

**The
Council
Commissioner
Manual**

Boy Scouts of America

By

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National Commissioner Service
Training Chairman**

February 2010

Preface

Why am I writing this?

In the summer of 2009 the new National Council Commissioner Service Support Team became aware that there was no formal training material for the all important job of Council Commissioner. This was rather amazing in that at this point Boy Scouting was 99 years old and this material had never been completely compiled and formatted before. I undertook the efforts to do this in my new role as the National Commissioner Service Training Chairman with assistance from the other members of the National Commissioner Support Staff, who are: Scott Sorrels, Ellie Morrison, Tim Acree, and Mark Wappel. My thanks to them for their contributions, both on a pilgrimage that we made to Philmont to begin this process and then for the editing numerous drafts of this material. Also, a thank you to Milwaukee County Council members and other Scout Executives who helped with the editing and organizational suggestions. A special thanks to my administrative assistant, Sue Dayton, who typed all the many drafts.

Much of the material in this manual is from old, or current BSA materials. Some of this has been taken intact for compilation here. Some existing BSA materials were altered for brevity, or to reduce redundancy. Some materials were gathered from other Scouters in Councils around the country, again somewhat edited. Other material was mine from previous National BSA presentations at Annual Meetings, Philmont, or College of Commissioner Service courses that I have written and taught. Some material I wrote specifically for this manual to “fill in” where I perceived there to be holes.

The manual was compiled and written from the point of view that it would be a basic, yet comprehensive, guide to someone who had never been a Council Commissioner. It is meant to orient someone who had been asked to be the Council Commissioner who did not have many years of Scouter experience at the Council level and who was not familiar with the Council structure and how it operated. This person might be a “Suit”, a community leader who was willing to serve at this high level Council position. They might also be a “Uniform”, someone who has many years of adult Scouter experience and an extensive list of Scouting positions – like having been a Unit Leader, Unit Commissioner, or Scouting volunteer in some other way.

One major problem I noted compiling this material for the first time was that there is great variation from Council to Council about the role and position of the Council Commissioner. These variations have developed over time, from region to region, and from large urban or multi-county Councils to smaller, rural Councils. This manual was written to try to allow for those variations, and should be read in that way.

The efforts were all undertaken with the hope that this would bring together, in one place, all that Council Commissioners and their Administrative Staffs need to get started when they agree to undertake the all important job of Council Commissioner, District Commissioner, and their Assistants.

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The Council Commissioner

A. “Fast Start” for Council Commissioners

The Council Commissioner

- ◆ **Is:**
 - Leader of all the Council’s Commissioners
 - Representative of all the uniformed youth and Scouters
 - Member of the Council:
 - Key 3
 - Executive Committee
 - Executive Board
 - Liaison between the professional staff and volunteers
 - Chief Morale Officer of Commissioners - raising their profile and impact throughout the Council.
- ◆ **Assures:**
 - Recruitment of an adequate number of Unit and Administrative Commissioners.
 - Orientation of all new Commissioners
 - Training of Unit and Administrative Commissioners
 - Implementation of all functions of Unit and Administrative Commissioners
 - Reporting of progress towards the goal achievement of all Commissioner functions
 - Evaluation of the functioning of the Commissioner staff – making changes when necessary.
 - Formulation of succession plans for the Administrative Commissioner staff.
- ◆ **Oversees, through the Unit Commissioners:**
 - Making monthly Unit visits and contacts.
 - Providing supportive services to Unit Leaders.
 - Delivery of a Quality Scouting program to all youth.

B. A Brief History of Commissioners

When Scouting first started in 1910 in America, it was understaffed. There were no Scouting professionals outside the National office. Volunteers, then known as Commissioners, helped start, register, and service Units as they were formed around the country.

As Scouting grew and hired professional staff, Commissioners continued in this role of assisting or servicing Units.

To this day the function of Unit Commissioners in Scouting is to do whatever it takes to help Units succeed, and thus be able to deliver the Scouting Program to the youth of America.

(See the more Detailed History of Commissioners, Section RR, p. 65.

C. **Commissioner Basics:**

All Commissioners should be familiar with the basic tenets of the Boy Scouts of America and their local Council:

- ◆ BSA Mission Statement
- ◆ BSA Vision Statement
- ◆ Scout Oath
- ◆ Scout Law
- ◆ Your council's Mission Statement, Vision, and Strategic Plan

BSA Mission Statement

The mission of the BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

BSA Vision Statement

The Boy Scouts of America is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training.

In the future, Scouting will continue to:

- ◆ Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- ◆ Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law;
- ◆ Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership;
- ◆ Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

The Purpose of the Boy Scouts of America

The Charter of the Boy Scouts of America states that “the **Purpose** of this corporation shall be to promote, through organization and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in Scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues, using methods which are now in common use by Boy Scouts.”

Scout Oath

On my honor, I will do my best, to do my duty to God and my country, and to help other people at all times, to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law A Scout is:

- ◆ Trustworthy
- ◆ Loyal
- ◆ Helpful
- ◆ Friendly
- ◆ Courteous
- ◆ Kind
- ◆ Obedient
- ◆ Cheerful
- ◆ Thrifty
- ◆ Brave
- ◆ Clean
- ◆ Reverent

D. The BSA Organizational Structure as Related to the Council Commissioner

Who is the Council Commissioner?

Each local Boy Scouts of America Council has a Council Commissioner. This person is a part of the Council Key 3 which consists of: (See Chart B on p.13)

- ◆ The Scout Executive
- ◆ The Council President
- ◆ The Council Commissioner

The Council Commissioner is suggested by the Council President – with input from the Scout Executive, nominated by the Nominating Committee, and approved by the Executive Board.

The Council Commissioner's primary function is to:

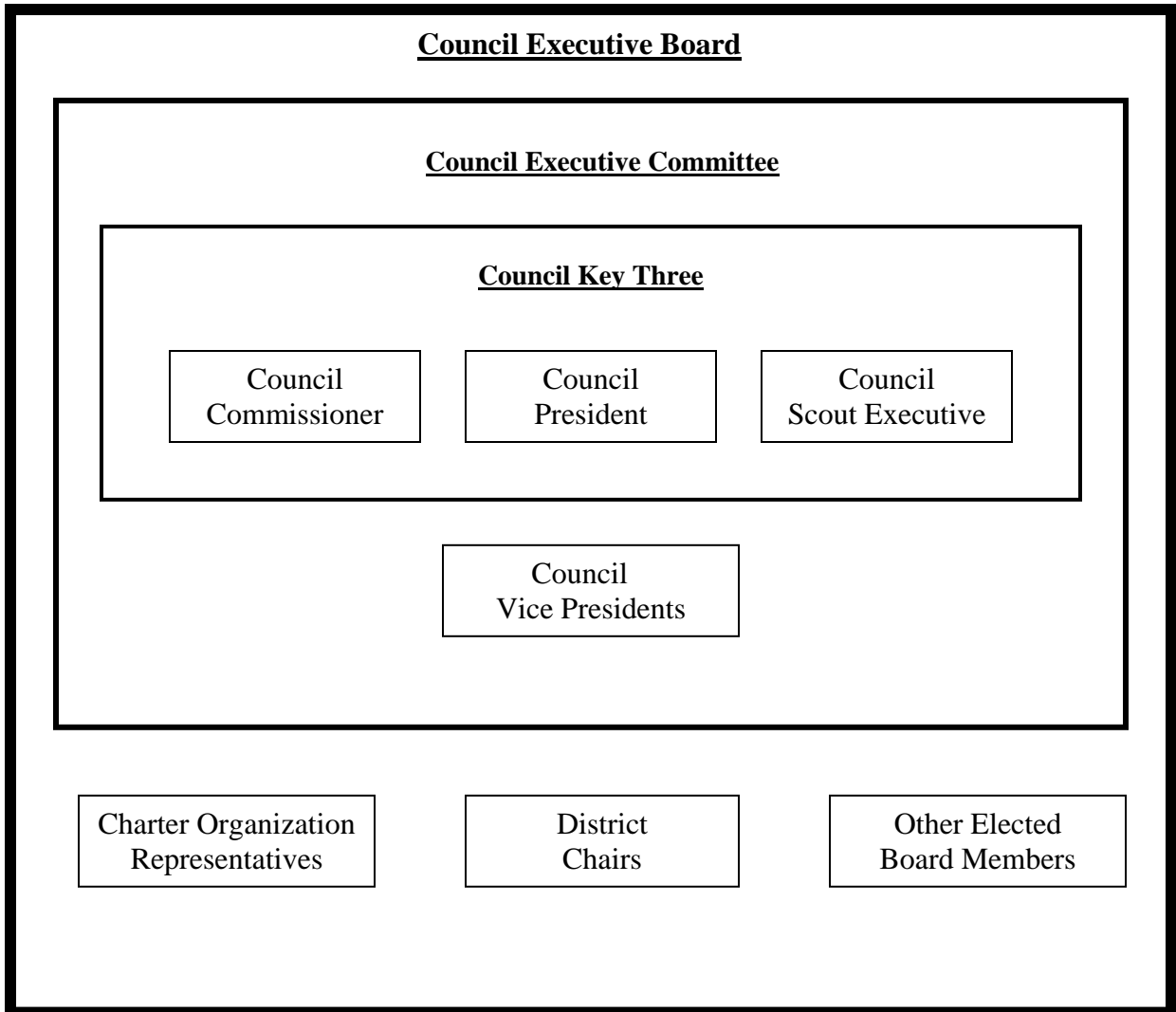
- ◆ Represent all uniformed Youth and Scouters,
- ◆ Represent all of the Council's Unit Serving Commissioner's staff in Council matters,
- ◆ Achieve the goals of the Council Commissioner staff, and
- ◆ Raise the profile and impact of the Commissioners at the Council Key 3, Council Executive Board level, and throughout the Council.

The following three charts show the relationship of the Council Commissioner to the Scouting Organizational structure:

- ◆ **Chart A** shows the Council Commissioner role within the local Council.
- ◆ **Chart B** shows the relationship of the Council Commissioner to the Council Executive Board and Council Executive Committee.
- ◆ **Chart C** shows the relationship of the Council Commissioner to the National Commissioner structure.

