

## **PLANNING FOR OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES**

Overseas travel is one of the most exciting and personally rewarding experiences in which Scouts can participate. The excitement of travelling to a foreign land and meeting people from other cultures can be a life-changing experience and one the highlights of any Scout's life.

Every year World Scouting offers many opportunities for Scouts to travel to overseas events. So why not opt to go to one of these activities and experience the difference in your family holiday?

Some of the key differences between your family holiday and an overseas Scouting activity are:

- All the activities are Scout focused and full of fun and adventure
- Scouts help in the planning and organising of the event
- They afford the opportunity to travel with your Scout friends
- They provide the chance to meet Scouts from other countries and enjoy International Scouting fellowship
- As Scouting is available in at least 216 countries and territories, the opportunities for overseas Scouting adventures are extensive

As in any event whether local or overseas, good planning is essential for a successful trip.

## **INTERNATIONAL SCOUT EVENT**

Usually The Singapore Scout Association (SSA) would receive formal invitations from the host NSOs to participate in their Jamborees, Moots, Conferences, Workshops & Seminars. The host nation takes on the responsibility to plan and organise the event. In most cases these activities are restricted to Scouts and their Leaders and are not normally open to participants from the wider local community.

Every year, SSA selects a number of overseas activities to participate. Official Scout contingents are formed based on the selected activities. The International Commissioner then appoints a Contingent Leader for each of the events. Once appointed, the responsibility of planning falls on the shoulder of the Contingent Leader and their Team.

Should you like to attend any event which is not officially participated by SSA, you can still contact the International Commissioner or the Support Staff to register your interest in the event.

## **FLOW CHART FOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**



The above diagram shows the flow of information and follow- up action to be taken once SSA plans to take part in an international Scouting event.

## **A SCOUTING EVENT WITH AN OFFICIAL SINGAPORE CONTINGENT**

If you are participating as part of an official Singapore contingent then the Contingent Leader will do all the planning and preparation for the event.

Their responsibilities include budgeting, arranging for travel arrangements and liaising with the host organisation.

On your part, besides helping to promote the event to other Scouts, you should ensure that your passport is valid and to obtain the necessary visa where applicable. Above all ensure that you get ready sufficient funds for your travels..

## **A SCOUTING EVENT WITH NO OFFICIAL SINGAPORE CONTINGENT**

If you decide to participate in an event which is not represented by any official Singapore Contingent, there are a number of steps to be taken in order to plan and prepare for the participation.

There are many facets to planning and preparation for an overseas trip and they can be time consuming. It is critical that you set an achievable timeline for the planning and preparation and stick to the timeline

## **STEPS IN PLANNING & PREPARATION FOR AN EVENT**

The first step in planning is to identify and research the event. SSA lists most international events on its website well in advance. There is a considerable amount of Information about scouting events on the internet, with most international Jamborees posted on their respective websites.

Some of the factors to be considered are as follows:-

- \* Where do you want to go?
- \* When do you want to go?
- \* Who is eligible to attend?
- \* Who will coordinate the event

When you have completed the overview of the activity, you will then have a much clearer picture of the work load involved in the planning and preparation for the participation.

## **THE VALUE OF RESEARCHING YOUR TRIP**

Researching your trip can be an exciting experience, especially as you learn more about your destination and the activity itself. There is no doubt that detailed research of your overseas activity will enhance your planning and minimise the possibility of making unnecessary mistakes.

Today, websites can help you find out Information on everything from accommodation costs of Scout campsites to the booking details of international flights. The Internet and email can help you organise all your contacts and update everyone regarding your planning and preparation.

There are also a number of other ways to gather information about your destination which may not require the use of a computer.

Visit a local or school library for information on the country you will be visiting. Drop by a travel agent and collect as much information as you can pertaining to your destination. These brochures are usually given out free.

Talk to Leaders or other Scouts who have been to the event or country before. Contact the embassy or consulate of the country you are visiting to request for related information.

## SOME KEY TASKS

In planning for your activity there are a number of key tasks that must be completed. Appoint an activity coordinator. This person must have the previous skills and experience to plan, organise and lead a contingent overseas.

Obtain a “**Request to Travel Overseas**” form from your International Relations Department. This form must be completed before you start detailed planning for your activity and is designed to inform the appropriate people of your intention.

Once you have received approval to participate in the activity then the actual planning and preparation can commence.

- Contact a reputable travel agent for travel and accommodation.
- Complete a budget for the event that has the approval of the event committee.
- Calculate the participation fee for the event.
- Set a timeline for the event with key dates indicated.
- Allocate tasks to each of the organising committee members.
- Organise a fund raising program if needed.
- Remind all participants to apply for or update their passports.
- Remind all participants arrange for travel visas if required

<b>Initial tasks to be completed</b>	<b>Action by</b>
Appoint an Event Coordinator/Contingent Leader (a suitably experienced Leader or Adult)	Group, District or Area
Discuss the trip details with Group Leader, District Commissioner or Area Commissioner to gather feedback and inputs	Event Coordinator / Contingent Leader
Get in touch with Singapore Scout Association (SSA) International Relations Department to indicate your interest in the event.	Event Coordinator / Contingent Leader
Access the information provided by the International Relations Dept	Group, District or Area
Decide if the event is suitable and meets the expectations of the participants before proceeding	Group, District or Area
Inform SSA International Relations Dept of the decision to proceed with the event.	Event Coordinator / Contingent Leader
Form an Activity Planning Committee	Event Coordinator / Contingent Leader

## WHO TO CONTACT

The International Commissioner/Executive will write in official letter to the relevant NSO. Once the initial official contacts has been made, it is very important to maintain regularly update your host(s) of the development or change (s) if any.

