

National Sea Scouts BSA Standardized Operating Procedures



This document contains the prescribed organizational schemes for the administration of the Sea Scout leadership structure for the National, Region, and Area tiers. It also provides recommended models for local Councils to adopt. This document provides a minimal set of practices; leadership at all tiers may expand upon this standard operating procedure by creating more specific guidelines.

Leadership for Sea Scouts BSA at the national tier of the Boy Scouts of America consists of a National Boatswain, National Commodore, National Director, and National Sea Scout Support Committee. The National Sea Scout Support Committee is governed by a charter that is renewed each year. Leadership for Sea Scouts BSA at the region and area tiers consists of a Sea Scout Committee composed of required and optional youth and adult positions described within this document.

At each organizational tier of the BSA, the Sea Scout Committee should report to the Vice President for Program, or similar position as defined in the local organizational structure; and should cooperate with but not report to the Venturing Committee. Likewise, there should be collaborative links between the Quarterdeck and the Venturing Officer's Association, Youth Leadership Council, or other similar body, as defined by the organizational structure.

This document contains:

- Methods to select Sea Scout youth officers and appoint adult volunteers
- A timetable for the selection and appointment of youth officers and adult volunteers
- Minimum Organization
- Position descriptions
- Duties of Area, Region, and National Establishments

Youth Officer Selections

Applications for youth officer positions are available at www.seascout.org, and all applicants require the prior approval of their ship Skipper and local Scout Executive.

The term of office for all national, region, and area youth officers will be from June 1 to May 31 each year. Normally, a youth officer should not be appointed to a sequential term in the same office; however, exceptions may be made at local discretion. Incoming youth officers may be ceremonially recognized or sworn-in in advance of the beginning of the term of office.

For National, Regional, and Area Boatswain, a common application will be used. The timings for applications and selections are as follows:

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| National Boatswain Application Deadline: | February 15th |
| National Boatswain Selection Deadline: | March 1st |
| Regional Boatswain Application Deadline: | March 1st |
| Regional Boatswain Selection Deadline: | March 15th |
| Area Boatswain Application Deadline: | March 15th |
| Area Boatswain Selection Deadline: | April 1st |

If a youth applicant is not selected for an office, they should be offered the opportunity to be considered for the next tier down. If the candidate accepts the opportunity, the application should be transferred to the selection panel for that office for consideration.

All applicants for every youth office must be under age 21 throughout the duration of the term for any office held.

If no applicant for an office exists at the time of selection, the Commodore and Director for that office may extend the current youth officer's term unless they do not meet the age requirements.

All youth officer positions shall have an adult volunteer to serve as an advisor and provide support to the youth throughout their term. In working with youth leaders, two deep leadership will be important to comply with BSA Youth Protection policies.

A Sea Scout may hold only one council, area, region, or national position during their term.

Boatswains should be selected by a panel of representatives from the respective tier, it should include the respective Commodore and should be chaired by the current Boatswain. The panel should be mainly comprised of youth. The respective Director should approve all applications prior to interview.

Subsidiary youth positions at each tier will be appointed by the Sea Scout Boatswain at that tier with the approval of that Boatswain's respective Commodore and Director.

Adult Volunteer Appointments

The Commodore is appointed by the top official at each tier (e.g., Region President, Area President, Council President, District Chair) with the approval of the candidate's Council Scout Executive. Area, Regional and National Commodore positions may involve a nominating committee per Region and National policies.

The Sea Scout Director is appointed by the Scout Executive at each tier (e.g., Region Director, Area Director, or Council Scout Executive).

Vice Commodores and other subsidiary positions are appointed by the Sea Scout Commodore at that tier, approved by the Sea Scout Director at that tier, and approved by the candidate's local Council Scout Executive.

Appointments of adult volunteers should be for a term of three years; or less as circumstances may require. Adult volunteer incumbents may be appointed to subsequent terms of one to three years.

Removal From Office

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to remove a youth officer or adult volunteer leader from a position.

Any youth or adult may resign from office.

If the incumbent has not been performing their duties or has exhibited behavior inconsistent with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the incumbent may be removed from office by agreement of the Commodore and Director.

Youth officer vacancies may be filled through appointment by the Commodore and Director for the remainder of the term of office.

Council Scout Executives should be notified if any member of their council is removed from office.

Minimum Required Organization

Regional:

- ❖ Regional Sea Scout Committee
- ❖ Regional Sea Scout Commodore
- ❖ Regional Sea Scout Director
- ❖ Regional Sea Scout Boatswain

Area:

- ❖ Area Sea Scout Committee
- ❖ Area Sea Scout Commodore
- ❖ Area Sea Scout Director
- ❖ Area Sea Scout Boatswain

Council (Suggested Structure):

- ❖ Council Sea Scout Committee
- ❖ Council Sea Scout Commodore
- ❖ Council Sea Scout Director
- ❖ Council Sea Scout Boatswain

Duties of Council, Area, Region, and National Committees

National Sea Scout Support Committee

The duties of the National Sea Scout Support Committee are bound by the National Sea Scout Support Committee Charter that is reviewed and approved each year. The charter may be found at seascout.org/about/organization.

