



2013

By Lizzie Fogarty

Researching the viability of establishing a Branch Youth Council for Scouts NT



Please note: The Chief Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians is an independent advisory body. The views expressed in this report are those of the author and are not necessarily reflective of those of the Office of Youth Affairs or the Northern Territory Government.

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Cover Image: courtesy of Jordan Firley, Venturer Scout of the Humpty Doo Venturer Scout Unit.

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New Darwin Rover Group members

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- ✚ Ms Gemma Benn, A/Manager, OYA
- ✚ My dear friend and fellow Venturer Scout, Miss Chantele Cowley
- ✚ Chief Commissioner of Scouting Shane McCorkel
- ✚ The Humpty Doo Venturer Scout Unit
- ✚ The Department of the Chief Minister
- ✚ Scouts Australia
- ✚ The 2013 members of the Round Table.

Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
BYC	Branch Youth Council
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NYC	National Youth Council
OYA	Office of Youth Affairs
Round Table	Chief Minister's Round Table of Young Territorians

Terms used in this Report

Branch Youth Council	Group of up to 25 youth who represent Scouting in their state or territory
Contingent	Scouting parties/groups
Roar NT	The name of the proposed Branch Youth Council for the Northern Territory (NT)
Rover	A youth member of the scouting organisation aged 18 – 25 years old
Scouts NT	The Scouting Organisation in the NT as a whole
Scout	A youth member of the scouting organisation aged 11 – 14 years old
Venturer	A youth member of the scouting organisation aged 15 – 17 years old
Youth	An individual aged 12 – 25 years of age
Young Territorian	A person aged between 12 – 25 years who lives in the NT

Executive Summary

The aim of this project was to research the viability of establishing a Branch Youth Council (BYC) for Scouts NT. Across Australia, BYCs provide an opportunity to create real change and offer amazing opportunities by engaging young people through involvement in decision making.

Roar NT is the name of the proposed BYC for the NT. This group aims to achieve a voice for the young people in our Scouting community by empowering them to have a say on youth issues relevant to Scouting NT. The main goals I set out to achieve from this project were to get word out about *Roar NT* and to encourage youth aged 13 – 25 in the NT to get involved.

In the early stages of the project, I started researching what BYCs were and how beneficial they are to each state that has one. After a few months into the process, I soon realised that developing a group like this would take more than one year to actually form and get up and running. In order to still complete the project it was decided to research how to start a BYC and outline the benefits it would have for Scouting in the NT.

To establish whether there was an interest in developing *Roar NT*, I sent out a youth survey to the Darwin Region Scout groups. In total I received 35 responses, of this total 27 supported the idea. The survey responses indicated that the Scouting youth felt that it would be a great opportunity to have their voices heard to help change the future of Scouting NT.

Through my research I was able to establish three recommendations that would benefit the establishment of *Roar NT* and would help to keep the group functioning properly. It is recommended that the Northern Territory Government:

1. help provide financial support when the group needs funds for transport, accommodation, and meeting venues;
2. if needed, provide a meeting place for the annual meeting and other meetings that will be held each year; and
3. have continuous communication that links between the NTG, in particular the Office of Youth Affairs, and Scouts Association NT to share information about youth issues and development opportunities.

Introduction

Establishing a BYC for Scouting in the NT would create many benefits for young people in the Scouting community as it would open up great opportunities for youth to have their voices heard and to create change for the future of Scouts NT. By creating a BYC, young people involved in Scouts NT are able to address youth based issues within Scouts and the BYC can give them the opportunities and solutions to resolve the problems.

Roar NT is a project in which aims to create a youth council for Scouting across the Territory. The council aims to tackle youth issues within the Scouting community that can be studied and taken to a national level. In addition, it aims to combine the skills and leadership qualities of the Scouting youth to provide a voice for the NT and a chance to create a real change for the upcoming generation of leaders. *Roar NT* was a name that came originally from the idea of the BYC when the concept was first thrown around by a couple of Darwin Scouts but never really took off. The word 'Roar' is a figure of speech used to describe how young people can have their say and speak out.