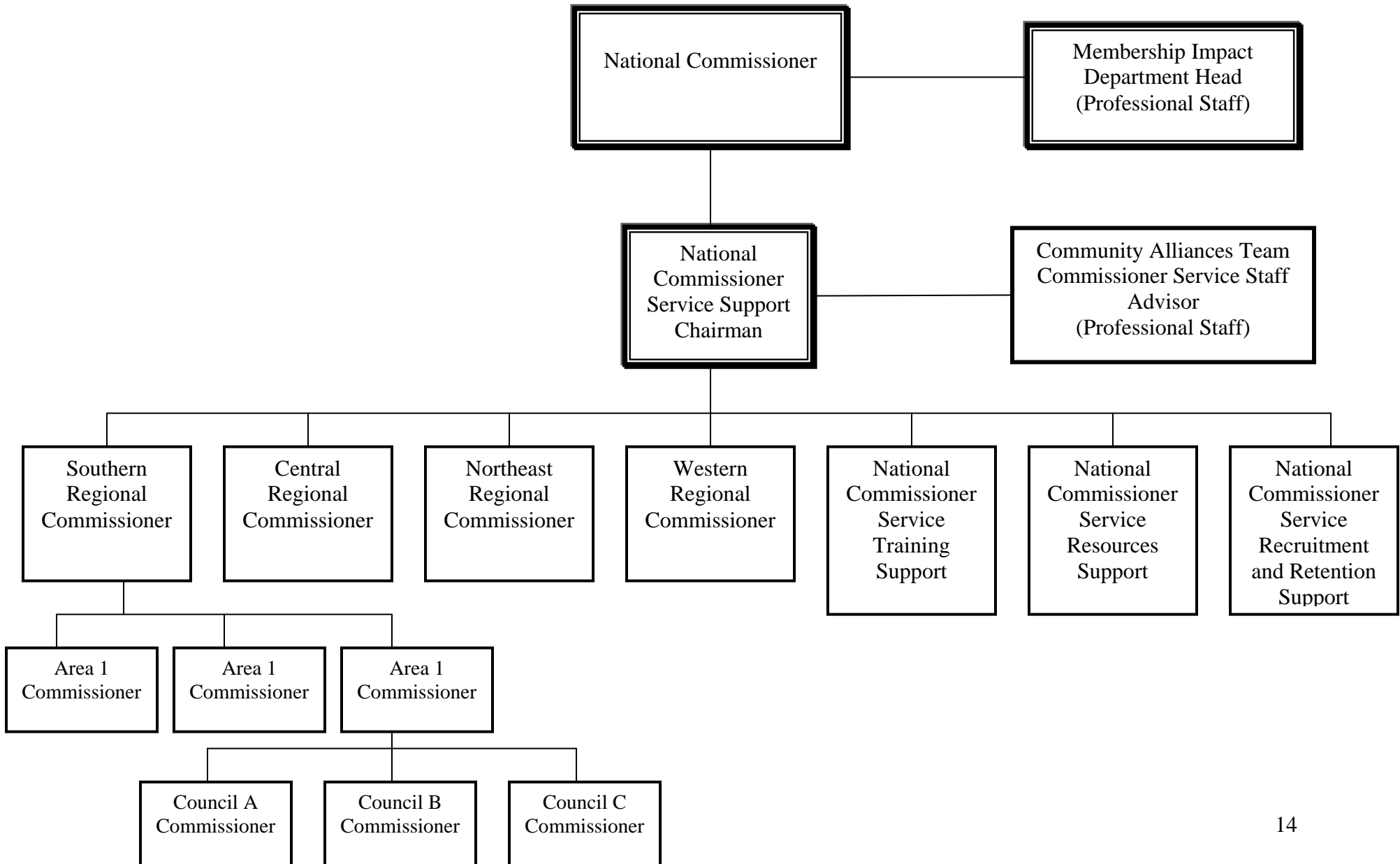
Note as the above three charts are reviewed, keep in mind that The Purpose of the Council is to establish, guide and support Districts for the achievement of the movement's purpose. Councils establish policies and programs. Districts carry out the policies and Mission in their respective territories.

The following chart shows the relationship of the Council Commissioner to: the Council Key Three, the Council Executive Committee, and the Council Executive Board:



The following chart shows the relationship of the Council Commissioner to the National Commissioner structure: CHART C

National Commissioner Organizational Chart



E. What are the Main or Core Purposes of the Council Commissioner?

1. The Council Commissioner is responsible for each Council Unit – each Cub Scout Pack, Boy Scout Troop, or Venturing Crew- being visited by a Unit Commissioner and receiving Commissioner Service each month.

The purpose of these visits is for the Unit Commissioner to provide service to assist these Unit leaders in their all important goal of delivering the Boy Scouting Program to the Scouts. The Unit Commissioner acts in many different capacities - to be a counselor, advisor, mentor, service representative, doctor, etc., when any type of assistance is needed by Unit leaders.

Without these regular visits and contacts, Unit leaders would have no direct contact with the Scouting structure other than District or Council Roundtables and the District Executive. They would be on their own trying to implement the Scouting Program without the training, skills, knowledge, assistance, and support that a Commissioner can help provide. This would make their job much more difficult and their chances of being successful much lower. The Unit Commissioner is there to help Units succeed in delivering the Scouting Program.

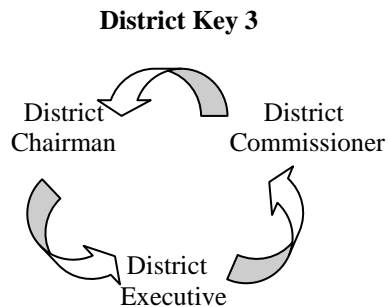
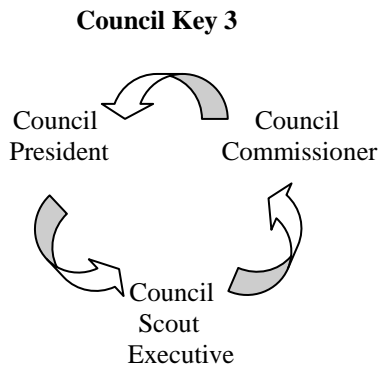
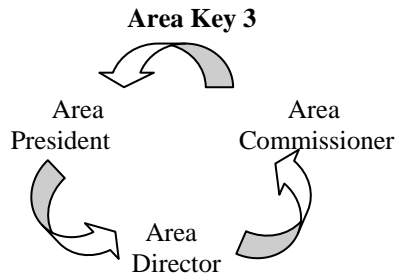
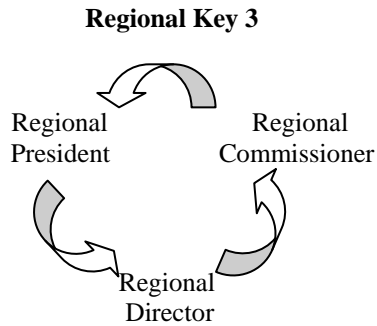
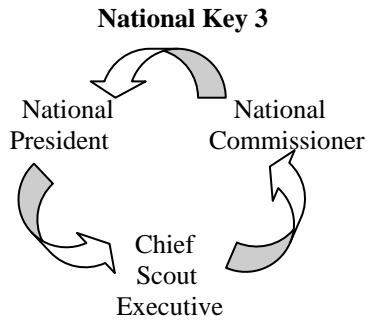
Assisting Units to be successful in delivering a quality Scouting Program is the main or core purpose of the Councils' Commissioners, and thus, it is also the main core purpose of the Council Commissioner.

The other main purposes of the Council Commissioner are:

2. Serve as Officer of the local Council, a member of its Executive Board and Executive Committee, and as a National Council member representing the local Council.
3. Keep the President and Executive Board informed of the condition of Units and their successes and the problems in delivering the Scouting Program.
4. Serve on the Council Key 3. (See Chart D, p. 16)

What is the Key 3 Concept in Scouting and where do Commissioners fit into them?

CHART D



F. The Council Commissioner's Significant Working Relationships

It is a basic premise of the Scouting Program that Scouting is volunteer led and professionally guided. The Commissioner role, while filled by a volunteer, is in many ways the point of contact between these two groups. It is the Commissioner that acts as liaison to the professional staff for volunteers at the Unit level, and at the District and Council level. It behooves the Council Commissioner to work on promoting good positive working relationships between the multitude of volunteers in each Council and the staff of paid Scouting professionals. In this way, the Council Commissioner helps all accomplish their specific tasks for the betterment of Scouting.

The Council Commissioner, as part of the Council Key 3, works together with the Council President and the Scout Executive at the Council level. The Council Commissioner also works directly with many other members of the professional Scouting staff when appropriate - the Director of Field Service, District Executives, etc. It's important that the Council Commissioner develop and keep good working relationships with these professionals in order to be able to assist them in their duties. The relationship is mutually beneficial in that they assist the Council Commissioner in fulfilling his or her goals, duties, and responsibilities - and their assistance is invaluable. Without these relationships, the Council Commissioner cannot be successful in the role of achieving and accomplishing the Council Commissioner functions.

The Council Commissioner also works directly with the Council President, who is the presiding officer of the Council Executive Board and the Council Executive Board Committee.

The Council Commissioner, again in the important role as Council Key 3 member, is a member of both of these key groups - the Council Executive Board and the Council Executive Committee. These two groups set direction and policy for the Council, set the strategic plan and goals for the Council, manage the Council's finances, oversee the Scout Executive's administrative actions, and are responsible for the quality of the Scouting Program being implemented in each District area.

The Council Commissioner is an important and integral part of all these top Council functions. (See Chart B, p.13)

G. The Council Commissioner and the Council Commissioner Staff

The Council Commissioner is the leader of the Council's Commissioner Staff and must take a dynamic role in initiating and implementing all of the Council Commissioner functions and making sure that all of the goals of the Council Commissioner staff are met. He or she is the inspirational leader of the Council's Commissioner Staff and promotes the quality of the Scouting Program within the Units.

The Council Commissioner's primary responsibility is to establish and operate a Council Administrative Commissioner Staff. In order to do this, the Council Commissioner must, as a first and foremost function, recruit and train adequate numbers of quality volunteers to fill all of the Council's administrative and Unit service providing Commissioner functions. These volunteers will help the Council Commissioner by organizing the Commissioner administrative structure of the Council, by being Assistant Council Commissioners, District Commissioners, Assistant District Commissioners, or Unit Commissioners. This entire administrative Commissioner structure is there to provide support to the Unit Commissioners, the ones who visit the Units and perform the actual function of Commissioners.

It is the Council Commissioner's primary duty to organize, recruit, nominate or appoint and operate the Council Commissioner's Administrative Commissioner Staff in order to be able to provide service to Units. The positions are:

- Assistant Council Commissioners
 - Specialty Assistant Council Commissioners
- District Commissioners
- Assistant District Commissioners
- Unit Commissioners (See Chart A, p.12)

The Council Commissioner's Relationship and Responsibilities to the Administrative Staff are:

1. Specialty Commissioners

Council Commissioners over time have found that certain administrative functions can sometimes best be accomplished if the Council Commissioner recruits and trains Specialty Commissioners. Depending upon a Council's size and preference, some of these could be:

5. The Council Rechartering Commissioner
6. The Unit Visit Tracking System Commissioner
7. The Quality Award Commissioner
8. The Council Webmaster Commissioner
9. Summer Camp Commissioners, etc.

2. Hold Commissioner Meetings

Obviously, in order to organize this administrative function, the Council Commissioner must hold regular Council administrative meetings with these individuals to check on their progress, set an agenda, set goals, and to achieve these goals as per the overall Council's strategic plan.

3. Recruit and Train

Another major administrative responsibility of the Council Commissioner is to be actively involved in the recruiting and training of these Administrative Commissioners to work with him or her, in conjunction with the Scout Executive. Note, a number of these administrative positions, such as District Commissioner, must be nominated by the District Nominating Committee in order to enjoy their support and involvement. They are then approved by the Council Executive Board.