Regional, Area, and Council Sea Scout Committees

Duties of the Regional, Area, and Council Sea Scout Committees:

- Maintain a positive image of the Sea Scout program.
- Strive to fulfill the mission of Sea Scouts, BSA.
- Encourage councils to expand Sea Scouts by chartering new Sea Scout Ships; and recruiting new leaders and youth members to existing Ships.
- Encourage councils to engage in activities that assist in retaining Sea Scout youth and adult members.
- Promote growth of council Sea Scout ships, including marketing materials, training materials, and recruiting of new members and volunteers.
- Promote Sea Scout participation in Scouting events including camporees or other outings, Order of the Arrow activities, meetings, and training.
- Provide youth officers and volunteers the training and resources necessary to grow and strengthen Sea Scouts.
- Directly or indirectly provide support for each Council in growing Sea Scouts.
- Facilitate communication and cooperative efforts within the Sea Scout community at the national, regional, area, council, and ship levels.
- Establish, develop, and maintain cooperative relationships with local boating organizations, the U.S Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U. S. Power Squadron.
- Where geographically feasible, host or promote program, training, and recognition events.
- Conduct regular Sea Scout Committee meetings or conference calls.

In addition to the above, Committees at different organizational tiers will have specific duties as outlined below.

Area Sea Scout Committees

In addition to the duties described above for Sea Scout Committees at all levels, Area Sea Scout Committees should:

- Encourage and assist with the organizing of Council Sea Scout Committees, encourage appointment of Council Commodores, and consistent improvement of their Sea Scout program.
- As a recommendation, host two events per year, one being program based (e.g., regatta, rendezvous, etc.), the other training oriented (e.g., Seabadge, Safety at Sea, Sea Scout Academy, Leadership Conferences, etc.).

Council Sea Scout Committees

In addition to the duties described above for Sea Scout Committees at all levels, Council Sea Scout Committees should:

- As a recommendation, host three events per year, one being program based (e.g., regatta, rendezvous, etc.), one being training oriented (e.g., Safety at Sea, Sea Scout Academy, Leadership Conferences, etc.), and one being recognition based (e.g., Bridge of Honor).
- Encourage collaboration between ships by hosting periodic Sea Scout Roundtables.
- Encourage ships to apply for the National Flagship Award.

Council, Area, and Regional Quarterdeck

The Quarterdeck is led by the Boatswain and is comprised of appointed youth officers such as Boatswain's Mates, Yeomen, etc. and the Boatswains from the tier below (for example, the Regional Quarterdeck includes the Area Boatswains).

Duties of the Quarterdeck:

- Maintain a positive image of the Sea Scout program, especially by setting a personal example.
- Strive to fulfill the mission of Sea Scouts, BSA
- Connect youth leadership in their tier and the tier below.
- Encourage positive social media participation by youth at all levels.
- Provide youth officers and volunteers the training and resources necessary to grow and strengthen Sea Scouts.
- Provide leadership for program, training and recognition events.

Position Profiles

Regional, Area, and Council Boatswain

The Boatswain:

- Works with Commodore and Director of their own tier and the Boatswains of the tiers above and below them.
- Appoints and supervises subsidiary youth officers as prescribed in these operating procedures.
- Leads and trains a Quarterdeck comprised of their appointed subsidiary youth officers and Boatswains from the tier below (Ship Boatswains in the case of a Council Boatswain).
- Conducts regular Quarterdeck meetings in person or by conference call.
- Leads the youth officer selection process and interviews.
- Represents youth leadership by serving as a member of the Sea Scout Committee of their tier.
- Represents Sea Scouts to Scouting leadership at the same tier.
- Motivates and coordinates the any subsidiary youth officers in assigned tasks and conducts meetings with them as needed.
- Helps train and mentor boatswains in lower tiers.
- Creates goals and provides regular progress reports to the appropriate committee.

Regional, Area, and Council Commodore

The Commodore:

- Chairs the Sea Scout Committee.
- Encourages councils to organize new Sea Scout ships and improve the quality of existing ships leading to longer retention of members and leaders.
- Establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with local/area/regional boating and maritime organizations such as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U. S. Power Squadron.
- Reports to the BSA volunteer structure (typically to the Vice President for Program or a similar role) and should work closely to carry out the Sea Scout program in the context of the greater BSA.
- Reports to the Executive Board on Sea Scout activities.
- Serves as the Sea Scout representative, as requested, on other BSA committees in support of the Sea Scout program (Outdoor Programs, Membership, Program Content, Commissioners, etc).
- Follows the direction provided for the Sea Scout program through the National Sea Scout Support Committee.
- Develops and support, upon request, Sea Scout functions at Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Venturing, and Sea Scout activities and conferences.
- Serves as a member of the Sea Scout Committee of the tier above.
- Attend Sea Scout Bridges-of-Honor to recognize Sea Scouts for earning the rank of Quartermaster as schedule permits, including sending letters of recognition.
- Promotes Sea Scout attendance at local/area/regional/national Sea Scout events.
- Is visible to Sea Scouts and volunteers in the program and in BSA.
- Wears The Official Sea Scout Uniform (not legacy Sea Scout uniforms) at all Sea Scout activities to set an appropriate example.