The areas that this project aims to research are how successful *Roar NT* could be and how this project could benefit the youth of NT Scouting. During the research stage, I sent out a survey to Scouting youth to find out if there was any interest in forming a BYC and whether or not it is something that could benefit youth on both a small and large scale. A copy of the survey is available at Appendix A. To further evidence this project I contacted the Scout leaders, the Chief Commissioner of NT Scouts and the Major of the Litchfield Shire to receive support on my project and to gain as much knowledge on how to run a functioning council.

Through my research and analysis, I was able to produce the recommendations based on what would really be a necessity when the group gets up and running. Each recommendation is based purely on what would help to keep the group at its full potential. Over time, this report has really shown how passionate I feel about Scouts and how I really want to do as much as I can to make Scouting in the NT as great as it can be.



Practical and outdoor based activities are one of the many aspects of Scouting.

Discussion and Major Findings

Scouting is a global movement that has been operating for over 100 years and plays a huge role in many aspects of our community. On 1 August 1907, Scouting was established as a worldwide movement by Lord Robert Baden-Powell. Scouting developed in Australia between 1931 and 1934 having been only for Boy Scouts.¹

Since then, Scouting has grown and is now open to both male and female youth aged six to 25. The international trend has grown to increasing rates since 1931 and has proven that “Scouts is the biggest and most successful youth organisation in Australia.”²

A Membership Census Report published on 1 August 2013 recorded that the Scouting movement in Australia currently has a population of 52,275 members aged 6-25.³ Although the number of Scouts across the nation is very high, the same census reported that the population of members aged 6-25 in the NT is considerably lower with only 360 members.⁴ Over the past three months since the census data was released, there has been an increase of members as well as the formation of the very first Rover Group in Darwin and according to one of the Rover members Miss Haylee Williams this group now contains more than 15 members. Scouting is important in the NT because Scouting is an association that aims to provide and support our local communities and people. A copy of the Census Comparison Report is available at Appendix B.

“The aim of Scouting is to encourage the physical, intellectual, social and spiritual development of young people so they may play a constructive role in society as responsible citizens and as members of their local community” (Scouts Australia NSW, 2013)

The idea to start this project arose around April of this year when a close friend and member of my Venturer Unit, Chantele Cowley, discussed the idea of starting up a BYC in the NT. I originally had no idea what a BYC was until it was explained to me how beneficial they are for other states around Australia. After thinking it through I decided that it was a great project to get into and to get more involved with Scouts and the future of Scouts in the NT. Once Chantele and I had discussed how the process of this project would work, I decided to change my original project idea of creating a youth orientated event into starting and developing a BYC in the NT.

¹ History of Scouting, 2013, Scouts Australia, www.scouts.com.au/main.asp?iMenuID=665

² About Scouts Australia, 2013, www.scouts.com.au/main.asp?iMenuID=646

³ Membership Census Report, 1 August 2013, Scouts Australia

⁴ Membership Census Report, 1 August 2013, Scouts Australia

Northern Territory Branch Youth Council

The NT BYC is planned to be a group of Scouts (aged 13-25, Scouts, Venturers and Rovers) who will represent Scouting in the NT as a whole. The target and aim of the NT BYC is to tackle the issues that youth in the NT Scouting community are facing and how we can solve them. Not only will the issues be examined and hopefully resolved through the BYC, the issues will be aimed to reach a national level at the National Youth Council (NYC). The council aims to tackle youth issues and create awareness within the Scouting Community about issues that develop within Scouting in the Northern Territory and what can be done about it.

The opportunity to contribute to local and national forums is represented in the following 'Voice Cycle'. Scouts living in the NT currently contribute to the NYC due to not having an established BYC.



The National Youth Council

The NYC is a group of youth members from Scout groups Australia wide who represent Scouting at national level. The NYC brings together 25 members aged 13-25 who each represent their regions. Once appointed on the council each member has an obligation to serve in his or her position for three years. The aims of the NYC are to create recommendations based on Scouting issues, youth issues and a range of other topics and then take them directly to higher authority (the National Team).

Similar to the Round Table, the NYC has a chair, vice chair, secretary, an adviser and four patrol leaders (like team/group leaders). Each patrol researches and creates their own recommendations depending on their topics and presents them to the council.⁵

Nearly every state in Australia has a BYC which runs and operates exactly like the NYC but on a smaller scale. Each state benefits from having a BYC as each youth member is able to voice their opinions and this opportunity gives each member a chance to make a change.

