

# National Rover Council Review

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## Discussion Paper:

### Functions and structure of the National Rover Council

August 2020



## National Rover Council Review

During their 2019 annual Conference, the National Rover Council ('the Council') identified several systemic issues facing the Council, including:

- Information loss between stakeholders;
- A perceived low return-on-investment from Rover Scouts, who each pay a small annual fee to fund the Council;
- A disconnect between the aims and outcomes of the Council;
- Inefficiencies in Council processes;
- Difficulties in internal and external communication; and
- Decreasing levels of engagement with the Council.

The Council formed the NRC Review Team in May 2019 to review and improve the effectiveness of the Council and its governance structures to deliver better outcomes for Rover Scouts in Australia. This discussion paper, which focuses on the functions and structures of the Council, forms part of the broader review project. Further information is available at <https://rovers.scouts.com.au/nrc-external-review/>.

### Have your say

The Review Team welcomes submissions from current and former Rover Scouts and Rover Advisers, as well as Rover Units, Region and Branch Rover Councils (BRCs), and others who engage with Rover Scouts.

Submissions will be accepted until **14 October 2020** via email to [rover.review@team.scouts.com.au](mailto:rover.review@team.scouts.com.au).

Submissions should be supported by relevant research or consultations, and be structured to clearly identify the discussion questions being responding to.

The information provided to the Review Team will inform our final report and associated recommendations. Your name, contact details and other personal information will not be provided to any other person or organisation unless required by law.

### Disclaimer

This paper has been prepared for consultation purposes only and does not reflect the views of the National Rover Council or Scouts Australia, and does not indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

### Terminology

- For clarity, 'the Council' refers to the elected and co-opted members of the National Rover Council, while 'the Conference' refers to the annual three-day meeting of the Council which occurs during the first quarter of each year. The term 'NRC' is avoided as it has historically been used interchangeably to refer to both the Council and the Conference.
- The term 'Rover Units' is used rather than 'Rover Crews' to reflect the language of the new Youth Program.
- The generic terms 'Branch Rover Council' (BRC) and 'Branch Rover Adviser' (BRA) are used, noting that the naming of these positions varies between Branches.

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## Background

The National Rover Council (NRC, 'the Council') is the peak body for the 3,100 Rover Scouts in Australia. It represents the interests of 18-25 year old Rover Scouts at a national level, aiming to develop and support the Rover Scout program in Australia<sup>1</sup>. Executive members of the Council are peer-elected by the Branch delegations at the annual Conference and take on the day to day operations and responsibilities of the Council. They are joined by representatives co-opted from each Branch Rover Council (BRC), who alongside the Executive members, form the Council.

The Council was formed in 1979 and held its first meeting at Joseph Harris Park, Mount Martha, Victoria, shortly after Rover Scouts transitioned to a self-management model<sup>2</sup>. Over the following decade, the Council significantly reformed Rover Scouts in Australia through revision of the Rover Scout Basic and Advanced training curriculums, continual improvement of the Baden-Powell Scout Award, and the introduction of the Rover Service Award presented annually by each Branch.

The number of Rover Scouts grew significantly during this time, in part due to the work of the Council. Internationally, the Council played a leading role in the revival of World Scout Moots by organising the 8<sup>th</sup> World Moot in Melbourne 1990-91, the first World Scout Moot in 30 years.<sup>3</sup> The surplus from this World Moot provided the capital for the

Rover Development, which funds projects related to the development of the Rover Scout program in Australia.

Between 1991 and 2004, the Council experienced several challenges. The number of Rover Scouts, and Scouts Australia members in general, declined by almost half<sup>4</sup>, and many Rover Units (then known as Rover Crews) and Scouts Groups closed as a result. BRCs expanded and matured in their processes, while the Council experienced increased infighting. During this time Rover Scouts transitioned from a self-management to self-governance model.

From 2005 to 2016 the number of Rovers stabilised and slowly grew as a result of increased recruitment and improvements to the youth program. Rover Units (then known as Rover Crews) and Scout Groups, who were often separate entities, reconnected. The disconnect between Rover Scouts and Venturer Scouts, who are 15 to 18 years old and serve as a source of new Rover Scouts, was recognised and became a greater focus of the Council. This work saw more of Venturer Scouts become Rover Scouts rather than leave Scouting as they often previously had, with the retention rate rising to around 30-50 per cent.

