



ROVER SCOUTS VICTORIA

152 Forster Rd,
Mount Waverley VIC 3149
www.vicrovers.com.au

Introduction

Rovers is a unique section within the wider Scouting movement. As young adults, they present their own set of opportunities and challenges. They are hardworking, invested, engaged and supportive members of their Unit and community. As much as other youth, they have the propensity to be opinionated, occasionally unreliable and passionate about what they care about. If they are properly engaged and treated like the young adults that they are, there is no limit to their capacity to better your Group, their peers, and the movement as a whole.

All levels of Rovers are self-governing, from the smallest Victorian Unit to the Chair of the National Rover Council. Rovers set their own program, strategy, and objectives within the framework of the wider association. As the senior section of the movement, they are just another step on the journey, but as young adults, they have a monumental amount to give to your group and the community!

What is a Rover?

Like any other section, Rovers have their own language, acronyms and terms that can be uninterpretable to the uninformed. Here's a snapshot of the Roving journey.

Rovers start at 18, due to the classification of adults in the movement and the swathe of activities that the autonomy and opportunities that that age brings. A Venturer wanting to move into Rovers is encouraged to engage with more than just the local Unit in order to find the one that best suits their needs. Uniquely, Rover Units tend to organise themselves along common interests, whether it be racing cars, doing adventurous activities such as skiing or hiking, performing in the Scout shows or in their dedication to service.

Once a Rover Unit has gotten to know the potential new member, they become part of the Unit.

The age range for Rovers is 18 to 25. On the sad day when a Rover turns 26, they leave Rovers. This is called being 'booted' and often there is a ceremony for the Rover that is attended by many individuals who helped the Rover throughout their Scouting journey. They are commonly provided with a 'boot' as a reminder of their years in Roving.

These are some key terms to help you understand a Rover's journey:



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What is a Rover Unit?

A group of Rovers could accurately be described as a rabble of Rovers or when in the right mood and large numbers, an avalanche of Rovers. Though the way they organise themselves is in a Unit. Much like a other sections, it comprises of all the Rovers in the group who meet together, but uniquely, they often come from a wide collection of groups in the local area and even much further away.

A Rover Unit is self-governing, they elect one of their members as Unit Leader and other members as part of the Unit Executive. Though elected, the Unit Leader is the equal as any other leader in your group and should, where possible, attend the Group Council along with the Unit's Rover Adviser.

The Rover Adviser (often referred to as an RA) is elected by the Unit as a member of the Unit and is an integral part of the Unit's makeup and decision process. They are there to provide advice and support the Unit as a whole and the individuals of the Unit. Once the Unit has elected their RA, the Group Leader then completes the necessary paperwork and appoints the RA. Get to know your Rover Unit, invite them to group events and make them feel welcome and ask to visit one of their average nights. Don't let the first time you reach out to your Unit be when you have a problem or need their help!

What do Rovers and Units do?

Rovers, as their age and transport capabilities allow, have an almost unlimited range of activities to choose from. These range from weekly Unit meetings through to World Moots, though much of the best Roving happens at inter Unit, region, and state-run events.

In Victoria, we are blessed with some awesome Statewide events, including:

Mudbash – Held on the June Queen's Birthday Weekend

Surfmoot – Held on Australia Day weekend

MARB – Metropolitan Area Rover Ball

Rover Dinner – Annual formal Dinner for Victorian Rovers held in October.

These events attract hundreds of Rovers from around Victoria and even from other states. They are run by Rovers, with Subcommittees working on these events for the entire year prior and provide multiple opportunities for development and project management of those who help out.



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How do I start a Rover Unit?

So you want to have a Rover Unit in your group? First, you need to have a decent number of Rover aged people to start a Unit, ideally at least 10. We've learnt as a section that a new Unit with not much more than half a dozen members is likely to fold within 6 months.

Second, it's best to have strong feeder units in the local area to provide sustainability for your Unit and its growth. Where possible, these would not be Units already identified with a local Unit. That being said, if the local Venturers aren't going to the local Unit, then the Unit is not presenting what those Venturers want and we prefer they stay in the movement, regardless of what Unit they attend.

Third, the approval of the Region Rover Community is the deciding factor as to the establishment of the Unit. The Region Rover Community decides whether the establishment is in the best interests of the Region. A new Unit cannot start without the approval of the Region Rover Community. The Region Rover Community will appoint another Unit in the Region to act as sponsor Unit to your new Unit. The Region Adviser (Region Rover Support Commissioner), will act as the Adviser to your new Unit. Don't go and find the RA for your new Unit, that's for them to decide! Though helping them with the process of finding someone would likely be appreciated.

All this comes from the Victorian Rover Council's "New Unit Starter Guide", which can be found at vicrovers.com.au/.....

