



PROCEDURE

Challenge Rope Activities SOP



Issued with the authority of the Chief Commissioner
and Chief Executive Officer of Scouts Australia NSW

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| Chief Commissioner signature |  | Chief Executive Officer signature |  |
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Challenge Rope Activities SOP

1 Philosophy

Challenge ropes activities are covered by Scouts NSW Adventurous Activities procedures. The requirements that are common to planning and conducting *any* type of adventurous activity are covered in [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#). The additional requirements that are specific to Challenge ropes activities and are described in the following procedure.

Therefore, when planning and conducting any Challenge ropes activity, it is necessary to refer to [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#) as well as this specific SOP. Should contradicting requirements be found in these documents, the more stringent standard shall apply.

2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Refer to [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#) for roles and responsibilities.

3 Conduct of Activities

In addition to the requirements of [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#), the following **additional** requirements apply to this activity;

3.1 Challenge Ropes activities include Crate Stacking, High and Low Ropes, Flying Fox, Rope Bridges (and similar 'off ground' pioneering projects).

3.2 Where the activity is of permanent construction (eg purpose built challenge rope course at Cataract Scout Park and Baden Powell Scout Centre), the SOP for that site must be followed.

3.3 Where the activity is greater than 1.5 metres above the ground, a belay system, or other fall protection system must be used. Where a belay is used, the person supervising the belay must be appropriately qualified (Level 2 Abseiling or equivalent competency).

3.4 Refer to Scouts Australia Policy and Rules (P&R R12.7) regarding Pioneering, noting:

Pioneering is a day-to-day program activity involving special risks, which require special precautions. Leaders are required to inform themselves of the risks and precautions required to be taken prior to the conduct of the activity. Branch rules may prescribe restrictions and additional requirements especially where public participation is involved.

a) Ropes under tension, e.g. rope bridges of less than one metre height and seven metres span, and flying foxes up to 20 metres where the participant is less than 1.5m off the ground, may be constructed within the Section Program by skilled leaders without formal qualifications.

b) During the construction of pioneering activities where Scouts may be more than two metres from the ground suitable safety equipment/protection must be worn.

c) Suitable four point attachment helmets which comply with current Australian standards, e.g. hard-shelled bicycle, caving, rock climbing (not construction) helmets, must be worn for pioneering activities where head injuries are a potential.

d) Industrial helmets may only be worn in situations where participants remain on the ground.

- 3.5 The tensioning of ropes for Challenge Rope Activities should be done by manual means, this includes use of blocks and tackle. The use of tirlfors, power operated winches, vehicles and the like is not permitted as they place rope under extreme tension, increasing risk of serious injury.
- 3.6 Commercially manufactured activities are exempt from 2.7 as the construction of the activity requires mechanical tensioning during construction or authorised servicing.

4 Equipment

In addition to the requirements of [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#), the following **additional** requirements apply to this activity;

- 4.1 All equipment used for Challenge Rope activities must be inspected prior to the activity by the Activity Leader to ensure it meets requirements. Inspections must also be done by the Activity Leader at pre-determined intervals throughout the activity, to checks for aspects such as unexpected movement or wear.
- 4.2 A record of such inspections should be kept with the equipment and available on demand.
- 4.3 Rescue equipment, such as pulleys, ascenders and belay devices, suitable for the activity, shall be located where it is deployable within a reasonable time frame for rescue.
- 4.4 All permanent or potentially long term constructions should be checked in accordance with any manufacturing or engineering requirements. Refer to [Scouts NSW WHS Procedure 61 Design of Activity Structures \(permanent construction\)](#).

5 Ratios and Party sizes

In addition to the requirements of [POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy](#), the following **additional** requirements apply to this activity;

- 5.1 Where a belay system is required, ratios must be based on a risk assessment carried out by an appropriately qualified person.

6 Qualifications

In addition to the requirements of *POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy*, the following **additional** requirements apply to this activity;

| Activity | Qualification required |
|-------------------|--|
| Flying Fox | A person qualified, and current, as required by the Flying Fox Policy and Training |
| Crate Stacking | A person qualified to Abseil level 2 must set up and oversee the belay system. There are no specific qualifications for this activity. |
| High Ropes | A person qualified to a minimum Challenge Rope Guide must set up and oversee the rope course. |
| Low Ropes | There are no specific qualifications for this activity |
| Rope Bridges | There are no specific qualifications for this activity |
| Pioneering Towers | There are no specific qualifications for this activity |

7 Incidents

- 7.1 Refer to *POL 36 Adventurous Activities Policy* for Responsibilities and expectations for reporting incidents, including for if a serious incident occurs.