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<sup>1</sup> NRC (n.d.) 'National Rover Council' <<https://rovers.scouts.com.au/rovering/nrc/>>

<sup>2</sup> NRC (n.d.) 'History of Rovering in Australia' <<https://rovers.scouts.com.au/rovering/history/>>

<sup>3</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Epping Rover Unit (2015) 'FAQ' <<http://eppingrovers.com/FAQ>>

<sup>4</sup> Scouts Australia (2019) 'Overview of the New Youth Program' <[https://scouts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/New-Program-Overview\\_08-Web.pdf](https://scouts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/New-Program-Overview_08-Web.pdf)>, p. 5

During this time the Council:

- introduced a levy on all Rover Scouts to fund its activities and projects
- overhauled the Baden-Powell Scout Award, providing greater flexibility for Rover Scouts to tailor their award scheme to their interests
- lobbied successfully for Rover Scouts to receive Adult Recognition Awards, and
- organised for a Centenary of Scouting Peace Boomerang to travel around Australia as part of the Scouting Centenary celebrations<sup>5</sup>.

Despite this, Rover Scouts began to feel a disconnect from the Council, which many saw as an arena of hostile politics which did not deliver value for money.

Acknowledging the issues facing it, the Council has undertaken several recent reform attempts, including the 2010-11 Roving Toward 2020 Report, 2014 Rover Governance Review, and 2018 NRC Audit. The Council, however, has been largely ineffective in implementing many of the recommendations of these reviews. As a result, there have been numerous proposals to dissolve the Council, notably in 2015 and 2017.



'World Non-Formal Education Forum 2019' by World Scouting, licenced under [CY BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).

<sup>5</sup> Queensland Rovers (2017) 'Rovers Australia – National Rover Council'

<[https://qldrovers.fandom.com/wiki/Rovers\\_Australia#National\\_Rover\\_Council](https://qldrovers.fandom.com/wiki/Rovers_Australia#National_Rover_Council)>

## Topics for discussion

This discussion paper explores four key areas of the Council and the way it operates. Please structure your submission to identify the discussion question you are responding to clearly.

### **Purpose of the Council:**

- Does the purpose of the Council align with the needs of Rover Scouts, or would these matters could be handled better by another body (e.g. BRC, Rover Unit)? What should the NRC be responsible for, and what (if anything) should it be held accountable for?
- What challenges have impacted the ability of the Council to fulfil its purpose, and how could they be overcome?

### **Powers of the Council:**

- Should the Council, as the peak representative body of Rover Scouts in Australia, have the ability to make binding decisions for all BRCs?

### **Structure of the Council:**

- Does the current Executive structure reflect the needs of both Rover Scouts and the Council?
- What are appropriate term lengths for Council Executive positions?
- Does the current Council non-Executive structure reflect the needs of both Rover Scouts and the Council?
- Are there alternative structural arrangements for the Council which could better meet the needs of Rover Scouts?

### **Meetings of the Council:**

- Does the current Conference format meet the needs of Rover Scouts and represent value for money?
- How can the Council better engage with Rover Scouts ahead of meetings to ensure it is representing their views?



## 1. Purpose of the National Rover Council

The Council has ten functions (**Figure 1**) according to Policy and Rules (P&R), which is issued by the Nation Council of Scouts Australia and provides direction by which Scouts Australia operations<sup>6</sup>. The Council by-laws largely mirror these functions.<sup>7</sup>

A survey (see **Appendix A**) of 333 current and former members of Scout Australia listed the top three responsibilities of the Council as marketing Rover Scouts (60.0 per cent), setting a national Rover Scout strategic direction (55.5 per cent), and developing Rover Scout policies and procedures (54.4 per cent). When asked what the focus of the Council should be over the next ten years, and what it

should be accountable for, youth program, growth and training were the most common topics raised (see **Appendix B**).

The rollout of Scouts Australia new youth program, which emphasises a more cohesive Scouting experience, will impact the purpose of the Council going forward. Elements which the Council was previously responsible for, such as the award scheme and Rover Scout training curriculum, will now be harmonised across Australia and be less specific to Rover Scouts.

**Figure 1:** Functions of the Council.

1. Provide direction, planning and encouragement for the extension and development of Rovering in Australia.
2. Exchange information between Branches on matters in respect of the Rover Scout Section in each Branch.
3. Advise and make recommendations to the National Operations Committee on policy decisions for the Rover Scout Section.
4. Advise and make recommendations to the National Operations Committee on the preparation and publication of books, periodicals and pamphlets on Rovering in Australia.
5. Recommend updates to the National Commissioner - Youth Program on the Rover Scout Section program to ensure that the program meets the needs of young adults in the Rover age range.
6. Assist in the planning of national and international Rover Moots and projects.
7. Convene National Rover Conferences.
8. Represent Australian Rovers in appropriate international and national bodies and forums.
9. Make recommendations to the International Commissioner on the staffing [*sic*]<sup>8</sup>.
10. Organise contingents to international Rover activities.