4. Evaluate Functioning

Also, as the top Administrative Commissioner, it will be necessary for the Council Commissioner to evaluate the functioning of the Commissioners in the administrative positions and to possibly make changes over time, as necessary.

5. Annual Commissioner Conference

The Council Commissioner should plan, and conduct an annual Commissioner Conference for training, updates, planning, recognition, and morale building or a College of Commissioner Science.

6. Succession Planning

And lastly, a far-sighted Council Commissioner will be developing a succession plan in terms of grooming and training the next Council Commissioner and other potential Council Commissioner administrative staff people to take over these various functions as the persons in them fulfill their terms. They do this in conjunction with the Scout Executive.

H. The Council Commissioner's Relationship and Responsibilities to Unit Commissioners

1. Recruit

First and foremost, the Council Commissioner is responsible for the Council Commissioner's Administrative Structure that recruits a sufficient number of Unit Commissioners so that there is one Commissioner for at least every three Units in the Council. This has been the national standard for many years and time has shown that attending to the needs of three Units at a maximum, gives Unit Commissioners the time that they need to do a good job in providing service to these Units.

Unit Commissioners can be recruited from:

- Unit leaders who have "retired" from their Unit leader positions
- Involved parents of Cubs, Scouts, and Ventures who have gone through the Scouting program
- Former Scouts
- Eagle Scouts
- National Youth Leadership Training Programs
- Vocations that attract and develop mentors, i.e., College Professors
- Philmont Rangers
- Church Officers
- Service organizations, i.e., Rotary, Lions, etc.
- Veterans Organizations
- Etc.

2. Organize a District Commissioner Structure

While making sure that each District secures a sufficient number of Unit Commissioners to service the District's Units, the Council Commissioner must also make sure that all of the Council's Districts are organized with their own Administrative Commissioner structures:

- District Commissioners
- Assistant District Commissioners
- Specialty Commissioners, if needed
- Unit Commissioners

The District Commissioner should hold regular meetings. These meetings should be at unique times and not combined with other District functions so that attention can be paid to the important function of Commissioning.

3. Training

The Council Commissioner must make sure that there is regular and continuing education for all Commissioners. New recruits should be put through Fast Start Commissioner training and Unit Commissioner Basic Training. The Council and District should provide regular ongoing training to all Commissioners. Increasingly, Councils have been encouraged to start a College of Commissioner Science which tends to be periodic, all day training sessions with numerous different classes on Commissioning subjects. Individuals are encouraged to attend for several years and earn their Bachelors, Masters, and or Doctoral Degree in Commissioner Science.

The Council Commissioner should evaluate the Council's Commissioner Training Program and make improvements or additions when necessary.

4. Roundtables

Roundtables serve an educational function for the Council's Commissioners and Unit leaders, as well as an opportunity for them to meet outside of Unit meetings, to socialize to get to know each other, and to exchange conversation that's helpful to the Unit Commissioners to fulfill their functions. Roundtables are usually the responsibility of the District and the District Commissioner.

5. Volunteer Recognition

The Council Commissioner should also make sure that all Commissioners are recognized for their efforts in Scouting with the following

1. Recognize Commissioners for attending training
2. Commissioner Awards (Section V, p. 38)
3. Periodic and regular "thank you's"
4. Recognized for special achievements or longevity of service at Council or District recognition events, such as banquets, dinners, newsletters, etc.

6. Leadership

Overall, the Council Commissioner must act as the champion or spirit of the Council Commissioner staff. This is the person who should be visible at numerous meetings and functions, who always has something positive and encouraging to say about the Commissioning function and is enthusiastic about advancing the purpose of Commissioners and is basically functioning as the "cheerleader" or chief morale officer for the Council's Commissioners.

7. Camp Promotion/Outdoor Activities

The Council Commissioner should strongly promote all Packs, Troops, and Crews to participate in Council camping opportunities. By working with their Commissioner staff

they can help promote better utilization of the Council's facilities year round – and attendance at the National High Adventure camps and events. They should also encourage Commissioners to attend training at the Philmont Training Center.

They may want to pay special attention to the Council's health and safety concerns regarding camping and outdoor activities at Council camps.

Council Commissioners can help promote the use of camperships for Scouting members with financial needs.

8. Activities and Civic Service

The Council Commissioners will want to help promote various district activities, events, and civic service projects. This will help Scouting be more involved in the community and more visible.

9. Advancement – The Council Commissioner has a major role in Advancement – a key part of the Scouting Program. Advancement through the various ranks – for Cubs, Scouts, and Venture Crew members, is a key component to helping Scouting achieve its goals of developing character and leadership in youth.

Commissioners can assist with Advancement major tasks such as:

- ◆ Help Unit leaders establish and maintain proper advancement procedures.
- ◆ Monitor a Unit's Advancements.
- ◆ Participate in troop Eagle Board of Reviews or conduct District level Eagle Board of Reviews.
- ◆ Provide resources in Advancement that are difficult for Units to secure.

I. The Council Commissioner's Goals for the Council's Unit Commissioners

The Council Commissioner is ultimately responsible for all of the Council's Unit Commissioners accomplishing these responsibilities. They work through the District Commissioners. The District Commissioners work directly with their staff and the Unit Commissioners to achieve these goals:

1. To visit or contact each of their three Units every month

A visit or contact can be in person, during a Unit meeting of the Cub Pack or Boy Scout Troop or Venture Crew, a person to person meeting with the adult leaders of those Units outside the Unit's regular time, a phone call or e-mail to these Unit leaders, or a meeting with the Unit's Committee of adult leaders. The Unit Commissioner can also meet with the Chartered Organization Representative from the church, service club, or other organization that charters the Unit. The Council and District should use the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS) so that Unit Commissioners are accountable for making the above noted visits, documenting them, and reporting them to the administrative structure of the Council.

2. To be responsible for the annual Rechartering of each Unit on time. The Unit Commissioner should be using the new Internet Based Online Rechartering System to help with this all important function.
3. To work with each Unit to achieve the Annual Quality Unit Award.
4. To follow and achieve the monthly Commissioners Annual Service Plan for Units. (See Section T, p. 36)
5. To help with organizing new Units with the Scout District Executive staff, and District Membership Committee, and chartered organizational representatives. Also, to help recruit leaders for these new Units.
6. To work with new Units that have problems in order to keep them from "dropping" or disappearing as functioning Units.
7. To help with "dropped" Units that could be revitalized or restarted.
8. To assist Units in recruiting and retaining youth membership by working with the Council and District Membership and Relationships chairs to conduct a successful Annual Membership Recruitment effort.
9. To work with the District Membership Committee Units to assist Cub Scouts in making the transition from Webelos into Scouting.
10. To work with Unit Leadership in improving their Programming and Advancement through Scouting ranks.

11. To work with Units to recruit and retain quality adult leadership for each Unit.
12. To work with Units in order to get their recruited Unit leaders trained in the Scouting program.
13. To work with Units to ensure that leaders and youth members maintain BSA Standards of Uniforming and Insignia.
14. To assure that the Council is providing support and service to Council adult volunteers in all:
 - a. Cub Packs
 - b. Scout Troops
 - c. Venture Crews
15. To encourage Unit leaders to attend the District/Council Roundtables.
16. To demonstrate concern, empathy, and support to Unit leaders.
17. To help Units benefit from Council resources that they may be unaware of.
18. To encourage 100% of the Cubs, Scouts, and Ventures in all Units to subscribe to *Boys Life Magazine*.

J. Overall Points of Importance for Council Commissioners

1. The Council Commissioner should be a “true believer” in Scouting’s mission, and a role model of the Scout Oath and Law.
2. The Council Commissioner should set a high standard of personal performance and expect accountability of each administrative and Unit Commissioner in the Council.
3. Also, this broad scope and array of responsibilities can best be accomplished if the Council Commissioner takes personal ownership of the Council’s Scouting Program and sees it as his or her duty to do enthusiastically whatever it takes to improve the Program. That type of true leadership is what’s needed in the role of Council Commissioner and will go a long way in accomplishing their goals.
4. The Council Commissioner should set and make known the vision and goals for his or her term of service in the office. These should be consistent with BSA’s Mission and Vision, the Council Commissioner’s responsibilities as noted in this manual, and the needs and plans of their Council.
5. The Council Commissioner should be in a proper Scout Uniform at most meetings and functions in order to set the example for the volunteer leaders. He/she can check with the Scout Executive to see which event or meetings are the ones where the Council Commissioner should be in uniform.
6. In order to help set an example throughout the Council, the Council Commissioner should consider making a significant contribution to the Council Friends of Scouting Annual Campaign and/or the Council’s endowment campaign. It’s important for the Council Commissioner to do this in order to set an example.
7. Although many Councils prefer someone who was involved in Scouting as a youth and/or who has been an adult volunteer with extensive Scouting experience, there are no specific requirements for being appointed the Council Commissioner. Some Councils select someone who has been involved in Commissioner Service, and who has had many years experience in various Commissioner positions in the Council. However, there are numerous examples of persons having been selected with little or no previous Scouting experience, but who could quickly learn and perform the responsibilities and duties noted in this manual.
8. The Council Commissioner is elected at the Annual Meeting of the Council Executive Board and serves at its pleasure. The Council Commissioner can be removed by a vote of the Council Executive Board at any time.

K. The Role of the Council President in Relationship to the Council Commissioner

- ◆ The Council President is the Chief Volunteer Officer of the Council.
- ◆ He/she is the Chairman of the Council Board and has all the responsibilities of leading a 501c3 not-for-profit organization. (See Section N, p. 29)
- ◆ These leadership responsibilities are shared with the Scout Executive and Council Commissioner as a part of the Council Key 3.
- ◆ The President is the volunteer that “meets and greets” the public and is the “face” of the Council.
- ◆ Working with the Council Nominating Committee together, they should fill key Board and committee vacancies and replace inactive committee chairs and Board members.
- ◆ The Council President sets priorities and objectives consistent with the Council’s strategic plan.
- ◆ The Council President can place major Council issues on the Council Executive Board’s agenda.
- ◆ And most importantly, the Council President should know the Council’s progress towards its goals and objectives.

L. The Relationship of the Council President to the Scouting Professional Staff

- ◆ The professional staff provides guidance while the volunteer provides leadership and renders service.
- ◆ The Scout Executive and President must be utterly frank with one another, and have a good working relationship.
- ◆ The direction of the Council professional staff must come from the Scout Executive only – not the Council President or other Board Members.
- ◆ In the unlikely event of disagreement between the Council President and the Scout Executive, the Board makes the final decision.
- ◆ The President should check with the Scout Executive before making any public statement.
- ◆ The Scout Executive should be the news source or spokesperson in emergencies.
- ◆ The Council President should always keep in mind that the Council Scouting Program should be volunteer led and professionally guided.

