

SCOUTS AUSTRALIA  
Victorian Branch

**WORK FOR THE DOLE**

**PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY GROUPS OR OTHER FORMATIONS PARTICIPATING IN A 'WORK FOR THE DOLE' OR OTHER JOB PLACEMENT PROGRAMME.**

As a registered not-for-profit organization, the Scout Association is eligible to participate in the 'Work-for-the-Dole' and other similar schemes. However, because of certain legal requirements and other onerous responsibilities and obligations that may result, Groups and other Scouting Formations should *not* enter into any such arrangement lightly and if at all, only after full consultation with District, Region *and* Branch.

All Formations should be aware that job placement programmes are subject to both Victorian and Federal laws. In any instance, the provisions of numerous Acts of Parliament such as those relating to Taxation, Workers' Compensation, Occupational Health & Safety, Superannuation etc., as well as the need to register as an employer and adopt tax accountancy practices can create costly compliance obligations that must be fully considered and satisfied. In certain circumstances, the Association's Insurers will also need to be consulted.

Registered Scout Groups and other Scouting Formations may be successful in obtaining funding through these schemes for projects that are seen to benefit the local community and at the same time provide opportunities for job seekers to develop skills that will improve their prospects of finding ongoing employment.

This is not to be discouraged but it is essential, for our own legal protection both as an Association and as individuals, that before we enter into any such arrangement, the entire proposal is thoroughly and diligently examined at the highest level.

The 'Work-for-the-Dole' scheme, for example, is managed in each area by local Community Work Coordinators who are contracted by the Government to develop work-for-the-dole activities and to manage the placement of job seekers into those activities.

Not every proposal will succeed in attracting funding. If you are considering the possibility of applying under this Scheme, it is essential to first consult with the Community Work Coordinator to determine whether the proposed project is likely to be accepted and funded. If there is a high probability that the project will be funded, the Coordinator will also be in a position to assist with the preparation of the formal application.

It is also important to note that in any scouting situation where personnel are required to be employed under the Scheme (including a Supervisor) the *only entity* that can lawfully act as the 'Employer' is the "*Scout Association of Australia (Victorian Branch)*". In any event, this is absolutely essential because taxation, workers' compensation and other relevant legislation create obligations that can be satisfactorily and legally discharged only by that entity. Strict compliance is essential to safeguard the Group (or other Scouting Formation), the Association itself and more particularly, the individual parents and leaders involved.

If, in the opinion of the Community Work Coordinator, the proposal appears to meet all requirements, the Applicant *must next comply with each step of the following check-list before proceeding to develop the proposition any further:*

- Advise the next higher Authority (District, Region and Branch) of the intention to apply for funding;

- Prepare a formal application detailing the proposed works;
- Support the Application with relevant cost estimates covering the entire project;
- Separately cost the remuneration (*including all direct and indirect costs*) for the Project Supervisor;
- Submit a copy of the Application and all cost estimates to BHQ (through District *and/or* Region) for approval;
- Submit *separately but concurrently* to BHQ (through District *and/or* Region) the name, age and address of the proposed Supervisor including his or her qualifications, relevant experience and (in case the Application is successful), written consent to act;
- Obtain *written* approval from BHQ before submitting the formal Application to the Community Work Coordinator;
- When (if) funding for the proposed project is approved, *immediately* submit written notification to BHQ (through District *and/or* Region);

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES:**

Job seekers and other persons connected with employment schemes will be required to enter upon scouting premises to carry out the designated tasks involved in the approved project. Consequently, it will be necessary to first address issues of Occupational Health & Safety and risk management generally, to ensure that you do not expose participants to hazards that are likely to result in their personal injury (for which the Association and/or individual scouting personnel may be held liable).

Unquestionably, the Association and the Formation concerned will owe a duty of care to those job seekers participating in the work placement scheme and therefore, it is essential that the Scout Association provides a safe and healthy work environment.

*Accordingly, this means an environment that fully satisfies all relevant legislative requirements and one in which the hazards of the specific project work have been fully identified and effectively minimised.*

To minimize the possibility of injuries to workers, it is the responsibility of the relevant Formation to ensure that its premises are safe for all persons entering upon it, whether involved in work placement activities or not.

*It is the expectation of BHQ that as a matter of course, all Formations should frequently inspect premises, equipment and facilities for which they are immediately responsible and that prompt and appropriate attention will be given to any matters requiring maintenance.*

By performing and recording these checks in accordance with a formally established maintenance programme, the risk of accidents and injuries will be significantly reduced and the potential for legal action will be minimized.