**Source:** Scouts Australia (2018) 'Policy and Rules', pp.49-50.

<sup>6</sup> Scouts Australia (2018) 'Policy and Rules', pp.49-50

<sup>7</sup> NRC (2019) 'The By-laws of the National Rover Council of Australia', s.6.1

<sup>8</sup> Based on 'The By-laws of the National Rover Council of Australia' s.6.1.j, the ninth and tenth

functions of the Council should be combined to read 'Make recommendations to the National Commissioner - International on the staffing and organisation of contingents to international Rover Scouts activities.'

There is presently no nationally agreed up delineation of functions between the various levels of Rover Scout governance. The purpose and powers of the Council were not clearly outlined at the time it was established and instead they have evolved. Workshop participants at the 2020 Conference discussed and noted that there is often overlap between the responsibilities of the Council and other Rover Scout formations (see **Appendix C**).

Currently, both the elected and co-opted members of the Council are responsible for fulfilling the above functions and for completing tasks which contribute to the realisation of these functions. While the Council as a whole is responsible for these functions, is largely not held accountable; it is not required to report on its progress or be answerable for its decisions or project outcomes.

Under a model of accountability, both Executive and co-opted members of Council would become directly become answerable their actions. The Council would be required to regularly report progress and justify their actions to stakeholders, including BRCs and the National Operations Committee.

The Council, outside of its stated purpose, also provides an opportunity for Rover Scouts to gain skills in leadership, negotiation, stakeholder management and project management. The Council also offers an opportunity for youth leadership at a national level as recommended by the World Organisation of the Scouting Movement (WOSM)<sup>9</sup>.

**1.1 Does the purpose of the Council align with the needs of Rover Scouts, or would these matters could be handled better by another body (e.g. BRC, Rover Unit)? What should the NRC be responsible for, and what (if anything) should it be held accountable for?**

During its first two decades of operation, the Council undertook several valuable bodies of work which focused on improving the youth program, Rover Scout training, and major events, and gained a positive reputation within Australia and internationally.

However, research conducted by the Review Team indicates that the Council is no longer viewed as positively. When asked, the majority of respondents to the review survey (57 per cent) could not name an achievement of the Council over the past ten years. As one survey respondent noted:

*“Very little has truly been achieved by the NRC when you look at Rovers and Units at a local level. Sure, things have happened at the higher level, but it rarely achieves the intended purpose at the ground roots level of Rovering.”*

Respondents rated how effectively the Council is achieving its five strategic objectives (**Table 1**). Evidence gathered from interviews conducted by the Review Team with both current and past Rover Scouts supports these results.

**1.2 What challenges have impacted the ability of the Council to fulfil its purpose, and how could they be overcome?**

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<sup>9</sup> WOSM (2015) ‘World Scout Youth Involvement Policy’, pp.15-16



**Table 1:** How effectively is the Council in achieving its strategic objectives?

Strategic objective	Score (out of 5 points)
Active engagement of Rover Scouts throughout all subcommittees and workgroup of Scouts Australia relevant to the aims and objectives of the NRC.	2.8
Provides open and dynamic governance at all levels that delivers an innovative Rover Scout program.	2.7
Supporting the delivery of quality Rover Scout programs which align with the youth program.	2.8
Supporting access to relevant and engaging training that provides Rover Scouts with the skills to deliver a quality program.	3.2
Develop and maintain a nationally consistent image of Rover Scouts Australia which engages all sections and prospective members.	2.8

**Source:** Review Team Survey February – June 2020.



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## 2. Powers of the National Rover Council

The Council, through both its Executive and co-opted members, is generally agreed to act as the peak representative body for Rover Scouts within Australia. While current and past Council members and members of various BRCs believe that the decisions of the Council are not binding, the policy documents which underpin the operations of the Council are less clear.

The current edition of P&R provides conflicting views on the powers of the Council (emphasis added):

*National Rover Council – The **coordinating body** for the Rover Scout Section in Australia*<sup>10</sup>

*The National Rover Council is the **governing body** for the Rover Scout Section*<sup>11</sup>

‘Coordinating’ and ‘governing’ are not synonymous; the former suggests a space for sharing information and developing joint responses to issues, while the latter implies the power to issue and enforce directions to BRCs as subordinate bodies.

The current By-Laws of the Council likewise create questions as to the ability the Council has to make binding decisions for all BRCs (emphasis added):

**Preamble 1.3:** *The third and final part, Guidelines [is] aimed at **supporting** Branch Rover Councils and Rover Scouts in general on a variety of topics.*

**Preamble 1.4:** *Each Branch Rover Council (BRC) **shall function in accordance with these By-Laws and operate within the national framework of the Rover Scout Section and their local Branch.***

**Article 1:** *The National Rover Council (NRC) exists to provide **direction, planning and encouragement** for the extension and development of the Rover Scout Section in Australia.*

The first and third statements imply the Council is a coordinating body for BRCs. In contrast, the second statement empowers the Council, through the inclusion of decisions into their By-Laws, to directly govern the BRCs.