BYCs across Australia give the opportunity for youth to get involved in the Scouting community in their state and create real change within their contingent. BYCs create a platform for young people to develop their skills in leadership and decision making.

“Opportunities to empower young people through youth involvement in decision making and personal development” (Scouts Australia, 2013).

Project Aims

At the beginning of this project, the following ideas were produced as topics that could be brought forward to the BYC and the council could address such as:

- ✚ Improve communication between other Scouting groups
- ✚ Create opportunities for youth to voice their own opinions
- ✚ More accessibility for youth for example, promoting multiculturalism and Indigenous youth involvement
- ✚ Awareness of other opportunities within the community, for example, allowing youth to be aware of other youth opportunities like the Round Table
- ✚ Promoting Scouting and creating promotional materials, for example, posters, youtube videos, TV advertisements, facebook pages
- ✚ Fundraising and how money can be distributed for beneficial uses.

As above, one of the main aims of the BYC will be to promote Scouting in the NT and to show the benefits it can have for youth. By promoting Scouting as a whole, we can hope to expand the number of young people in Scouts. One of the largest benefits to promote

⁵ National Youth Council's New Appointments - Scouts Australia, 2013, National Youth Council's New Appointments - Scouts Australia, [ONLINE] accessed 11 December 2013, www.scouts.com.au/main.asp?iStoryID=15732688.

in young people is the positive affects that Scouting can have for a young person's mental and physical health as well as their wellbeing. A study that took place in the UK showed that six out of 10 Scouting employers said that Scouts helps to improve youth well-being and had the following benefits:⁶

- ✚ Scouts had developed team working skills
- ✚ Scouts showed respect for others, which was important when working with peers, customers and clients
- ✚ Scouting helped build character and personal development
- ✚ Scouts showed confidence and leadership ability.

The BYC can help to not only promote these benefits but can also increase personal development opportunities within the council by giving each member a platform to become more confident and grow.

The Youth Voice in the Northern Territory

At the beginning of this project Chantele Cowley and I discussed the project aims required to develop the BYC. I asked Chantele what her main aims were and what she wanted to achieve out of the BYC. She stated that:

"I want be able to accurately represent the Scouting youth in the NT. I want to do my job as a Branch Appointment which is a youth member who provides links between national and branch level. I want to improve Scouting in the Northern Territory and I want to get more involved with youth, I want to see needs of the youth in the Territory Scouting being met and I guess I want to see individuals learn and grow within the council."

The BYC's main aim is to create opportunities for young Territorian Scouts to learn and grow as well as to provide a contributing role in our communities. The objectives and aims of the BYC tie in with the NT Government's draft strategic document '*Framing the Future*' blueprint.⁷ Within the Strong Society section of the blueprint, Objective 3 suggests to provide 'A strong society that is safe, connected and encourages

⁶ A study of the impact of Scouting on the UK's young people, adults and communities, 2011, Public and Corporate Economic Consultants, <http://members.scouts.org.uk/documents/supportandresources/leadershipandmanagement/ImpactStudy/Impact%20Study%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20web.pdf>

⁷ Framing the Future draft blueprint, Department of the Chief Minister, 2013 Northern Territory Government, www.dcm.nt.gov.au/home

participation.’ Within this objective, one of the priorities is to ‘increase community connections.’ The goal of the council is to increase community involvement and allow youth members to get involved with more opportunities.

Objective 2 of Strong Society is ‘[a] strong society that is capable of making a difference through integrated and responsive services, focus on early intervention and prevention, strong collaboration in the design and delivery services to the most vulnerable that lead to long-term outcomes and self-sustainability.’ Another priority under this objective is for ‘a vibrant non-government sector.’ The NT BYC is a way to provide a youth orientated sector which can be linked in with the government and strengthen ties between the youth of the NT and what needs to be done to support young Territorians.

Results and Findings

In order to begin the formation of the BYC, the idea had to be circulated and promoted. One of the best ways to spread this idea and get youth involved was through a survey and through word of mouth. I created a survey that allowed youth to understand what a BYC was and if there was any interest in forming one. The survey also asked questions about issues within Scouting in the NT.