Regional Commodore

In addition to the duties expected of all Commodores, the Regional Commodore:

- Serves as a member of the National Sea Scout Support Committee including attending National Committee meeting(s).
- Serves as a liaison between the Regional, Area, and National Sea Scout Support Committees.

Area Commodore

In addition to the duties expected of all Commodores, the Area Commodore:

- Serves as a contact point and a resource to help enable councils with no Sea Scouts develop a Sea Scout program.
- Encourages councils to appoint a Council Commodore.
- Mentors and develops leadership and management abilities of Council Commodores.
- Encourages councils to host training and program events that are open to all councils in the area.
- Promote national Sea Scout programs with Area Quarterdeck and Council Commodores.

Council Commodore

The Council Commodore is an adult volunteer Sea Scouter who is a member of a local council, typically a member of the Council Executive Board, and who is responsible for working with Sea Scout volunteers and Scouting professionals for a successful Sea Scout program. The Council Commodore chairs the Council Sea Scout Committee, and along with the Council Sea Scout

Director and Council Boatswain, supports all existing and prospective Sea Scout Ships in the Council. Furthermore, the Commodore must communicate to Sea Scout leaders on council issues. A Council Sea Scout Commodore is responsible for working with Sea Scout volunteers and Scouting professionals for a successful Sea Scout program. The Council Commodore normally reports to the Council Vice President for Program. As of 2016, Sea Scouts is no longer a subordinate program to Venturing; both are peers within BSA and the organization at the Council level should reflect this. The Council Commodore should maintain a close and cooperative relationship with the Council Venturing Advisor and the Order of the Arrow Lodge Advisor as there are significant collaboration opportunities between Venturing and Sea Scouts and between the Order of the Arrow and Sea Scouts.

A council with few or no ships should appoint a Council Commodore whose primary role is to start or grow the Sea Scout program in that council. That Commodore should form at least a minimal Sea Scout Committee as soon as is practical, but it may not be feasible or desirable to provide all the functions listed for Council Commodores or Committees in councils with only one or two ships.

In addition to the duties expected of all Commodores, the Council Commodore:

- Works with the Council Scout Executive, Council Staff, Sea Scout Director, and Commissioners assigned to Sea Scouts for recruiting, council sponsored Sea Scout events and program growth and delivery.
- Visits individual Sea Scout ships to maintain effective communication and awareness of their program needs. Along with the Ship's Unit Commissioner, ensure that Sea Scout Ships are compliant with requirements to recharter.
- Serves (or appoints a representative) as a member on appropriate Council Committees, such as the Council Camping Committee, Council Risk Management Committee, Council Aquatics Committee, Council Marketing Committee.
- Ensures compliance with all BSA policies for locally sponsored Sea Scout events.
- Communicates training opportunities and responsibilities for volunteer education, including Youth Protection, weather hazard, Sea Scout basic and advanced leader training, Safety Afloat, Safe Swim, CPR/First Aid and other relevant program trainings for volunteers.
- Communicates any changes of BSA procedures to Sea Scout volunteers.
- Assists to organize and support Quartermaster boards of review at the request of a ship committee in collaboration with the Council and District Advancement Chair. Guide to Advancement policies must be followed.
- Organizes the annual council Bridge of Honor. Attends and recognize Sea Scouts for their rank advancement. New Quartermasters should be recognized with letters of recognition.
- Promotes relationships with community organizations in support of the program.
- Promote national Sea Scout programs with Quarterdeck and Sea Scout Ship Skippers.

Sea Scout Director

The Sea Scout director at the National, Regional, Area, and Council levels is a BSA professional appointed by the top executive at that level. The Director works closely with the Commodore and Boatswain at that level to create a better Sea Scout program for our youth. Duties include:

- Mentor and guide Commodores in the performance of their duties.

- Help secure cooperation of and ensure appropriate collaboration with other BSA organizations/departments.
- Communicate any changes of BSA policy and procedures to Commodores and Committees.
- Conduct or facilitate approval and oversight of budgets (including for events) where appropriate.
- Conduct or facilitate approval of volunteers appointed to Sea Scout committees, including Commodore.

Subsidiary Roles

Other organizations and youth officers and adult leadership positions may be established, such as:

- Subcommittees, such as Membership, Program, Communications and Technology, Operations and Administration, etc.
- Vice Commodore for a functional role, such as Membership, Program, Communications and Technology, Operations and Administration, etc.
- Boatswain's Mate for a functional role, such as Program, Administration, Communications, etc.

In designating these roles, use standard Sea Scout terminology, such as Commodore, Vice Commodore, Boatswain, Boatswain's Mate, Yeoman, Media Specialist, etc. Non-standard terminology such as executive officer, junior officer, etc. are not allowed.

Revisions

This document last updated 18 January 2019. Send comments and suggestions for future revisions to operations@seascout.org.