized at the Area level.

We also need to adapt our traditional program delivery methods to meet the needs of rural communities. For instance, there are communities in which Saturday morning programs and monthly programs have been successful. We must be willing to try new approaches.

We also have many groups that are parent-sponsored. We should consider what support we could provide to parent-sponsored groups in order to better serve them.

We recommend an investigation that would:

- a) Research the steps necessary to create a new group, the role of group sponsors, and whether operating a section requires the creation of a group
- b) Propose new models, based on the UK Explorer/Network/SCOUTSabout experience
- c) Investigate alternative delivery models that would help meet the needs of rural communities
- d) Launch funded pilot projects as needed
- e) Identify how we can strengthen parent-sponsored groups

Action Deadline

- ➔ Report and model proposals due by May 2010
- ➔ Pilot project implementation by September 2010

Person Responsible

- ➔ Executive Commissioner and CEO
- ➔ Council Commissioners

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Minimal, with some staff support

Conclusion

The world is changing, and most observers agree that more change is coming, and coming exponentially; these changes have many roots: environmental, social, economic, and generational. For Scouting to grow in our second century, we must be aware of these changes, respond to them, and harness them.

The issues that Scouting faces are national and even international in scope, and we can no longer afford to hide behind territorial boundaries. We need holistic solutions.

This Action Plan is, then, a call to action for all of us, collectively and individually. We must all work together to ensure Scouting's continued preeminence as the world's leading youth movement.

Join with us. Together, we can create a better world.

Now is the time. Right here. Right now.

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(as of July 27, 2009)

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A call to action... please get involved

Next month, the Task Force will launch its website:

www.ScoutingNow.org

We encourage you to visit the site to monitor the Task Force's progress, to have input on the various action items, and to find out how you can help with the Task Force's work.

We also encourage you to join in the ongoing discussion on the Action Plan at:

www.talkscouts.ca/forum