



# PROCEDURE

## Use of volunteer skills



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

Chief Commissioner signature		Chief Executive Officer signature	
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# Use of volunteer skills

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# 1 Purpose

The success of Scout Groups and events relies on the volunteer labour of our experienced volunteers. These guidelines have been prepared to clarify the circumstances of acceptable use of volunteer in terms of providing a healthy and safe working environment.

Under the WHS Act, any activities that are normally called 'work' (whether it is paid or on a voluntary basis) must be conducted in a way that complies with WHS legislation. This procedure applies to anyone in Scouting who is responsible for performing work at Scouts NSW including on or around Scout Halls and Scout camps and Scout Groups.

## 2 Work that may be performed by non-qualified volunteers

Often without this assistance much needed work would go undone due to ever increasing costs. It is recognised that this assistance is often vital to the success of a Group or event; this usually directly relates to financial savings to Scouting.

In general, non-qualified volunteers (e.g. non-trade qualified for the job at hand) can undertake general housekeeping and light handyman work within the guidelines below. Only qualified volunteers or paid contractors may undertake the additional work, and the work must be performed under the requirements of the appropriate legislation of code of practice.

Any equipment used must be in safe working condition and guarding must be in place. Refer to [Scouts NSW PRO 30 Managing the risk of plant](#) for further information regarding the use of equipment.

### **Prior to any work being undertaken**

Check the competency of the workers. Perform the risk assessment, either verbally or in writing, in consultation with others and again on-site, immediately prior to commencing the work.

For any work classified as 'high risk construction work' as per the [Code of Practice – Construction Work](#), a written risk assessment, equivalent to a Safe Work Method Statement is to be prepared and only qualified persons are permitted to conduct this work in line with the relevant legislation. There may be insurance implications associated with high risk construction work, even when using qualified volunteers. So contact your Region Office or State Office for advice prior to undertaking this work.

### Plumbing work

Cleaning and basics up to changing a washer on a domestic tap is allowed.

- No hard or flexible pipe connection work of any kind
- No sewer or drainage work where the pipe work connects to a public system
- No work on boilers or pressurised systems such as hot water units

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## Electrical Work

Changing light bulbs and resetting RCD's (providing qualified persons are notified of the trip and approve the reset).

- No alteration or repair of portable system or fixed electrical items able to connect to main power high or low voltage.
- No hardwiring of fixed items, lights, fans, or similar installed items.
- No connections to sub boards or power poles.
- No work on or near supply authority mains or meter boards.
- No work defined as high risk construction work under the WHS Act.

## Building and structural work

Cleaning, painting, general housekeeping and light handyman work activity within the scope of abilities.

- No alteration or carpentry work on structural members of a building.
- No work which involves a risk of falling >2m. eg on roofing, ceiling, roof spaces, attics or gutters and fascias.
- No work on external wall cladding or sidings where removal of panels or sections are required.
- No work on flooring where under floor work is required that could be declared a confined space under the WHS Act.
- No work on any area deemed to contain fibrous elements or known asbestos.
- No work defined as high risk construction work under the WHS Act.

## Landscape and external work

Apart from normal ground clearing, litter removal and basic gardening to the ability of the person

- No significant tree lopping of any kind or use of chainsaws at height
- No use of commercial pesticides or sprays deemed toxic to the individual or the environment. Typical items sold over the counter are acceptable ie round up, zero, etc as long as the user follows the labeled directions of use.
- No use of non-domestic powered tools without approval and supervision. This includes whipper snippers, powered mowers, hedgers etc.
- No laying of concrete or paving without appropriate supervision.
- No work defined as high risk construction work under the WHS Act.

## Mechanical work;

With the exception of basic cleaning and elementary maintenance

- No work on powered vehicles
- No work on AC systems or refrigeration etc
- No work on any trailered equipment without appropriate supervision
- No spray painting or toxic cleaning of parts on site
- No work on the mechanicals of powered marine craft or the trailer(s) associated
- No work defined as high risk construction work under the WHS Act.

## 3 Incident reporting

Incidents that occur during the course of paid, or unpaid, work *may* be Notifiable to Safe Work NSW. There are penalties in place for not complying with this rule. Incidents that are notifiable are:

- o the death of a person
- o a “serious injury or illness”
- o a “dangerous incident”

Essentially, any work-related incident that involves emergency services (eg ambulance, police or fire) should be notified to management as a matter of urgency. Work-related incidents do not include personal illnesses.

Where an incident is (potentially) notifiable to Safe Work NSW, the scene shall be preserved and management (eg District Commissioner, Region Commissioner and State office) must be notified as a matter of urgency to determine next steps. See Scouts NSW [WHS Procedure 15 Incident, Reporting and Analysis](#) procedure for details.

## 4 Records/references

- WHS Volunteers Guide (Safe Work Australia)
- WHS Legislation
- 18.1 Risk Assessment Form (for leaders of adults)
- Code of Practice - Construction Work

## 5 Associated forms

- Nil

## 6 Appendices

- Nil