The Council President, in addition to expected attendance at Council Executive Board, Council Executive Committee, Council Key 3 meetings, and the Scout Executive's review and annual salary review meeting is welcome to attend:

- BSA National Annual Meeting
- Council Camporees
- United Way site visits
- Area Conferences
- Council Finance Committee meetings
- Summer camp
- Council Charter reviews

The Scout Executive will work with the Council President to help decide which meetings and events are most important for him/her to attend.

M. The Role of the Council Scout Executive in Relation to the Council Commissioner

- ◆ The Scout Executive works together with the Council Commissioner and the Council President to maintain the National Scouting Program standards and the continuity of the operation of the Council Scouting organization and programs.
- ◆ The Scout Executive is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Not-for-Profit 501c3 Council Executive Board, and as such is responsible for fulfilling the policy decisions and strategic plan of the Council Executive Board, of which the Council Commissioner is a member.
- ◆ The Scout Executive is hired and fired by the Council Executive Board.
- ◆ The Scout Executive leads the local Council which is an administrative organization charged with fulfilling the purpose of the Scouting movement.
- ◆ Scouting is a volunteer movement that operates with professional guidance.
- ◆ The Scout Executive recognizes and is committed to the predominant and vital role of volunteer Scouters at all levels in fulfillment of their responsibilities.
- ◆ Roles of the Council Scout Executive:
 - The professionally trained representative of the National Scouting Program
 - Chief Executive Officer of the local Council
 - Corporate Secretary of the Council Executive Board and Council Executive Committee
 - Counselor and Advisor to the Council President and Council Commissioner
 - Director of Professional and Support Staff

N. The Council Commissioner's Responsibilities as a Member of the Council Executive Board

Because of the strong, one hundred year national organization, it's easy to forget that each Boy Scout of America Council is incorporated as a separate, legal entity – a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization with an independent Governing Board. In essence, the Boy Scouts of America organization is a federation of all of its Councils. This is analogous to Councils themselves chartering independent Packs, Troops, and Crews at various schools, churches and other organizations. The National Boy Scouts of America charters each incorporated Council independently, to provide the Scouting Program.

As an independent entity, a 501(c)3, each Council has certain legal, fiduciary, and moral responsibilities to fulfill to its local community.

Therefore, it's important that the Council Commissioner, as a member of the Council Executive Board, understands his or her basic responsibilities as a Council Executive Board Member. They are:

1. Set the Mission of the Council and from time to time, review the Mission
2. Be committed to the Mission, Values, and Goals of the Boy Scouts of America
3. Hire/fire the Scout Executive
4. Fiduciary responsibilities
5. Quality of the Scouting Program
6. Strategic Planning
7. Fundraising
8. Board Development (Nominating Committee)
9. Observe Conflict of Interest policies
10. Attend, participate, and vote at Council Executive Board meetings
11. Manage Council issues from a policy perspective
12. Work as a team

As the Council's top uniformed volunteer, the Council Commissioner is seated on the Council Executive Board with the basic responsibility of representing all uniformed adult volunteers in Council matters. However, the Council Commissioner does not vote from this

single purpose perspective alone, but uses his/her judgment to vote on all Council matters, for the good of the Council overall.

As noted before, the Council Executive Board President's responsibility is to preside over the Council Executive Board and fulfill the twelve responsibilities listed above.

The following clarifies the distinction between the Council Executive Board Governance role and the Scout Executive Administrative role:

Board Governance – setting policy and strategy, making large decisions, over seeing implementation.

The Scout Executive – implements policy and strategy as set forth by the Board, manages day to day operations, and achieves goals.

In summary, the Council Executive Board has three primary roles:

- Policy formulation
- Decision making
- Oversight

There are also three legally mandated duties of Council Executive Boards, and they are:

- The duty of *Care/Due Diligence*

The Board must be knowledgeable of all reasonably available Council information, and act with appropriate prudence and care. It's not acceptable later for a Board Member, or the Council Commissioner to say that they were unaware of something.

- The duty of *Obedience*

The Board must ensure that the Council is obedient to its central core purpose as described in its Articles of Incorporation and to the Mission of the Boy Scouts of America.

- The duty of *Loyalty*

The Board must discharge its duties unselfishly to the benefit of only the Council and not the Council Executive Board Member personally. This means that Board Members should:

- Disclose situations with potential conflicts of interest and self-interest.
- Avoid competition with the Council.
- Refrain from discussing confidential Board business with others.

O. The Role of the Council Commissioner and the Board in Program/Quality

The Council Executive Board is responsible for the development and review of quality assurance, compliance and monitoring systems, and for regularly evaluating the Council's Scouting Programs. This is a responsibility that the Board cannot delegate to the Council Commissioner or Scout Executive alone. The Board is ultimately responsible for what goes on or doesn't go on within the Council relating to the quality of the Scouting Program. The Board is also ultimately responsible for the actions of the paid professional staff and the volunteers in the Council performing their responsibilities in implementing the Program. The Board has the ultimate responsibility for the quality of the Scouting Program that the youth receive and they should review it regularly. The "buck stops" with them. They should ask frequent questions about the quality of the Program to the Scout Executive and to the Commissioner, and follow up on these questions as a part of their oversight responsibilities.

The Council Commissioner is the conduit for these Board issues or concerns to the other volunteers down through his or her Commissioner's Administrative structure.

The Council Commissioner should be intimately familiar with the Scouting Program and should intuitively know "a good program when he/she sees it." In addition, the Commissioner should act as a conduit up to the other members of the Key 3 and to the Board for any complaints, concerns, or issues that the Commissioner or volunteer staff may be expressing.

In order to fulfill the oversight role related to quality and programming, the Council Commissioner should be regularly out within the Council to attend various meetings and Council and District functions, observing, listening, and talking to volunteers.

P. The Council Commissioner's Vision Statement

One of the most important things a Council Commissioner should do comes at the very beginning of his/her term of service. The Council Commissioner has a responsibility to set a vision for the Commissioner staff. This is what the Council Commissioner hopes that the Commissioner service will accomplish under his/her leadership and what he/she hopes will be the legacy of his/her service to the Council. The Council Commissioner should write a Vision Statement.

A vision statement is putting into words what success will look like for a particular effort. This may sound familiar because of work or Wood Badge experience. The following is a list of steps to develop a Council Commissioner's Vision Statement:

1. First, it is important to consider the Council's current situation. A careful assessment of unit strength, membership, unit retention and the current commissioner staff and their functioning will reveal that.
2. The next step involves thoughtful consideration. What areas need the most attention? What needs to be added to or changed about the current Council's Commissioner service? Focus on "what" needs to happen rather than "how". Make some notes. *Think about the big picture.* This is the opportunity to make significant improvements in the quality of commissioner service delivered to the units of the council.
3. Write down a simple statement describing the objectives.
4. Determine the gaps between where the Council's Commissioner service is now and where you want it to go. Make some notes about how to get from here to there. The list may seem overwhelming, but go slow. This is a long process and not a quick-fix.
5. Choose two or three of the most important strategic ideas that will help bring the vision for commissioner service into reality. Make some plans that will help move along the agenda towards those ideas. These become the Annual Goals.
6. Break the Goals down into Action Plans—each should have a responsible individual and a due date. These are the operational plans for the coming year. Make sure that each fits into the vision of success.
7. It is important that during his/her term, the Council Commissioner reviews these Goals every six months, making sure that progress is being made toward achieving them. And as the vision for commissioner service becomes reality—continue to set new, higher goals and visions.

Summary

By setting worthy and specific goals for his/her time as Council Commissioner, the Council Commissioner will have an impact on a large number of Commissioners - who in turn will have an impact on a large number of units and Scouts. Improvement in the program the Scouts receive will be the result of this vision setting, planning, and goal setting.

Q. How Can the Council Commissioner Ensure High Quality Commissioner Service from the Administrative Commissioner Staff?

1. Define their responsibilities

Administrative Commissioners must know what is expected of them in order to be successful. Make sure each one knows, in writing, the responsibilities of their position. There are many official BSA materials in which these responsibilities are articulated.

2. Select and recruit

Fit the right person to the job. Consider each person's skills, interests, and other relevant factors. Consider the variety of motivating factors for people getting involved in Scouting. Use all the prescribed steps and methods in recruiting Administrative Commissioners. Use the recruiting resources provided by BSA.

3. Orient and train

Provide each recruited Administrative Commissioner with a prompt orientation (Fast Start) and Basic Commissioner Training. Orient them to their individual administrative assignment (Assistant Council Commissioner, District Commissioner, etc.). Provide ongoing training over time.

4. Coach your Administrative Commissioner staff

Provide ongoing, individual coaching as needed. Build up their confidence and self-esteem. Being an Administrative Commissioner is a hard, complex job. New Commissioners need to feel confident in order to do a good job. Additional coaching should also be provided by the appropriate level Administrative Commissioner.

5. Recognize their service

Prompt volunteer recognition has an important impact on the tenure and quality of Commissioner service. Recognition must be sincere, timely, and earned. Use the great variety of formal BSA recognition items, but also be creative with frequent "thank you's" or a personal note. Recognizing Commissioners in front of peers, at Council or District meetings or functions, will be well received by them.

6. Evaluate Administrative Commissioner performance

Regularly evaluate how Administrative Commissioners at all levels are doing. Use the BSA Job Descriptions and Evaluation materials available. Make personnel changes promptly when necessary.

R. Assistant Council Commissioners

Successful Council Commissioners know they cannot do the job alone. Council Commissioners surveyed had an average of three to five Assistants. Appointed by the Council Commissioner, Assistant Council Commissioners may play the following roles:

- ◆ A “**stand-in.**” Like the Vice President of an organization, an Assistant Council Commissioner can be appointed by the Council Commissioner to act as a substitute when he or she is temporarily unable to serve (e.g., being out of town, ill, etc).
- ◆ A “**copilot.**” A good Assistant does more than wait for emergency action. An Assistant should share the weight of leadership as determined by the Council Commissioner. There are many ways that the Assistant can help: for example, by handling topics at the Council Commissioner’s cabinet meetings, or helping to guide a new District Commissioner.
- ◆ On “**special assignment.**” The Council Commissioner might ask Assistants to undertake special ongoing assignments. This is the most popular role of the Assistant. Seven are listed in order of popularity.
 1. **Training.** The Assistant Council Commissioner for training coordinates Commissioner training in the Council, sees that basic training is available somewhere in the Council during all parts of the year, trains District commissioner trainers, and sees that the concept of “continuing education for Commissioners” really works.
 2. **Geographic service area.** Councils with eight or more Districts often have Assistants who provide special support as needed for clusters of Districts in various parts of the Council. The Assistants are careful to give District Commissioners their rightful direct responsibility for operation in the Districts. Council Assistants make themselves available for guidance and help where needed.
 3. **Roundtables.** Many Councils have Assistants to help in training District Roundtable personnel by bringing them together twice a year to exchange ideas, share new ways of promoting attendance, creating active program features, and handling good Roundtable logistics.
 4. **Program.** Some Councils have Assistant Council Commissioners for Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Exploring.
 5. **Commissioner Conference.** Some Councils have Assistant Council Commissioners who lead the team that runs the Annual Council Commissioner Conference (college or non-college type of conference).
 6. **Diversity.** Some Councils have an Assistant Council Commissioner who works with Districts to encourage diversity of Commissioners on their staffs, as well as helping to serve the emerging markets of their respective Districts.
 7. **New Unit Service.** Some Councils have created an Assistant Council Commissioner to coordinate the efforts in working with new Units to provide a more focused emphasis on their first three years of operation.