Indeed, the constitutions of BRCs themselves do not provide certainty around the ability of the Council to enact binding decisions (emphasis added).

Examples include:

*‘NRC is recognised as the governing body of the Rover Scout Section in Australia. **Except where that governance may conflict** with any rules and regulations of [Branch]’.*

*[The BRC shall] ‘...implement, **where applicable**, the resolutions of the National Rover Council’.* Later in the document: *‘The Council [BRC] **must comply with the... National Rover Council Standing Resolutions**’*

The first example establishes the Council as a governing body able to make decisions, though notes that these will not be followed where they conflict with that Branch’s rules and regulation. The second example states that resolutions of the Council are simultaneously mandatory and optional.

<sup>10</sup> Scouts Australia (2018) ‘Policy and Rules’, p.22

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*, p.49

If the Council is empowered to make binding decisions, ideally it would be responsible for setting strategy in agreement with BRC's, who would then be obliged to follow decisions and report their progress to the Council. Likewise, individual Rover Units would also be bound to follow decisions made by the Council, and report on progress to the Council via their BRC.

Individual BRCs are bound by the rules of their Branch and may be limited in their ability to act on decisions of the Council unless their governance arrangements are

amended. Participants in a Review Team workshop at the 2020 Conference noted that the Council had faced challenges in the past when attempting to implement nationally consistent policy and make binding directions; while the BRCs agreed to these decisions, they faced difficulties getting their Branch to adopt the measures.

**2.1 Should the Council, as the peak representative body of Rover Scouts in Australia, have the ability to make binding decisions for all BRCs?**



'World Scout Youth Forum 2017' by World Scouting, licenced under [CY BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).

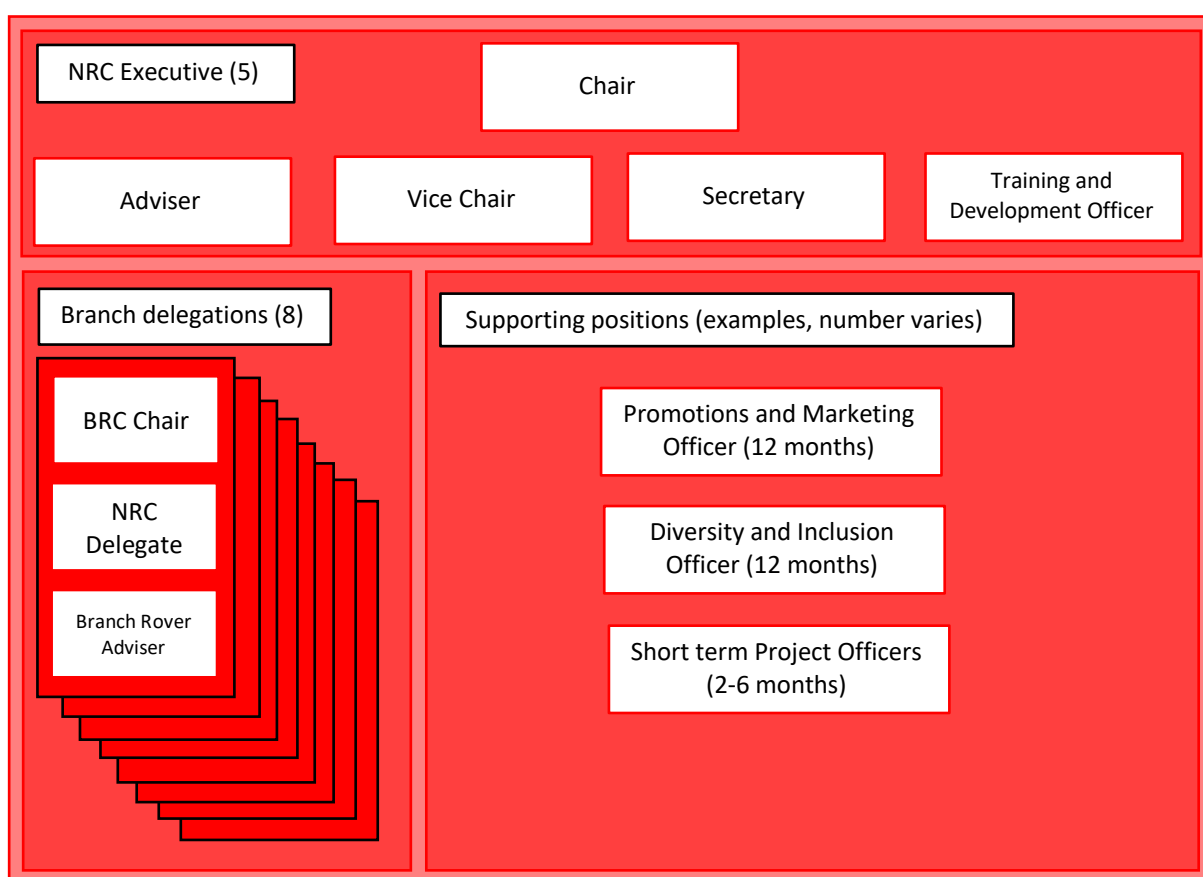
### 3. Structure of the National Rover Council