So the Rover Adviser is the Leader?

Often Rover Advisers get misunderstood as the 'leader' of the section, and in charge of the Unit. This couldn't be farther from the truth! The RA is elected to the Unit like any other member, so they get to choose who they want. The RA also needs to complete training, like any other Rover. The RA is a full member, except they can't vote. Their title is indicative of their status. They are there to advise and support the Unit, the Unit Leader in particular, who is responsible for the Unit and the Unit's first point of contact. All other RAs beyond a group level are selected and recommended by Rovers and appointed by the State Commissioner – Rover Support, whether it is at a Region, State or Subcommittee level.



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Why Won't the Rovers be Leaders?

Rovers is a development section for young people, providing opportunities for members to transition to leaders once they've finished a full and complete Rover program. Being a youth section leader is not a core part of the Rover program, however individual Rovers may decide it is a form of service they would like to deliver to the movement.

The Rover section is not your source of leaders for the group, and it is not uncommon for Rovers at your local group to be leaders elsewhere. That being said, it doesn't hurt to ask the Unit and see if you could even entice them to develop a duty roster of Rovers to lend a hand if you're having some real struggles. Remember, in asking for help, as in all things to do with Rovers, treat them like adults and show them the respect you would any other adult member of the movement and you will be surprised at how receptive they may be!

Fees and Rovers

Each group sets its own fees above the minimum state fees. Rovers are largely self-funded, and most are students or very early in their careers with little or no steady income.

When setting the fee it is important to remember the financial limitations Rovers work under and what access to group equipment the Unit has. This can get more complicated when a Unit is fed by multiple groups. A good place to go regarding the setting of fees for Rovers is your Region Rover Commissioner as they know what other Units and Groups do in regards to fees and your district management team where either other group leaders and/or the District Commissioner can advise you.

Lastly, but definitely not least, ask to be invited to your Unit's next business meeting to discuss fees with the Unit and outline how fee structures are decided upon. In most cases you will be able to arrive at an acceptable position on fees for your Rovers. Just remember if they are a registered leader in your group or elsewhere, they do not pay fees!



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Rovers and Alcohol...

Rovers are adults. With adulthood comes important decision making. One such decision that is often made by people between the ages of 18 and 26 is to drink and sometimes they decide to drink a bit too much. However, a Unit is responsible for its members, and an environment that has many people watching out for each other while drinking is a comparably safe environment for young people to explore alcohol.

The Unit and the wider Rover community have some basic expectations and exert a certain amount of peer pressure upon their members to meet what is considered acceptable behaviour. When a member of a Unit misbehaves in general, but particularly when under the influence of alcohol, the Unit as a whole is held responsible for the individual's behaviour. The Unit may be fined for damage that has occurred or have substantial disciplinary action taken against them by the Victorian Rover Council that may result in being banned from attending further events.

Victorian Rovers have a comprehensive set of guidelines covering alcohol and its use at events or activities which can be found under resources and guidelines on the VicRovers website.

Rover Governance

Rovers are remarkably well organised for any group of young adults. From the Unit and Region to the State and National level, Rovers elect their own representatives and provide their own governance. Though each of our Scout sections have a level of youth involvement in the planning and programming of the section, once they get to the Rover section, there is complete control over the program, policies and direction.

Group, Multi Group and District Units

As the Core formation of Rovers, all Rovers, regardless of what other position they may hold, must be a current member of a Unit. A Unit is usually attached to a group, though it's not unusual for a Unit to have connections with several groups or even with a particular District.

Region Rover Community

Groups of Units within the same Region come together as a Region Rover Community. It is good to note here that Rovers don't govern at the district level and District Leaders are encouraged to engage with the Region Rover Community if they have any issues with the Rovers in their District.



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The Region Rover Community normally meets monthly, and is made up of the delegates of the member Units, their RAs, the Region Rover Executive and the Region Commissioner for Rovers. The Region Executive are elected from the Rovers of the Region by the Units in the Region. The Region Executive normally consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other positions as they see fit.

The Region Chair is the most senior Rover in the Region and should be involved in the region level meetings as would any other senior section leader in the region and should be your first contact for the Region.

The Region also has its own Region Rover Adviser, also known as the Region Commissioner Rover Support. The Region Adviser is responsible for supporting the Region Executive, any Unit without an RA and the Rover Advisers of the Units in the Region.

State

Rovers at a state level are similarly elected and represent the Rovers of the state. The governing body for Victorian Rover is the Victorian Rover Council (VRC), which is comprised of representatives of the 8 Rover Region Communities and has elected Office Bearers responsible for the management and promotion of Victorian Rovers. The Chair of the VRC is responsible for leading and representing Victorian Rovers and they sit on the Chief Commissioner's State Leadership Team with the Assistant State Commissioners.