S. Meetings

Not many people really enjoy meetings, but the Council Commissioner, by virtue of his/her central role in the Council, will be involved in many meetings. Examples of some of the many meetings he/she needs to attend are:

- ◆ Council Key 3 Meetings
- ◆ Council Executive Board Meetings
- ◆ Council Board Meetings
- ◆ District Meetings – if invited
- ◆ Council Commissioner’s Administrative Staff Meetings
- ◆ Council Charter reviews
- ◆ Other Council functions (events, fundraisers, awards dinners, etc.)

As well, the Council Commissioner should, with the Scout Executive and Scout President, regularly visit other Council and District committee meetings where their presence can be of assistance, or just to be seen and to listen to input.

Also, because he/she is a member of the Council Key 3, the Council Commissioner is invited to attend the National Annual Meeting of the Boy Scouts of America as a representative of the Council and to be a voting member of the National Council when it is in session at the Annual Meeting. These meetings are held in various major cities around the country every year and have general sessions of interest to the Council Commissioner and specific training sessions for Council Commissioners. Also, the Philmont Training Center offers numerous classes throughout the summer for Commissioners that could benefit Council Commissioners, as well as classes that are specific to Council Commissioner Training.

T. The Commissioner Annual Service Plan for Units

The Council Commissioner is responsible for seeing that the Unit Commissioners bring up these subjects, in these months, during their monthly Unit visits and record this on the Unit Visit Tracking system (UVTS):

January	Review Unit Health
February	Commitment for Quality
March	Spring Roundup
April	Inventory of Unit Leaders
May	Inspect Troop Uniforms
June	Confirm Summer Program
July	Review Unit Health
August	Planning Unit Program
September	Promote Leader Training
October	Inspect Pack/Troop Uniforms
November	Youth Protection Unit
December	Submit Quality Unit Application

See other Commissioner Training materials for indepth discussions and explanations of these subjects. It should be noted that this is just one example of a Commissioner annual plan for Units, and there are numerous other examples available. Council Commissioners can also customize these plans to the specific needs of their Councils.

U. The Council Commissioner's Annual Conference and the College of Commissioner Science

◆ The Council Commissioner's Annual Conference

A Commissioner Conference should be held on an annual basis and it should be the Commissioner's highlight of the year. The conference should be a highly informative, planning, morale enhancing, and team building event. However, there are several types of Commissioner Conferences. Some Councils run a traditional conference or "retreat" and some use a "College of Commissioner Science" program formatted after college courses and degrees:

◆ The College of Commissioner Science

This program uses the terminology of college courses of study. There are Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral programs. A diploma is awarded to each participant who completes the requirements of the "degree". The awards are called:

- Bachelor of Commissioner Science
- Masters of Commissioner Science
- Doctor of Commissioner Science

This format encourages an ongoing continuing education experience for all Commissioners by offering a number of classes of instruction at each level over time. Throughout the day, a Commissioner may attend/or teach a number of classes. The College may be held in a single day or over a weekend. The reasons for offering a number of courses are to provide ongoing practical training for all Commissioners – Administrative, Roundtable and Unit Commissioners on a variety of subjects. The courses typically offer "real world" advice and training from experienced Commissioners.

V. Required and Suggested Council Commissioner Training and Awards

In order to set a good example for all the Commissioners in a Council, the Council Commissioner is required to undergo certain training, and it is suggested that he/she works to achieve additional recognition awards.

Required 1. On line “Fast Start” Video for all Commissioners

Required 2. Basic Commissioner Training

Suggested 3. Arrowhead Honor

There are specific Arrowhead Honor Awards for various categories of Commissioners:

- ◆ Unit Commissioner
- ◆ Roundtable Commissioner
- ◆ District Commissioners and Assistant District Commissioners
- ◆ Council Commissioners and Assistant Council Commissioners
- ◆ Area Commissioners (Proposed)

Only Commissioners may wear the Arrowhead. It is a visible sign of competence in the field of Commissioners. These awards have requirements of service, training, and performance. Completion of this award signifies the ability to put Commissioner training into practice. See specific requirements in other BSA Publications.

Suggested 4. Commissioner Key

A Commissioner must complete the Arrowhead Honor (above) and serve in a Commissioner position three years within a five year period.

Suggested 5. Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award

Purpose: To recognize completion of a standardized program leading to the completion of a thesis or project and the award of the Doctorate of Commissioner Science from a College of Commissioner Science.

The College of Commissioner Science program is designed to have a Commissioner learn, through a series of training classes, followed by work experiences, to ensure a quality program throughout Scouting. This training will take a number of years to complete.

In order to obtain the Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award, the Commissioner must earn or accomplish A, B, C, and D.

A. Bachelor of Commissioner Science Degree (BCS)

B. Master of Commissioner Science Degree (MCS)

C. Doctor of Commissioner Science Degree (DCS), and complete a Thesis or Project

D. Performance (all three below are required):

- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty.
- Recruit at least three new Commissioners at any level. Approval of Council or Assigned Commissioner is required.
- Be approved for the Knot by the Scout Executive or the Advisor to Commissioner Service.

W. A Checklist of Characteristics of a Council Commissioner

Obviously, the role of the Council Commissioner is multi-faceted and complex and there could not be one prescriptive list of individual characteristics that one could or should possess in order to be an effective Council Commissioner. However, there is a list of traits and skills that are common to many successful Commissioners:

- An intimate knowledge of the Boy Scouts of America Program.
- Having been in the Scouting Program as a youth.
- Have volunteered at the District or Council level for a significant number of years.
- Have a thorough understanding of the role of the Unit Commissioner, and/or various administrative Commissioner positions.
- Love Scouting and embrace the Scouting Mission.
- Have a significant amount of time available for this demanding volunteer position.
- Enjoy meeting and dealing with other people.
- Like holding, organizing, and conducting meaningful meetings.
- Enjoy and be good at communicating with others.
- Be able to understand complex problems and devise solutions.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Be able to write and speak well.
- Enjoy presenting in public meetings.
- Be a role model for other Commissioners and volunteers.

These are in no particular order, and there are no particular number of these traits that are necessary to constitute a successful Council Commissioner. However, the more of these characteristics that the Council Commissioner possesses, the more likely his or her chance of being successful in this challenging role.

**The District Commissioner
And
Assistant District
Commissioner**

X. The District

Each Council is subdivided into a number of Districts. The number varies by Council, but usually they are geographic sub areas of the Council.

Each District has its own administrative structure, and is governed by the District Key 3 (See Chart E, p. 43)

LOCAL COUNCIL

STANDARD DISTRICT

District Key Three

District Commissioner

District Chairman

District Executive

District Vice Chairman
(as needed)

Asst. Dist. Commissioners Roundtable
Commissioners Unit Commissioners
(as needed)

Chairman Program

Chairman Finance

Chairman Membership

Chairman Training

Chairman Camp Promotion & Outdoor

Chairman Activities & Civic Service

Chairman Advancement & Recognition

Chairman Learning For Life

CHARTERED/PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS
PACKS ● TROOPS ● CREWS ● POSTS

Y. The District's Purpose

A Scouting District is a geographical area of a BSA local Council, determined by the Council Executive Board. District leaders mobilize resources to ensure the growth and success of Scouting Units within the District's territory.

The purpose of the District is to work through chartered organizations and community groups to organize and support successful Units. The end result of effective District support is more and more youth members receiving a better and better program.

Z. The District's Relationship to the Council

The local Council establishes Districts, each a prescribed part of the geographical territory of the Council, for the purpose of Unit service and program administration. The Council has the authority to realign district territories. It also has the authority to oversee the organization of District Committees and District Commissioner staffs to administer Scouting in Districts and to disband them.

Only the local Council is chartered by the Boy Scouts of America. The District is not chartered. Each District exists only by authority of its local Council.

The local Council is chartered by and held responsible by the Boys Scouts of America for the administration of Scouting in its entire territory for adherence to basic policy, maintenance of standards, public acceptance and goodwill, providing facilities necessary to good Scouting, organization of new Units, service to existing Units, and the quality of the program that each youth member receives.

The District exists as a part of the Council. The Council adopts overall policies and plans a Program designed to meet the needs of every part of the Council territory. The District, which had an important part in that planning, carries out the programs so that it reaches and helps every chartered organization and every Unit. The District Committee is not a legislative body in the same sense as the Executive Board of the Council. It does uphold Boy Scouts of America policy in its own local area, but it can neither make basic changes nor permit violations of established policies. The Council Executive Board is the governing body of the entire Council and is responsible for its operation and assets. It is an independently incorporated 501c3 not for profit organization. The District is not. The District is an operating subunit of the Council.

The District cannot raise money in the name of Scouting nor permit others to do so except in campaigns authorized by the Council. The District cannot hold title to property or accept gifts. The Council is the only agency that can do so. Thus, there is no such thing as a District-owned camp or fund. There may be a campsite and camp property located in District territory and used principally by that District, but the property title is held by the Council. Districts also do not have budgets, treasurers, or treasuries.

The District Chairman, District Commissioner, District Executive, and District Operating Committee Chairmen all provide important ties to the overall Council organization.

AA. The Four Functions of the District

All Districts are responsible for carrying out four important standard operational functions:

1. Membership

The membership function strives for growth through the district of new Scouting Units and growth through new members joining existing Units.

2. Finance

The finance function sees that the district provides its share of funds to the total Council operating budget.

3. Program

The program function concentrates on helping Scouting Units with providing the official Scouting Program, camp promotion; special activities including community service; training adult volunteers; and youth Advancement and recognition.

NOTE: For more information about the Membership, Finance, and Program Functions see the BSA Publication: The District

4. Unit Service – Commissioner Service

The Unit service function provides direct coaching and consultation by District volunteers and Commissioners to adults to help ensure the success of every Scouting Unit.

NOTE: The Membership, Finance, and Program Functions are carried out by members of the District Committee. The Unit Service function is carried out by the District Commissioner staff.

The order in which the functions are listed above is not meant to suggest the order of their importance but the natural interrelationship and flow of the functions. The Scouting movement cannot achieve its purpose without first organizing Units and enrolling members. The District cannot support its Units without the funds to do so. Unit programs are supported by the District through its program functions and Unit service. All four functions are equally important and necessary. If one suffers from lack of attention, all the work of the District suffers.