As shown in **Figure 2**, the Council consists of a five-person Executive, various non-executive short-term and long-term supporting positions, and up to three delegates co-opted from each of the eight Branches. The total membership of the Council generally numbers around 30 members.

While some Executive positions have been added on of recommendation of previous reviews<sup>12</sup>, the Executive structure is

largely unchanged over the last two decades. All Executive positions on the Council must be filled by current Rover Scouts, with the exception of the Adviser which is an adult appointment<sup>13</sup>. The duty statement for the current Council Executives are outlined in Part II of the Council By-Laws, available on the Council website: <https://rovers.scouts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/01/NRC-By-Laws-V2-1.pdf>

**Figure 2:** Current structure of the Council.



**Source:** Analysis of Council documentation.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the Adviser role created in 2012 on the recommendation of *Rovering Toward 2020*, and the Secretary role was added in 2016 on recommendation from the 2014 Rover Governance Review.

<sup>13</sup> Scouts Australia (2019) 'National Rover Council Advisor' <<https://scouts.com.au/blog/2019/01/29/national-rover-council-advisor-position-vacancy>>

### 3.1 Does the current Executive structure reflect the needs of both Rover Scouts and the Council?

All Executive positions are one-year terms with the option to apply for additional terms; there is currently no term limit. The NRC Chair has been a two-year term since 2016; previously, it was also a one-year term. In extending the term of the Chair, the Council at the time noted that it would provide greater continuity across long-term projects and would allow the Chair to build stronger relationships with few stakeholders.

By comparison, Scouts Australia makes initial national appointments for three-year terms<sup>14</sup>, reflected in the three-year term of the Council Adviser.<sup>15</sup> The World Scout Committee elects its members for three years<sup>16</sup>, while the Asia-Pacific Regional Scout Committee elects its members for six-year terms.<sup>17</sup> Given that the Council has previously identified information loss between outgoing and incoming Executive members as a critical challenge<sup>18</sup>, there is merit to exploring longer term lengths for NRC Executive positions.

Noting this, possible longer terms need to be balanced against the fact that this is often a period of rapid lifestyle change as Rover Scouts enter the workforce or attend tertiary education either locally or away from home.

### 3.2 What are appropriate term lengths for Council Executive positions?

Several non-Executive positions support the Executive, generally divided into two categories:

- Supporting positions – 12-month appointments with portfolio responsibility, such as Diversity & Inclusion Officer, and Public Relations & Marketing Officer.
- Project officers – 2-6+ month appointments with responsibility for delivering a discreet project, such as Roverscope Coordinator, website and content creation, implementation reviews, and feasibility studies.

Each of the eight Branches provides a three-person delegation to the Council consisting of the BRC Chair, the Branch Rover Adviser (BRA), and an NRC Delegate elected by their BRC. The NRC Delegate is responsible for providing updates from the NRC back to their Branch and expected to participate in project work as assigned by the NRC Vice Chair<sup>19</sup>. Interviews with past and present members of the Executive suggest that the Council has struggled in recent years to complete work due to a lack of willingness on the part of NRC Delegates to undertake assigned tasks. At present, the Executive lack formal mechanisms to hold NRC Delegates responsible for completing assigned work.

<sup>14</sup> Scouts Australia (2018) 'Policy and Rules', p.57

<sup>15</sup> Scouts Australia (2019) 'National Rover Council Advisor' <<https://scouts.com.au/blog/2019/01/29/national-rover-council-advisor-position-vacancy>>

<sup>16</sup> WOSM (n.d.) 'World Scout Committee' <<https://www.scout.org/WorldScoutCommittee>>

<sup>17</sup> WOSM (n.d.) 'Asia-Pacific Region – Governance' <<https://www.scout.org/node/94/about/132>>

<sup>18</sup> NRC (2019) 'National Rover Council External Review Consultant' <<https://scouts.com.au/blog/2019/02/27/nrc-external-review-consultant-vacancy/>>

<sup>19</sup> NRC (2019) 'The By-laws of the National Rover Council of Australia', s.2.3



Observers to the Council include a representative of the New Zealand Rover Council, Scout Australia national office bearers (e.g. National Commissioners, National Advisers), and representatives from Branch Venturer Councils<sup>20</sup>. Generally, these observers only attend the annual Conference and not regular meetings. The Chair of the next Australian Rover Moot typically attends all Council meetings.