Once the details of travel and other arrangements are finalized, you must notify your host(s) and provide them with an update of your plans. Information on contingent members, travel and accommodation details and photos of participants may be supplied to your host(s) to facilitate identification and reception upon arrival at the host country. If you are planning to use home hosting it is very important that you provide you host(s) with the travel plans.

## **FUND RAISING AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

To make the event as affordable as possible to as many youth members, efforts must be made to generate income to help defray the cost. Fund raising, grants and scholarships are some three good ways to do so.

Fund raising will go a long way towards reducing the financial burden on participants and may provide the opportunity for participants to better appreciate the use of limited funds. It is very important for the participants and their families to get involved in the fund raising efforts to widen the network of reaching out to the sponsors.

### **SOME GUIDELINES FOR FUND RAISING:**

- Discuss your fund raising options with participants and their families before proceeding with the programme
- Set the targeted amount to be raised.
- Decide on how the funds raised will be used
- Set a time line for the fund raising programme
- Maintain proper records on the amount and source of funding.
- Arrange with Accounts department for the issue of tax exempt receipts to the donors.
- Monitor results and change program if required.

### **OTHER FUNDING ASSISTANCE**

Funding assistance may be available to youth members from a variety of sources. Some sources are managed at the school level. You are strongly encouraged to use your group funds to subsidize your deserving participants. Apart from subsidies from the group funds, MOE students can apply for "Opportunity Funds" or "Internationalization Funds" from their respective schools. They can also apply to use their Edusave.

### **AREA & DISTRICT SUBSIDIES**

Subsidies may be granted to individuals through formal application to the respective District Commissioner (DC) or Area Commissioner (AC). It should be noted that not all events will receive funding allocations. The decision of the respective DC/AC is final.

### **MAXIMISING YOUR INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

For most Scouts the opportunity to attend an overseas Jamboree or similar event is a once in a lifetime opportunity, so you must not only plan your journey but also plan to maximise the experience while you are away.

Here are some travel tips and ideas to think about when organising your trip

### **CONTINGENT ORGANISATION**

**Assign Patrol Leaders:** If possible assign the Patrols and Patrol Leaders prior to departure. Patrol Leaders should help out in managing the contingent and take responsibility for some key tasks while travelling.

**Key tasks:** Allocate key tasks to all Leaders prior to departure. It is important to have tasks such as passport security, health, travel documents, insurance and finance clearly defined and allocated before departure.

**Itinerary notification:** In the week prior to departure it is critical that itinerary details, contact numbers and copies of all important documents are given to the assigned leaders. All participating families, group leaders, the International Commissioner and International Relations Executive should have the latest details before the contingent departure

## **GENERAL TIPS**

### ***Souvenirs and gifts***

Thanking your hosts with local souvenirs and gifts is a great way of showing your appreciation for their hospitality and friendship and reminding them of your visit.

### ***Scout badges***

Scout badge swapping or trading is popular with Scouts and Leaders among scouting fraternity world-wide. Do bring your badge collection along for exchanges and bring home some really different souvenirs to help you remember your trip.

## **SINGAPORE FLAG & ASSOCIATION FLAG**

It is always important to bring along the Singapore Flag and SSA or Group flag to any overseas event.

## **TRAVELLING TIPS**

### **Passports**

Passport is the most important document to prove your identity and your legal status to remain in the host country. A dedicated person must be assigned to safe keep the passport.

### **Phone contact**

Mobile phones can be very expensive to use while overseas, not to mention the fact that you will need to advise your service provider that you may require global roaming. Consider using a prepaid phone card either purchased here or at the event venue, or buy a rechargeable SIM card for your phone when you get to your destination. Don't forget to advise everyone of your new number.

### **Time Management**

Always plan for free time during your travels. There is nothing wrong with having a day or two during your trip to catch up with the little things in life such as washing clothes, shopping and sending postcards and emails to family.

Allow extra time for airline and hotel transfers. When moving with larger numbers of people it always takes a longer time to pass through security checks, customs and immigration. Always set aside more time. It is better to spend a couple of hours in a transit lounge than to miss a flight.

### **Luggage**

Either label the entire group's luggage with the same identity tags, ribbons or logos or consider purchasing matching bags as part of the contingent cost. Having readily identifiable or the same type of luggage simplifies collection at airports and hotels and allows for easier packing and unpacking on buses and trains.

### **Ambassadors for Singapore**

Every time you travel as a Scout, you are a Scouting ambassador. This is particularly so in an international event. Scouting not only offers its Youth and Adult Members a unique opportunity to enjoy a great overseas adventure but also provides a chance for them to represent their country.

There are a number of responsibilities that come with the image of an ambassador for Singapore. To the best of your ability, you should live by the Scout Law and Promise.

Singapore Scouts who travel overseas should also wear the official National Scarf with their uniforms.

### **What to do when you get home**

Once your overseas Scouting adventure has ended and you have settled down at home, the first tasks you should do is to thank those people who have helped you in one way or another to get to the event. It may be your Scout Leader, your Commissioners, and Sponsors etc.

### **Other tasks you shouldn't forget are:**

- To write and thank your hosts for their hospitality
- To complete your report if you have received financial support from sponsors

Above all, don't forget to keep in contact with the friends you made at the event. They form part of your network of friends among the scouting fraternity. Many scouts made lifelong friends at scouting events.