BB. The Duties of the District Commissioner

1. Recruits, appoints, trains, supervises, and motivates the Assistant District Commissioner and Unit Commissioner staff so that all Units in the District receive regular helpful service or assistance from a Unit Commissioner.
2. Conducts monthly meetings of the District Commissioner staff for the purpose of reviewing the health of each Unit and planning who will help meet specific Unit needs during the month ahead.
3. Directs Commissioners to establish and maintain a system of frequent visits to each Unit, receives reports of problems in the Units through regular meetings of the District Commissioner's staff, and reviews plans to solve such problems.
4. Directs the Unit Commissioners to report and record their Unit visits on the Internet Based Unit Visit Tracking system (UVTS).
5. Oversees the Unit Charter renewal plan and procedures to assure that each Unit reregisters on time and with optimum membership.
6. Attends District and/or Council meetings and reports on the condition and needs of Units. Keeps current on all developments and new ideas, including the use of program planning tools, and sees that Units are informed.
7. Serves as a member of the District Key 3 and meets regularly with the District Chairman and District Scout Executive to coordinate the work of the district and assess its progress.
8. Works closely with Roundtable Commissioners to ensure quality Roundtables that are well attended.
9. Encourages the Commissioner staff to have all Units on the Unit budget plan, thus encouraging all Units to subscribe one hundred percent to *Boys' Life*.
10. Serves as a member of the Council Commissioner's staff and attends meetings representing the District.
11. Works to assist all Units (Cub Packs, Boy Scout Troops, and Venture Crews) to be successful and provide an increasingly better Scouting Program for the youth of the District.
12. Participates in the Council's Commissioner Conferences or College of Commissioner Science under the leadership of the Council Commissioner.
13. Supports local and National Scouting policy, procedures, and practices.
14. Recruits and directs Roundtable Commissioners who are responsible to the District Commissioner for planning and operating successful Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing leader Roundtables each month.

CC. The Roles of the District Commissioner

- ◆ The District Commissioner works directly with the District Chairman and the District professional Scouting staff as part of the District Key 3.
 - Districts may have one or more paid professional Scouting staff.
 - District professional Scouting staff can carry one of the following titles:
 - District Executive
 - Senior District Executive
 - District Director

DD. The Responsibilities of the District Commissioner

- The major expectation of the District Commissioner is Unit service. He/she should take ownership of the District team of Commissioners and ensure that all Units are well cared for throughout the year. Most important is the monthly Unit Commissioner contact with each Unit. The contact could be face-to-face whenever possible so the Commissioner can make an objective assessment about the health of the Unit. If this is not possible, phone contact, e-mail contact, or voice mail contact is acceptable.
- The District Commissioner should help Unit Commissioners pay special attention to new Units. These are the most vulnerable for being “dropped”. The District Commissioner should also work with the District Membership Chairman to help recruit Scouts and Leaders.
- The District Commissioner must be a proven leader capable of enlisting other effective persons to serve. The District Commissioner, or DC, is the Chief Morale Officer of the District: upbeat, personable, determined, and a role model for Scouting ideals. He or she is passionate about the benefits of Scouting and is a champion of the Unit to make Scouting happen in the lives of young people.
- The DC understands and communicates the best skills available in Unit service: how to counsel, coach, and inspire Unit Volunteers; how to enrich the Unit program; and how to help units solve problems before problems sink the Unit.
- ◆ District Commissioner Meetings

The District Commissioner is expected to attend a significant number of meetings of various kinds throughout the year. Some of these are:

- Council level meetings:
 - The Council Annual meetings
 - The Council Silver Beaver Award presentation meeting
 - Council Commissioner meetings
 - Annual Key Scouter training
 - Annual Commissioner conference
 - The Annual Commissioner College
- District level meetings

The District Commissioner conducts the monthly District Commissioner's staff meeting. This should ideally be on a day separate from all other District meetings. It should absolutely not be combined with other District meetings such as the District Committee meetings, Roundtable meetings, Order of the Arrow meetings, camp re-planning meetings, or others. This will detract from the importance of the District Commissioner's function and the Unit Commissioner function within the District.

- The District Committee meeting

The District Commissioner has a role in the District Committee monthly meetings and from time to time might also need to represent others in the District Key 3 that are not present at this meeting. He/she may also need to attend:

- District Roundtable meetings
- District Camporees
- District Courts of Honors and events

- ◆ Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS)

The District Commissioner is responsible for ensuring that all Unit Commissioners regularly use the new Internet based Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS) to report all of their Unit contacts.

- ◆ Training and Recognitions

It is the responsibility of the District Commissioner to personally attend Commissioners' trainings and to ensure that all Assistant District Commissioners and Unit Commissioners on the staff have attended Commissioner Basic Training and Fast Start Training. Assistant District Commissioners should also attend the Assistant District Commissioner Seminar.

- ◆ The District Commissioner should ensure that Assistant District Commissioners and Unit Commissioners within the District attend the Council's College of Commissioner Science and encourage individuals to potentially attend national level training at the Philmont Training Center.
- ◆ The District Commissioner should encourage Commissioners to complete the Arrowhead Honor and the Commissioner Key.
- ◆ Recruiting

This is the primary job of the District Commissioner to recruit Assistant District Commissioners and sufficient Unit Commissioners in order to be able to assure

that there is one Unit Commissioner for every three Units in the District and that there is one Assistant District Commissioner for every five Unit Commissioners, meaning that each Assistant District Commissioner will have 15 Units under his/her supervision. These are the National BSA target ratios, but if a District wants to recruit more Commissioners than this so as to “build a bench”, this would be a good thing to do.

◆ District Committees

The District Commissioner also works with the District Operating Committees. These committees meet to deal with the following Four Functions of the District Operations:

- Program
- Membership
- Finance
- Unit Service

◆ Tools Available

There are many Boy Scouts of America resources available to District Commissioners, including manuals, Fast Start trainings, websites, podcasts, and others.

EE. The District Commissioner Staff

The District Commissioner staff, led by the District Commissioner, includes Assistant District Commissioners, Roundtable Commissioners, and Unit Commissioners.

The District nominating committee, after consultation with the District Scout Executive, recommends a District Commissioner to the Council Executive Board for appointment and approval with the concurrence of the Council Scout Executive and Council Commissioner.

The District Commissioner works closely with the District Chairman and the District Executive. They are known as the Key 3 of the District.

FF. How Large is a District Commissioner Staff?

The size of a District Commissioner staff is determined by the needs of the District. Unit Commissioners usually don't function at their best when serving more than three Units. Therefore, a good rule of thumb is to divide the number of Units by three, then recruit that number of Unit Commissioners. It is a full-time volunteer job to be responsible for the success and well being of three Units and their leaders. For every five Unit Commissioners there should be an Assistant District Commissioner.

Refer to *Commissioner Administration of Unit Service and Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service* for further information.

GG. The Test of an Effective District Commissioner Staff:

- Your District has a full team of trained Commissioners (Assistant District Commissioners, Roundtable Commissioners, and Unit Commissioners).
- All of the District Units are visited monthly by a Commissioner who utilizes the Commissioner Annual Service Plan for Units (See Section T, p. 36) on these visits, and reports them on the Unit Visit Tracking System (UVTS).
- There is an increasing percentage of District Units rechartering on time each year.
- There is an increasing percentage of District Units achieving the Quality Award status each year.
- There is an increasing percentage retention rate of youth at charter renewal times.
- There are fewer Units “dropping” and more new ones being formed and chartered.

HH. How to be Successful as an Assistant District Commissioner

- Assistant District Commissioners, or ADCs, can make or break a District’s ability to see that every Unit receives competent Commissioner Service. Even the best District Commissioner of the Council cannot personally train and guide all Unit Commissioners of the District (in a 60-unit District that is at least 20 Unit Commissioners). So, ADCs are assigned certain Units in the District, and they supervise the Unit Commissioners who serve those Units. ADCs are appointed by the District Commissioners.
- Listen to, and work with the District Commissioner. Communicate through this District Commissioner unless the Council Commissioner has requested direct communication from you.
- Review and confirm that the District Commissioner staff has a complete and clear organizational chart, with Assistant District Commissioners typically managing no more than five individual Unit Commissioners. Each Unit Commissioner should have three or fewer Units.
- Ensure that there is a Roundtable Commissioner for each Roundtable. Roundtable Commissioners need to recruit their own specialized staff to assist them. Roundtable Commissioners need to attend the quarterly Roundtable Commissioner meetings in order to plan and coordinate.
- Help the members of the District Key 3 achieve their goals.

- Ask the District Scouting professionals to share their “Smart Goals”. These are the basis for these professionals’ annual review, promotion, compensation, and therefore, retention in their position. The goals of the District Committee and District Commissioner staff should be designed to ensure that the District Scouting professionals meet or exceed their “Smart Goals” and the District and Assistant District Commissioner should help them work to do this.
- Keep the Unit Commissioners focused on Unit service. There are many other things to distract them from the all essential goal of visiting Units and reporting these through the Unit Visit Tracking System.
- Focus on the District goals. Usually these are driven by the District Membership and Finance committees. Membership and Finance follow the Scouting program, therefore it’s also important to focus on making sure that each Unit has a Quality Program and that the District has a Quality Program.
- Focus on the Council’s outdoor program and getting youth to attend outdoor camps and summer camps.
- Good ADCs have good people skills and they:
 - Help recruit the right people.
 - Provide clear instructions and specific ideas for their staff
 - Listen to what people say and feel
 - Never play favorites
 - Coach Unit Commissioners through real Unit problem solving situations
 - Treat all Scouters with courtesy and dignity
 - Praise each Commissioner often for specific achievements
 - Do not try to take over for their Commissioner staff but always are ready to support or help them to be successful.
- ADCs work closely with the District Commissioner and District Executive. This team must have a vision of effective Scouting, and they must communicate that vision – through Unit Commissioners – to every Unit Leader in the District.
- When a Unit Commissioner resigns, or cannot adequately fulfill the responsibilities of the job, the Assistant District Commissioner temporarily assumes the vacant position. However, immediate action must be taken to recruit a replacement. Administrative Commissioners are not Unit Commissioners. Their job is to find Unit Commissioners.

- Assistant District Commissioners measure Unit Commissioners' progress, not in the number of meetings they attend but in the way they handle their responsibilities to visit Units.
- The ADC's job is accomplished largely on a personalized basis. At monthly District Commissioner staff meetings, they help their Unit Commissioners plan how to help meet priority needs of Units. They hold their Commissioners accountable for the previous months' plans and assignments.

II. The Role of the District Executive (Professional Scouting Staff)

The District Executive is an ex-officio part of the District Commissioner Staff.

This professional scouting leader is approved and appointed by the Council Executive Board, with the concurrence of the Scout Executive. He/she works with the Districts to:

- ◆ Maintain contact with the Unit Charter Organizations in the District
- ◆ Support volunteers – Unit Leaders and Commissioners
- ◆ Provide information from the Council Service Center
- ◆ Support The Four Functions of the District Operations (See Section AA, on p. 45).
 - Districts without a currently assigned professional staff are normally serviced by the Field Director for that service area.
 - In working with the District Executive, the correct orientation is to work with him/her as a peer. It's not uncommon for the District Commissioner to be older in age than the District Executive, but he/she should not relate to the District Executive as a son or daughter, but as an equal. The District Commissioner should help the District Executive succeed. A common role for the District Commissioner is to act as a mentor or coach to the District Executive, working to develop a meaningful working relationship with the District Executive.