With around 30 members regular members, excluding observers, the Council is significantly larger than comparable Scouting executive councils. By comparison, each of the eight BRCs has between four to 16 members, with an average of 11. The Scouts Australia National Operations Committee has 15 members and seven observers, and the Scouts Australia National Executive Committee has 13 members and one observer. The Asia-Pacific Region Scout Committee has ten members<sup>21</sup>, and the World Scout Committee has 12 voting members supported by 15 observers (6 Youth Advisors and nine non-voting members<sup>22</sup>).

The Council is unique compared to other Scouting executive councils in that a three-person delegation represents each Branch rather than an appointed individual.

### 3.3 Does the current Council non-Executive structure reflect the needs of both Rover Scouts and the Council?

The Council is also unique in that while the Executive members undertake the majority of the work, they do not have voting rights. Votes are decided by each Branch delegation casting a single vote<sup>23</sup>, with the Chair the only voting in the event of a tied vote.

The Review Team has developed several alternative structural arrangements for the Council (**Appendix D**). Please note that these are discussion starters only – they have been developed independently of the Council and Scouts Australia, and do not reflect the views of any named organisation or individual.

### 3.4 Are there alternative structural arrangements for the Council which could better meet the needs of Rover Scouts?

<sup>20</sup> NRC (2019) 'The By-laws of the National Rover Council of Australia', s.2.2

<sup>21</sup> WOSM (n.d.) 'Asia-Pacific Region – Governance' <<https://www.scout.org/node/94/about/132>>

<sup>22</sup> WOSM (n.d.) 'World Scout Committee' <<https://www.scout.org/WorldScoutCommittee>>

<sup>23</sup> NRC (2019) 'The By-laws of the National Rover Council of Australia', s.4.1



#### 4. Meetings of the National Rover Council

The Council holds an annual National Rover Council Conference ('the Conference') at the start of each year, which is generally hosted by the Branch who hosted the major event (Jamboree, Venture, or Moot) for that year. Recently the Conference has run for three days and three nights and is used to elect the new Council Executive, present financial reporting, and propose and discuss policies which impact Rover Scouts. Attendees at the 2020 Conference noted that the Conference is an excellent opportunity for them to network and build relationships between BRCs.

The Conference is a significant expense for the Council – the 2019 Conference represented 81 per cent of the Council's operational expenditure for 2019-2020. The costs of BRC delegations, generally between three to five Rover Scouts and Advisers, are met by their Branch or shared between the delegate and their BRC, while the Rover Levy covers the costs of the Council Executive<sup>24</sup>. Members of the Council have indicated that the rotating location can be expensive for flights as opposed to holding it in Melbourne or Sydney, to which flights can be considerably cheaper.

The high price of the Conference, and the accompanying environmental impact, was raised by survey respondents. For example:

*"It's a waste of our money for you [the Council] to be sent interstate on our dime to discuss things that could be done over Skype."*

Hosting an annual Conference aligns the Council with other Scouts Australia national teams and committees (e.g. Adventurous Activities, International, Adults in Scouting, Environment, Training), who also hold an annual meeting or conference, often supported virtual meetings throughout the year. By contrast, both the Asia-Pacific Region Scout Conference<sup>25</sup> and World Scout Conference<sup>26</sup>, which transact similar business to the Conference albeit on a larger scale, are held every three years.

It is worth noting that in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, a number of these conferences were conducted virtually, and in some instances, these previously closed conference were open to all Scouting members to attend and participate.

Some BRC meetings are open for all interested Rover Scouts to attend<sup>27</sup> and the World Scout Conference is streamed to YouTube<sup>28</sup>. By comparison, the Conference is viewed by some as a closed gathering accessible only by Rover Scouts who hold senior elected positions.

##### 4.1 Does the current Conference format meet the needs of Rover Scouts and represent value for money?

<sup>24</sup> Every Rover Scout in Australia pays an annual 'NRC Levy' of approximately \$6.00 as a component of their Branch fees, which is paid to the Council and used to cover operational costs and development projects.

