

Venturer Behaviour at other Section Camps/Activities/Events

Principles:

Venturers are valued at other section events for their enthusiasm, energy and dedication to ensuring their efforts contribute to the event's success. They are looked up to as positive role models to our younger section members. Venturers expect that along with an opportunity for service, there is an opportunity for them to have fun.

The State Venturer Council actively supports Venturer involvement and support of other section events. We expect event organisers to remind Venturers **at registration** that DADS rules apply so that they are enforceable throughout the camp/activity/event.

DADS Rules – No Drugs / No Alcohol / No Discrimination / No Sex
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Behaviour Expectations:

- From the Venturers themselves, we expect exemplary role modelling behaviour whilst still allowing a Venturer's own time to blow off steam in a positive way. Venturers at other section events are expected to follow the same behaviour guidelines as with a Venturer-run activity and comply with DADS rules. We view a breach seriously but also understand that these are young people still learning how to act responsibly and we want them to have an opportunity to learn from their mistakes.
- From the other sections, we expect they respect Venturers as a Youth Section acting in a leadership capacity and accordingly to provide "adult support" to their actions.
- In our experience, we have found that the first reaction to the incident can have a dramatic effect on the handling of the incident and recommend working through establishing the facts in a calm, cool and non-judgemental manner. The Venturer will know if they have done the wrong thing despite their defensive posture and aggression from either party will only hinder a positive outcome.

If an incident occurs:

First:

- **If the Venturer appears under the influence of drugs or alcohol, their safety is paramount and first aid support must be sought immediately.** Otherwise, remove the Venturer from the situation in a respectful manner and seek guidance from any available Venturer welfare member.
- In these cases, the Venturer Welfare member is expected to be an advocate for the Venturer whilst the facts are established. If a welfare person is not available, seek similar support from a third party. This removes the potential to embarrass anyone involved in the incident and thus trigger an over-emotional or angry and defensive response.

Then:

Establish the facts in a calm and clear way to verify that a breach has occurred:

- Drugs and Alcohol breaches can be complex and a grey area to identify unless substances are found. If a Venturer appears to be under the influence of a substance, the first aid team should be consulted to assist the Venturer immediately and then to help clarify the facts.
- Sexual activity is more complex to monitor. Venturers are discouraged from sharing tents with mixed genders. A warning is typically sufficient discouragement. If repeated warnings are required (three is a typical guide), or if proof exists that a breach has occurred, proceed with the following:

- Complete an *Incident Report Form*
- Instruct the Venturer(s) to call the parent/guardian to advise what has happened and to arrange for them to collect them. An adult leader should also speak with the parent/guardian and outline the situation and state the DADS rule was a requirement of participation
 - the Venturer(s) should be collected by parents and in the intervening period they should be separated (but not ostracised) from all youth contact (ie - stay in Leader camp if overnight collection by parents is not practical).
 - they should be counselled on why the course of action has occurred, reminded about the Law and Promise, how they are role models and the rules of the event. The goal here is for them to reflect and learn from the mistake – NOT to destroy their spirit.
- Post event, within 7 days, convey the facts and actions to the State Commissioner - Venturers (SC-V) – sc.venturers@scoutsvictoria.com.au
 - The SC-V will make contact with the Unit and Adult Leader with the advice that disciplinary action is at the discretion of the Unit Council and including a member of the State Youth Venturer Council to provide a balanced youth viewpoint.
 - SYVC member conveys outcome to DVL (if exists), VSC-R and SC -Venturers and recorded on the Incident Report Form and formally closed (depending on outcome).
 - SC Venturers advises outcome to the Event Co-ordinator.

FAQ's

Q. What should we do if a Venturer was caught drinking or under the influence of drugs at Stradbroke Cup / Scout Hike/ Cuboree/Kangaree, etc?

We have the DADS rule. It should be agreed to at Venturer registration and applies to all section activities/camps/events where Venturers are present in a Service capacity.

Remember your duty of care to the Venturer first (welfare/health). Make sure that the facts are established and then follow the guidelines. An Incident Report should be completed.

Q. Would it be the VSVC policy to send the Venturer home from such an event?

Yes, if the DADS statement has formed part of the Venturer's agreement to participate in the event and subsequent evidence of a breach is established.

This should (preferably) be handled by someone with experience with the Venturer age group and with a Venturer advocate /support present at all times.

Q. What if we think there are two Venturers engaged in sexual activity in a tent?

Approach the tent (make sure you have someone with you) and speak to the occupant(s). Ask them if they are alone. In most cases they will admit to having someone else there. If no response, shake the tent and ask again. Ask them both (or all) come out and remind them of their DADS rule obligation. Advise this is their first warning and that they will have to call their parents to come and get them if it occurs again. It is highly unlikely you will have proof of actual sexual activity. If you do, it is a send home offence – follow the procedures outlined above.

Do not open, enter or look into the tent.

Q. What if a Venturer has exhibited discriminatory/bullying behaviour towards another youth member (or Adult)?

Direct counselling outlining the Scouts Victoria Policy on Bullying or Discrimination should immediately occur and recommending that an immediate apology is offered to the other party(ies) to mitigate followup action, which may reduce the need for an Incident Report. The Venturer(s) will need to be aware that any aspect of Bullying / Discrimination will not be tolerated by Scouts Victoria (or by the Unit).