The Unit Commissioner

JJ. The Role of Unit Commissioners

Throughout this manual, the Council Commissioner has been described as being the person overseeing the functioning of the volunteers on the Council Commissioner's staff. The specific duties of the Unit Commissioners have been listed in Section I on p. 23. There are many BSA training manuals, courses, "Fact Sheets" and other resources to familiarize Unit Commissioners with their role. The following is a summary or "short course" of their vital function, and relationships to Scouting's Unit Leaders. They are:

What are the Roles of Unit Commissioners to Unit Leaders?

- Friend Role of Unit Commissioner
 - ◆ Most important role
 - ◆ "I care. I am here to help, what can I do for you?"
- Representative Role of Unit Commissioner
 - ◆ You represent BSA, the Council, and the District
 - ◆ Be a good example
- Doctor Role of Unit Commissioner
 - ◆ Be like a country doctor making house calls
 - ◆ Prevention is better than the cure
- Teacher Role of Unit Commissioner
 - ◆ Share knowledge
 - ◆ Teach adults
 - ◆ Teach youth
- Counselor Role of Unit Commissioner
 - ◆ Help Unit solve problems
 - ◆ Best role when Unit does not recognize problem

KK. The Unit Commissioner's Service Function - From the Unit Leader's Perspective

The Scouting movement rests upon two assumptions:

1. That Unit leaders can use the Scouting Program in a manner to make a difference in the lives of young people.
2. That district volunteers will do whatever is necessary to ensure every Unit leader's success.

Here's the way it is for Unit leaders; let's use the Scoutmaster for our example:

One night every single week the Scoutmaster knows there will be 20, 30, or 40 boys waiting at the troop meeting place. There is no rest at all from that. It makes no difference whether the Scoutmaster brings a headache home from work, is tired, or would rather be doing something else.

He knows if he doesn't appear at the Troop meeting, 30 or more boys will lose faith in him.

If he hasn't held enough meetings of the patrol leaders' Council, his boy leaders will not function, and he'll have to run the meeting alone. All of that, and more, is important to the Scoutmaster because he takes it seriously. He knows the troop is composed of boys who need his help and guidance.

The problem is that the Scoutmaster sometimes feels alone in his job. It isn't meant to be that way. The community organization that operates and sponsors his troop is expected to care about what he is doing; but it isn't always easy for them to know how to help. Sometimes members of that organization seem to have so much faith in their Scoutmaster they let him do the job alone. A troop committee exists to help him, but sometimes they wait for him to call their meetings and make them effective.

It's quite likely the parents appreciate all he is doing for their sons, but they may not always show it. The Scouts enjoy their experience, but sometimes they too take him for granted.

Considering all the things a Scoutmaster must do to operate his troop successfully, he probably spends from 30 to 40 hours each month to do them. In addition, he is expected to give a week of his vacation each year to provide a long-term camping experience. He probably wouldn't be doing all of that if he didn't derive some pleasure and satisfaction, but it is a demanding volunteer service to render. It isn't surprising if he becomes discouraged and frustrated once in a while.

It is in those moments when a Scoutmaster feels alone and wonders if it's worth the effort. It's one thing if his troop's chartered organization forgets him, or if the troop committee isn't very helpful, but it's almost devastating if the Boy Scouts of America seems to be neglecting him. But if a Unit leader has an effective Unit Commissioner, he will never feel alone.

LL. The Nature of Commissioner Unit Service

The most important thing a Commissioner does for a Unit leader is to be a friend to the Unit Leader. The Commissioner is the connecting link between the local Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the Unit leader. When the Unit leader is discouraged, it is the Commissioner who encourages. When the Unit committee is not helping enough, it is the Commissioner who meets with it on behalf of the Unit leader. Even when there are no problems, it is the Commissioner who works closely enough with the Unit leader in order to be able to prevent future ones, and to prove the District cares.

There is a simple formula for success: The Commissioner is assigned not more than three Units and is responsible for their success and the well-being of their leaders. This person does at least two things each month for each Unit:

1. The Commissioner visits a Unit meeting or Unit Committee meeting and stays long enough to evaluate how things are going and to talk with the Unit leader. The theme of the conversation is: "How are things going, and how can I help?"
2. The Commissioner phones each Unit leader between Unit meeting visits to see if help is needed.

These two simple acts can lift a Unit leader's spirit. Even if no help is currently needed it is reassuring to know it is available. Regular contacts twice each month create a positive feeling about the District and Council. This is essential if a Unit leader is to feel good about his/her job. Of course, if there is a specific problem, the Unit Commissioner meets with the Unit Leader more often until it is resolved.

Should the Unit Commissioner know everything about each Unit's operation? Well, it would be nice, but is not necessary. It is important, however, to know how to deal with common problems, and absolutely necessary to know where to get help with the special problems. He or she must care enough never to let a question go unanswered or a problem unresolved. That is the final test of a good Unit Commissioner.

National/Regional/Area/And
National Support Staff Commissioners

MM. National/Regional/Area/and National Support Staff Commissioners

At all levels of the organization, there are Commissioners available to support the delivery of a quality program experience through Units to the youth they serve. The job of the National, Regional, and Area Commissioners is to provide direct support to Council Commissioners and increase in their understanding and delivery of service to Units. (See Chart C, p. 14)

NN. National Commissioner

The National Commissioner is an officer of the National Council and a member of the National Executive Board, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council. He/she provides leadership to all Regional Commissioners in the areas of membership, Unit Charter renewal, and training in support of Commissioner Service. The job of the National Commissioner is to serve as the Chief Morale Officer of the Program.

The National Commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the National Key 3. (See Chart D, p. 16)
- Work closely with all Regional Commissioners in providing quality Commissioner Service throughout the country in support of local Councils.
- Supervise the activities of Commissioner Service, give leadership to Regional Commissioners, and preside at any meetings of the Regional Commissioners.
- Support the efforts to recruit Commissioners at all levels of the organization in support of local Councils.
- Encourage communications between Regional, Area, and Council Commissioners to ensure that all Councils provide opportunities for immediate Commissioner orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all Commissioners.
- Support Councils in improving Unit to Commissioner ratios, monthly Unit visits, retention of youth and Units, and progress towards achieving Quality Awards.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all National policies.
- Provide direction and support to Regional Commissioners working with local Councils especially related to the membership validation process and Unit Charter Renewal.
- Encourage the conduct and tracking of Unit visits, counseling support related to how to handle particular National situations, recruit and train a full staff of Regional and Area Commissioners, and support the annual commitment and achievement of the Quality Awards by Regions, Areas, and Councils.

- Work with the National Council President to secure the help of National, Regional, and Area committees in meeting local Council needs.

The National Commissioner reports on the status of Commissioner Service to the National Executive Board regularly:

- Inspirational stories about successes in local Councils.
- Status of each Council in qualifying as a Quality Council, as it relates to Unit visits by Commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more Commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of Units to date, by Council and Area.
- Retention percentage of youth and Units, by Council and Area.
- Current ratio of Units to registered Unit Commissioners by Council.

OO. Regional Commissioner

The Regional Commissioner is an officer of the Region and a member of the Regional Board, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council, he/she provides leadership to all Area Commissioners in the areas of Membership, Unit Charter Renewal and Training in support of Commissioner Service. The Regional Commissioner is appointed annually by the Regional President for a one year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms, with the concurrence of the Regional Director.

The Regional Commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the Regional Key 3. (See Chart D, p. 16)
- Work closely with the National Commissioner, Regional President and Regional Director in providing quality Commissioner Service throughout the Region and the Areas in support of local Councils.
- Supervise the activities of Commissioner Service in the Region, give leadership to Area Commissioners, and preside at any meetings of Area Commissioners. All meetings of the Region Commissioners will be held in conjunction with existing meetings within the Region. The Regional Commissioners are to support Council or joint Council Commissioner Training courses but are not to conduct Region/Area courses.
- Support the efforts to recruit Area Commissioners and to provide continuing and effective Commissioner Service in support of each Council.
- Encourage communications between the Area and Council Commissioners to ensure that Councils provide opportunities for immediate Commissioner

Orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all Commissioners.

- Support Councils in improving Unit to Commissioner ratios, monthly Unit visits, the use of the Unit Visit Tracking system (UVTS), retention of youth and Units, and progress towards achieving Quality Awards.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all National policies.
- Provide direction and support to Area Commissioners working with local Councils especially related to the membership validation process; Unit Charter renewal; conducting and tracking Unit visits; counseling support related to how to handle particular Regional situations; recruiting and training a full staff of Commissioners; and supporting the annual commitment and achievement of the Quality Award by the Regional, the Areas, and the Councils.
- Work with the Regional President to secure the help of Regional and Area Committees in meeting local Council needs.

The Regional Commissioner reports on the status of Commissioner service to the Regional Executive Board regularly;

- Inspirational stories about successes in local Councils.
- Status of each Council in qualifying as a Quality Council, as it relates to Unit Visits by Commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more Commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of Units to date, by Council and Area.
- Retention percentage of youth and Units, by Council and Area.
- Current ratio of Units to registered Unit Commissioners by Council.

PP. Area Commissioner

The Area Commissioner, whose duties are set forth in the bylaws of the National Council, provides support to all Council Commissioners in the areas of Membership, Unit Charter Renewal, and training in support of Commissioner Service. The Area Commissioner is appointed annually for a one year term, not to exceed three consecutive terms, by the Regional President upon recommendation of the Area President and Regional Commissioner. The Area Commissioner reports to the Area President while working closely with the Regional Commissioner.

The Area Commissioner shall:

- Serve as a member of the Area Key 3. (See Chart D, p. 16)

- Work closely with the Regional Commissioner, Area President, and Area Director in providing quality Commissioner Service throughout his or her Area in support of local Councils.
- Supervise the activities of Commissioner Service and preside at any Area meetings where Council Commissioners are in attendance. All meetings of the Area Commissioners will be held in conjunction with existing meetings within the Region/Areas.
- Support Council or Joint-Council Commissioner training courses but are not to conduct separate Area courses.
- Encourage communications between the Area and Council Commissioners to ensure that Councils provide opportunities for immediate Commissioner Orientation, frequent basic training, and monthly learning experiences for all Commissioners.
- Support Councils in improving Unit to Commissioner ratios, monthly Unit visits, retention of youth and Units, and progress toward achieving Quality status.
- Maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America and uphold all national policies.
- Provide direction and support to Council Commissioners, especially related to the membership validation process, Unit Charter Renewal, conducting and tracing Unit visits, counseling support related to how to handle particular situations, recruiting and training a full staff of Commissioners, and supporting the annual commitment and achievement of the Quality Council Award.
- Work with the Area President to secure the help of Area Committees in meeting local Council needs.