<sup>25</sup> WOSM (n.d.) 'Asia-Pacific Region – Governance' <<https://www.scout.org/node/94/about/132>>

<sup>26</sup> WOSM (2014) 'History of the World Scout Conference' <https://www.scout.org/node/6884>

<sup>27</sup> NSW State Rover Council (2017) 'Constitution', s.5.1.7

<sup>28</sup> WOSM (2017) '41st World Scout Conference – Session 1' <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVselqxeCQA&list=PLyXFqYLOH2EM-0w31KNTpxz6ROi6wLeJg>>

Since at least 2011<sup>29</sup> the Council has also met remotely between Conference. Recently these meetings have been held every two months using an enterprise web platform. These meetings are used to fill casual vacancies, discuss emerging issues, propose and vote on policies and projects, and provide updates and progress reports.

Discussions with BRCs have identified that in general, papers brought to meetings are brainstormed and drafted by the BRCs with limited input from the Rovers Scouts they represent. Several reasons for this have been raised, including:

- Lack of interest in matters at a national level, which are not considered to impact individual Rovers Scouts
- Lack of understanding of the purpose and functions of the Council
- Lack of understanding of the Conference process
- Lack of time to conduct meaningful consultation

Limited interest in, and understanding of, the work of the Council represents a significant challenge. In April 2020 the Council voted to begin publishing meeting papers and minutes online for Rover Scouts based on recommendations from the Review Team. This decision is designed to improve visibility of how the Council operates and to provide a mechanism for Executive and co-opted members of the Council to be held accountable.

Papers for discussion and voting are generally released four weeks ahead of the Conference, often over holiday periods or during major national events, and are circulated only to those attending. By comparison, papers for the most recent World Scout Conference are publicly available almost seven weeks before the conference<sup>30</sup>.

**4.2 How can the Council better engage with Rover Scouts ahead of meetings to ensure it is representing their views?**

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<sup>29</sup> The Council does not hold records complete from 2009-2011; remote meetings could have been held as early as 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Conference papers were uploaded to the World Scout Conference website between 14 June 2017

and 20 June 2017 according to the Internet Archive (<https://web.archive.org/web/20170620044944/http://www.wsc2017.az:80/documents>), around seven weeks before the conference commencing on 7 August 2017.



## Appendix A: Survey methodology

The Review Team conducted a survey of current and former Rover Scouts between February and June 2020 using the SurveyMonkey platform. Invitations to participate were circulated by the Council and BRCs using social media, websites, and email contact lists.

The survey comprised of 34 questions organised into four sections:

1. Respondent demographics (**Table 2**)
2. Rating Council performance against its current strategic objectives
3. Identifying which governance organisations (e.g. the World Organisation of the Scouting Movement, BRCs, Rover Units) are responsible and accountable for different matters affecting Rover Scouts
4. Listing major achievements of the Council over the past ten years, listing what the Council should focus on and be accountable for over the next ten years

**Table 2:** Demographics of survey respondents

Number of respondents		333
Current Rover Scouts		46.7%
Former Rover Scouts		52.6%
Age	Under 18	0.0%
	18-24	43.8%
	25-34	22.4%
	35-44	13.3%
	45-54	10.0%
	55-64	7.9%
	65+	2.7%
Where do you live?	ACT	10.3%
	NSW	21.8%
	NT	0.0%
	Qld	16.0%
	SA	8.5%
	Tas	4.5%
	Vic	23.3%
	WA	14.2%
	Outside Australia	1.5%
	Metropolitan area	81.6%
	Regional area	18.4%
Gender	Male	60.5%
	Female	38.6%
	Other	0.9%
Current or former member of the Council		21.5%
Current or former members of a BRC		41.4%
Involvement in Rover Scouts	1-3 years	29.0%
	4-8 years	44.7%
	9+ years	26.3%

**Source:** Review Team Survey February-June 2020.

**Note:** Figures are rounded and may not add to 100 per cent.



## Appendix B: Word cloud analysis of qualitative survey data

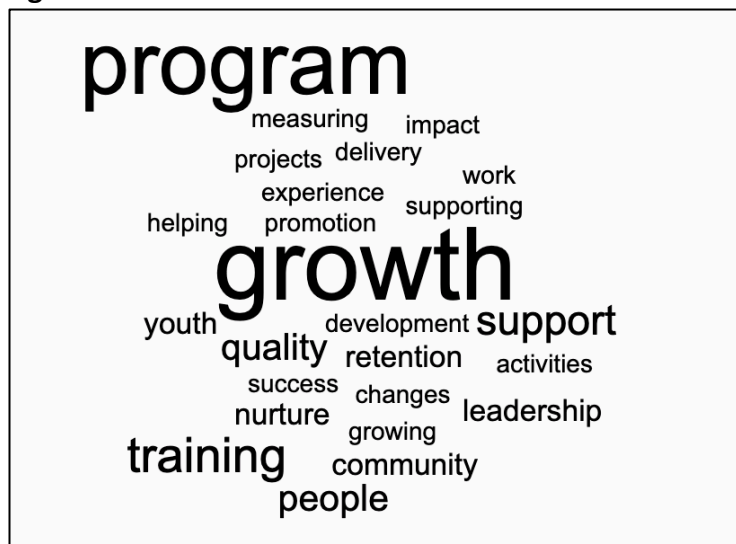
**Figure 3** and **Figure 4** list the 25 most frequent words used by respondents to the survey regarding the work of the Council over the next ten years. The larger the font size, the more frequently the word was used.