The VRC has its own set of Rover Advisers, led by the State Commissioner for Rover Support and two Assistant State Commissioners for Rover Support. These Advisers are appointed by the VRC and the number of them may change depending on the needs of the State's Rovers.

Sub-Committees

Victorian Rovers run a number of state wide events and manage 3 properties across Victoria. Their administration is conducted by VRC Sub-Committees that are made up of Rovers.

The properties are significant assets to Victorian Roving and Scouting in general both in terms of size and value. They require ongoing maintenance, management and promotion, which is all managed by current Rovers with some support from past Rovers. The assets include:

Mafeking Rover Park

Mt Baw Baw W.F. Waters Ski Lodge

Bogong Chalet



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The other Sub-committees manage State wide events and motor-sport:

Surfmoot

Mudbash

MARB

Rover Scout Motorsport (RSM) – Responsible for managing the relationship between Victorian Rovers and CAMS, overseeing the five racing events on the Rover Calendar (Mudbash being the premier event) and ensuring track and car safety.

Each Sub-committee has its own Adviser, which are selected in conjunction with the VRC.

National

Rovers at a National level organise themselves through the National Rover Council which is made up of delegates from each State. They elect Rovers to their Executive (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and standing Project Officers (Training & Development, Environment & Sustainability, Marketing & PR and Diversity & Inclusion) for their team; this NRC Team is supported by a National Rover Adviser. The NRC Chair is treated as one of the National Commissioners of Scouts Australia, so sits on the National Team and National Operations Committee, with other NRC Team members sitting on other Scouts Australia committees, councils and teams to represent Rover / program participant interests.

Awards and Badges of Rovers

The Rovers award system is based around the peak award the Baden Powell Scout Award (BPSA).

Victorian Rovers award the Rover Service award, known in Victoria as the W.F. Waters award, to Rovers and those who help with the Rover section for exemplary and sustained service to the Rover section. This award is a nationally recognised service award and is the most respected accolade that can be granted by the Rovers. If a Rover or RA in your group receives the award, you should make a special effort to recognize this achievement, even attending the annual Rover Dinner in October where the award is presented. The award's badge is a red and white rope and the medallion is the scout symbol within a red circle with a red and white ribbon. The badge and medallion can be worn by recipients after leaving Rovers.

In Victoria, Rovers can also receive the State Commissioners award, which a Rover can be nominated for for exceptional effort to benefit the Unit or Scouting in general. They can be nominated by any Scouting member outside the Rover section. To nominate a Rover for this award, contact the State Commissioner – Rover Support.



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Rover Training and the Rover Wood badge

As adults in the movement, Rovers are entitled to obtain a Wood badge through completion of the same levels of training as any other Leader. The training requirements for completing the Wood badge are the same as for any other adult. As Rovers are the leaders of their own units, GLs should be working with local Rovers to discuss the funding of their training. Members of the Unit Executive are the equivalent of the section leaders in any other section.

For Rovers, training is expected to be completed to a certain degree when in positions of authority including for Region Chairs, Subcommittee chairs and VRC Office Bearers. The Wood badge is expected to have been achieved for the positions of VRC Chair and Training Officer. When put in the context of responsibility for the governance of the section and management of extensive assets, its understandable why there is an emphasis on achieving the Wood badge.

Where to go for more help

This is just a brief overview of the section. There are individuals with decades of knowledge on all things Rover and others who spend an inordinate amount of time giving service to Roving each week. For all your questions, your Unit Leader should be your first point of contact, followed by the RA.

If you need more information or information beyond what the Unit can provide, the Chair of the Region Rover Community or the Region RA is a good option. Contact details for your Region Chair can be found on the VicRovers website under the Regions tab. The Region RA's information is provided in the Scouts Victoria Info Book.

If you need to get in contact with the Victorian Rover Council, the relevant Office Bearer's details can be found on the Vicrovers website under the Contacts tab.

For information on our assets visit their respective websites:

Bogongroverchalet.org.au

Mafekingroverpark.com

www.vicrovers.com.au/bawbaw

VicRovers website:

<https://www.vicrovers.com.au>



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Life After Rovers

For many Rovers, it feels like there is no life after Rovers, especially those that have been in the movement since they were 6. When a Rover turns 26 they are transferred to the ASF and will remain there until the end of that census year and will be removed from your group's extranet records.

Prior to them turning 26 and being booted, it is worth your time to approach the Rover and offer them a position in your group if you think they would be a good fit. Many Rovers involved in Rover governance are well placed to take up positions of adult leadership at any level of the association, some Rovers take on appointments as District Commissioners or even Assistant Chief Commissioners post their Roving careers.

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