The Area Commissioner reports on the status of Commissioner Service to the Area regularly:

- Inspirational stories about successes in local Councils.
- Status of each Council in qualifying as a Quality Council, as it relates to Unit Visits by Commissioners, and the recruiting and training of more Commissioners.
- Rechartering percentage of Units to date, by Council and Area.
- Retention percentage of youth and Units, by Council and Area.
- Current ratio of Units to registered Unit Commissioners by Council.

QQ. National Commissioner Support Staff

The National Commissioner has a Support Staff to help with specific duties. These National positions are:

- National Commissioner Service Support Chairperson.
- National Commissioner Service Training Chairperson
- National Commissioner Service Resources Chairperson
- National Commissioner Service Recruitment and Retention Chairperson

Background Information

RR. A Detailed History of Commissioner Service in Scouting

The word “commission” dates back to 1344 where it was derived from the Latin word *commissionem* meaning “delegation of business”. The nation’s monarch delegated authority to a deserving few.

Individuals identified by the monarch had to qualify as a “gentleman”. As legally defined, a gentleman earned his income from property and as such was independently wealthy with time to devote to other agendas. And it was exactly this kind of man that Lord Baden-Powell wanted as his volunteer Commissioners: men of both money and leisure.

Baden-Powell’s first Chief Scout Commissioner was Lieutenant-General Sir Edmond Roche Elles. Baden-Powell’s Commissioners included W.F. deBois, MacLaren, who donated Gilwell Park, and Rudyard Kipling, author of *The Jungle Book*.

As communities formed more troops, it became evident that some form of leadership was needed to maintain standards, provide camping opportunities, recruit leaders, give training, establish local Courts of Honor, and stimulate local Scouting. This person was the “Commissioner”.

The Scout Commissioner represented the local community committee or Council. A great deal of importance was placed upon the selection of this man. He was expected to have a great deal of outdoor experience and act as the local authority in all Scoutcraft matters.

While originally a volunteer, in some areas the community was able to raise enough funds for the Scout Commissioner to become a salaried position.

The areas with paid leadership positions, such as a Scout Executive or Executive Secretary, became known as First Class Councils while those with a volunteer head, still called the Scout Commissioner, were known as Second Class Councils.

By 1931, there was only one Second Class Council left.

“The wreath of service” that surrounds all Commissioner and professional position badges is a symbol of the service rendered to Units. It also symbolizes the continued partnership between volunteers and professionals.

Chief Scout Executive, James West, at the first National Conference of Scout Executives in 1920, suggested that the Scout Executive should be the General in the background with the Scout Commissioner as the ranking uniformed officer giving leadership to the Scoutmasters and acting as the ranking officer in public appearances.

West recognized that Scout Executives would move around and that the Council would benefit from finding and developing a good Scout Commissioner.

Volunteer National Field Commissioners were available as early as 1910 to help communities organize their local Council and troops. There were 68 Volunteer National Field Commissioners in 1913. Many of the Volunteer National Field Commissioners worked for other agencies and traveled extensively, helping with Scouting wherever they went. Besides organizing new Councils, they had to spend time correcting false starts and restraining those that wanted to implement their own brand of Scouting.

District Commissioners were introduced in 1931 as an outgrowth of the Deputy Scout Commissioner position.

In the 1930's local Field Commissioners were specialized representatives of the Council and served a functional responsibility such as Cubbing, senior Scouting, Catholic Scouting, Camping, Emergency Service Corp, or Sea Scouts. He was "on call" to the District or Neighborhood Commissioners as a technical expert on his program... Later Exploring Posts had Commissioners known as the Service Team.

The growth of Scouting overloaded the District Commissioner and his deputy. This made it necessary to add Commissioners to serve specific packs, ships, Rover crews, or troops.

Scouting in the 30's was very community focused so the Neighborhood Commissioner position was conceived to serve up to four Units in his immediate local area.

1950s-1960's The Scout Commissioner became the Council Commissioner. In many Councils this evolved into a ceremonial position with few or no duties.

District Commissioner training did not even mention the position. The District Commissioner position had reporting responsibilities to the Scout Executive.

1970-1972 Unit Focus – The Neighborhood Commissioner evolved into the Unit Commissioner and the mission of the Commissioner became clear: **Help Units Succeed.**

1970's Commissioners of the Round Table – District Commissioners were expected to hold a monthly meeting of the "District Scouters Round Table". Eventually, this became too much for the District Commissioner to handle and the Roundtable Commissioner became an official position.

1973-1976 Women Commissioners – In 1973, women were allowed to become Cub Scout Unit Commissioners or Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioners. In 1976, women were allowed to hold any Commissioner position.

Commissioner College – The first College of Commissioner Sciences was held in Atlanta in 1976. Courses included:

- Physical Education
- Staging Roll Call and Inspections
- Exciting Charter Presentation Ceremonies

2008 Commissioner Service is Reborn – Beginning in 1999, there has been renewed emphasis on the role of the Commissioner. Council Commissioners are now accountable for the Unit Service Program. The appointment of Area and Regional Commissioners and a National Commissioner Service Support Group shows that at all levels of the organization, the importance of Commissioner Service is being recognized and emphasized.

During all these many years, the Commissioner Service has been the one unifying factor that has made Scouting permanent. The Commissioner has remained the line of service from Council to Unit, and chartered organization.

National Commissioners:

2008-Now	Tico Perez
2004-2008	Donald D. Belcher
1999-2004	William F. “Rick” Cronk
1990-1995	Earl G. Graves
1943-1960	George J. Fisher
1910-1941	Daniel Carter Beard
1910-1911	Peter S. Bomus
1910-1911	William Verbeck

From a History of Commissioner Service in Scouting
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SS. Voluntarism and Commissioners

Time is precious, yet many adult citizens of the United States give some time to volunteer service. No other country in the world depends so heavily upon volunteer effort; and in no other country have citizens accepted so universally the idea that volunteer service is a requirement of good citizenship. Since most Americans accept this principle, and since there is no shortage of good causes to serve, each citizen can make a choice if they would like to volunteer, and where.

Scouting thrives because of its volunteers and could not exist without them. The question is, why should you choose Scouting for your volunteer service? Perhaps these questions will help you decide:

Do you wish to make a difference with your life? Most of us do. Scouting's volunteers believe they are making a significant difference in the lives of youth.

Do you care about children and young people? If you do care, Scouting is for you and you are for Scouting.

Do you care about the future? It isn't always easy to care about the future. Most of us keep busy enough with today's problems. But if you care about the future of your country and its children, then you may find volunteer service in Scouting very satisfying. One of the best ways to have a hand in shaping the future is to help young people who will ultimately own it and run it.

Do you care about the principals of the Boy Scouts of America? If you believe they are worth strengthening and spreading, then Scouting is a cause worth your gift of time.

Would you like your volunteer service to be different from your everyday work? Well, Scouting is different, and you might find that refreshing. The skills you use in your work may be helpful to your volunteer service, but it won't just be more of the same.

Do you enjoy relationships with spirited people? If so, come on in! Scouting volunteers all serve a common cause, and it shows in our relationships with each other. We know why we are here, and we are enthusiastic about what we are doing.

One of the great ways to serve youth through Scouting is to work as a Commissioner – at any level.

TT. Movements versus Organizations

It requires many pages of small print just to list the names of all the not for profit organizations in the United States. There are thousands of them. But the Boy Scouts of America is a movement, not an organization. There is an important difference.

The American Heritage Dictionary says an organization is “something that has been organized or made into an ordered whole; comprising elements with varied functions.” Well, there’s nothing wrong with that. Scouting is like that too. But if thousands of volunteers are going to give their time to serve youth through Scouting, there ought to be something more than that.

The same dictionary says a movement is the “activities of a group of people to achieve a specific goal.” It puts the emphasis where Scouting puts it: upon people, action, and a specific goal.

So for Scouting, organization is something to use rather than something to be. We know sound organization is needed if the Scouting movement is to succeed. But the boxes and lines on our organization charts are not the Scouting movement. They are only the way in which we sort out our varied functions.

When you serve as Commissioner you are part of a worldwide movement, composed of people who are dedicated to a common goal, who use organization as a means, not an end.

UU. Resources

Perhaps no other organization in America has as many helps available for its leaders as Scouting. These resources take many shapes, ranging from single sheets to the *Boy Scout Handbook*. *Scouting's Library of Literature*, available online, lists most of them.

For commissioners, the following special items are available:

<i>A Handbook for District Operations</i> , No. 34739	Provides insight into every aspect of the four functions of a district and council, including job descriptions for all commissioners.
<i>Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service</i> , No. 33621	Invaluable to every commissioner.
<i>Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews</i> , No. 33618	Suggests specific unit commissioner actions to help units meet specific standards and program objectives.
"Commissioner Basic Training Manual" (section two of this manual)	Complete syllabus for those planning and instructing this course.
"Continuing Education for Commissioners" (section three of this manual)	Detailed planning guide for council commissioner conferences, including the College of Commissioner Science. This section contains course outlines for commissioner meetings and conferences.
<i>Scouting's Library of Literature</i> , No. 70-080 (available for download online)	The best source of information for most literature and publications of BSA.
<i>Unit Commissioner Worksheets</i> : packs, No. 34125A; troops, No. 34126A; crews, No. 33660A; (available for download on the commissioner Web site)	For use after visiting a unit.
<i>Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i> , No. 34239	Contains roundtable outlines for each month of the program year.
<i>Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner and Staff Basic Training Manual</i> (available to download online on the commissioner Web site)	A one-day course best conducted on a council basis but also used by districts.
<i>Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide</i> , No. 34253	A workbook based on possible program features and special feature topics.
<i>Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training</i> , No. 34256 (available to download from the commissioner Web site)	A four-hour course best conducted on a council basis.
<i>Venturing Program Forum Guide</i> , No. 34342	Contains program forum activities, games, program features, and "how to" topics.
<i>Selecting District People</i> , No. 34512	A must for the important job of recruiting a full staff.
<i>Commissioner Volunteer Duties Cards</i> , No. 34265	Wallet-size description cards for all commissioner jobs.
<i>Unit Commissioner Program Notebook</i> , No. 26-006	A handy pocket calendar and commissioner resource guide provided annually by <i>Boys' Life</i> magazine.
<i>The Commissioner newsletter</i> , No. 14-975	Distributed periodically during the year to council commissioners and Scout executives. Also available on the commissioner Web site to download by any commissioner.

The commissioner Web site at www.scouting.org/ commissioners includes a number of resources including past issues of *The Commissioner* newsletter, current podcasts, roundtable resources, and PowerPoint presentations of previous subjects of interest to all commissioners. Also note the select line of saleable items to increase commissioner identity. They may be ordered at your council Scout Shop or by calling 800-323-0732.

Helpful DVDs available include:

- *Commissioner Annual Orientation* DVD, AV-04DVD03
- *Commissioner Service and District Operation Support* DVD, No. AV-06DVD08, with audiovisuals in support of commissioner service
- *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: How Districts Operate* DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- *The Unit Commissioner's Orientation: Helping Units Succeed* DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- *Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners* DVD, No. AV-06DVD08
- *Meetings of the District*, DVD, No. AV-06DVD07