**Figure 3: What should the Council focus on over the next ten years?**



Source: Review Team Survey February-June 2020.

**Figure 4: What should the Council be accountable for over the next ten years?**



Source: Review Team Survey February-June 2020.

## Appendix C: Current responsibilities of the NRC

The Review Team hosted a workshop during the 2020 Conference which examined the areas of responsibility for the Council. The following table was developed by workshop participants to represent responsible for various topics affecting Rover Scouts. The table does not reflect the views of any named organisation and is not an indication of official responsibility, but rather responsibility as perceived by participants.

National Operations/ Executive Committees	National Rover Council	Branches	Branch Rover Councils	Rover Units
Setting uniform standards		Branch Chief Commissioners control some badges		
Setting the award scheme				Setting minimum award scheme standards
Training development		Training implementation		
Strategic planning				Operational planning
National Moot (rotation, financial, reporting)	National Moot (reporting)		State Moots / National Moot (organising)	
Policy & Rules	Overarching policies (e.g. bullying, alcohol)	Implementing policies (e.g. grievances)		
General Scout RP/marketing	Rover RP/marketing (has been dormant recently)	State PR/marketing	State Rover RP/marketing	PR/marketing (showcasing local events)
		Support for struggling crews		
		Growth (supporting)		Growth (quality product)

**Source:** Review Team Workshop, 2020 National Rover Scout Conference.



## Appendix D: Alternative NRC structures

The Review Team has developed the following alternative structural models for the Council as a means to encourage discussions around the structure of the Council. They do not represent the views of the Council or any named organisation.

A.	<p>The Council is split into two bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BRC Chairs form a Chairs Committee, chaired by the Deputy Chief Commissioner of Australia (Under 30), which focuses on strategy. Realistically, BRC Chairs do not have capacity outside their elected roles to undertake Council project work.</li> <li>• BRC Delegates and the Council Executive continue to form the Council, which becomes a working group focused on implementation.</li> </ul> <p>BRAs could sit on one or both bodies, or neither.</p>
B.	The Council is made smaller to bring it more in line with other Scouting executive committees. Its membership consists of an Executive and the eight BRC Chairs.
C.	The BRC Delegate position is dissolved, and sub-committees are formed which draw upon the expertise of the relevant officers within each BRC (e.g. the eight BRC Training Officers form the training sub-committee). The Council Executive, BRC Chairs and BRAs continue to form the Council, which provides coordination and oversight of the sub-committees.
D.	The Council is dissolved, and instead, a group of independent Rover Scout councillors, who cannot concurrently hold Branch/Region/Unit leaderships roles, are elected nationally. They are selected based on relevant experience and knowledge (e.g. governance, financial management, public relations) and work for the benefit of all Rovers, not just their Branch.
E.	A model of proportionate representation to represent the 3,000 Rovers in Australia. Representatives from each Branch would be elected, based on one representative for every 100/200/300 Rovers in the Branch, with a minimum of two representatives for Branches with less than the above threshold. This option reflects the new proportional NRC funding model, which sees the larger Branches contribute more funding to the Council than smaller states.
F.	A proportional representation model based on Scouts Australia's division of Branches into three categories based on membership: large (NSW, Vic), medium (Qld, SA, WA) and small (ACT, Tas) <sup>31</sup> . Large branches could elect four members to the Council, medium-sized Branches three, and small Branches two.
G.	Any of the above options, however, the Conference is replaced by a National Rover Roundtable consisting of a representative from each Rover Unit in Australia, to provide a forum for grassroots Rover Scouts to raise issues and vote on proposals.
H.	Any of the above options, however decisions of the NRC are voted on by all Units in Australia. Votes must exceed a threshold (e.g. 60% agreement), with non-voting Units viewed as abstaining. This option would distribute ballots in favour of larger Branches but place the power at a Unit level rather than BRC level. In exchange, Units must follow the outcome of the vote and report on their progress.
I.	Any of the above options, however, the Council also becomes a sub-committee of the National Operations Committee (NOC), which manages all elements of the Scout Program. This option could to raise the status of the Council and create more substantial synergies with the NOC. The Council Chair is already a member of NOC.
J.	Disband the Council, with its functions transferred to BRCs.

<sup>31</sup> Scouts Australia (2018) 'Policy and Rules', p.97