Originally, the process in trying to distribute the surveys did not work as the emails that I first sent out did not reach the intended recipients. The first approach was trying to send the surveys to Scout leaders to present to the youth member, however I believe that lack of knowledge was the reason why this did not work; people did not understand the project so they weren’t interested. The next approach I took was to go public and distribute the surveys directly to the leaders at a big Scout camp. By doing this, I was able to give copies of the survey to leaders which they would take back to the Scouts to fill out. I also took the surveys to my own Venturer group and had each member fill out the survey with the assisted help of Chantele. I found that including the Venturers in this process was really helpful for them because they were able to ask any questions about the intentions of the BYC and we were able to work through any questions they did not understand. Both approaches were successful and in total 35 completed surveys were submitted.

For most of the questions, the youth were asked to elaborate on the questions asked, for example, if they liked something - why or why not. I kept the surveys completely anonymous so the youth could answer in confidence as to why they think a BYC would benefit the NT and what they think needs to be done in Scouts NT.

The biggest problems that the surveyed youth found to be the most significant issues in Scouts NT are:

- ✚ Lack of communication between Scouting groups across the Territory
- ✚ Lack of quality equipment and infrastructure
- ✚ Lack of joint Scout Camps combining all of the Territory groups together.

In the survey, the young people were also asked whether they would think that an NT BYC would benefit the future for NT Scouts and in response, a large majority of them replied with yes. The most common reasons for this were that:

- ✚ It gives the youth of Scouts NT a voice which can help them express their ideas and views on how to make Scouting better
- ✚ Could solve issues within the Scouting community
- ✚ A chance to bring together many Scouts, Venturers and Rovers from different contingents which can create advances in communication between groups
- ✚ Would help build leadership skills and teach youth to work together successfully and especially with people they don't know.

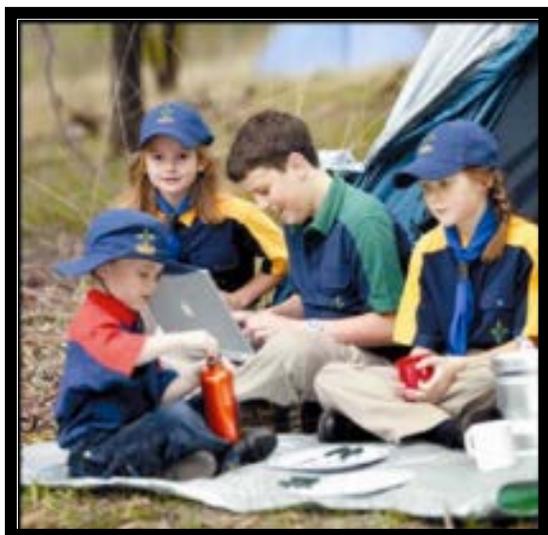
The last major aim of the survey was to question the youth of whether or not they would be interested in joining Roar NT when it develops. The younger Scouts aged between 12-14 did not really have that much of an interest as I believe that most of them did not fully understand the intentions of the BYC and the benefits it could possess. Although, there were at least four or five younger Scouts that said joining the BYC would be a great opportunity and something they would try out because of "how great the opportunity it would be" (anonymous Scout). The older youth surveyed, were much more enthusiastic with a larger population of the Venturers saying that they would join the council to be a voice for their group and to create change for the future of Scouting in the NT.

The results from the surveyed Venturers found that most of them thought starting a BYC would be a great idea for our youth but at least a quarter of them suggested that they would not join the council because they either were not interested or found that they did not have time to make such a commitment. Out of the 15 surveyed Venturers, 10 of them fully supported the idea of starting a BYC.

Overall, the outcome from the surveys was quite positive and proved to provide a good notion for the NT BYC. The surveys proved that the current NT Scouting youth have recognised issues within the Scouting community and want to help resolve them. The

surveys helped to give insight to whether or not a BYC in the NT would be beneficial and if there was any interest to begin with.

The idea of starting a BYC has raised a few eyebrows over the past months as the word has spread about my community-based project. The success from the surveys proved that the interest from youth is apparent and that youth want to get involved to improve the quality of Scouting in the NT as well as giving themselves a voice that can be spread across the Territory. I brought forward the idea of starting a BYC during a meeting with the Mayor of the Litchfield Shire Council, (Mr Allan McKay) and his secretary (Ms Sally Cleyton), who both supported the idea of creating a BYC. Through a series of emails, and assistance from Chantele, I was able to get into contact with Shane McCorkel the Chief Commissioner of Scouting in the NT.



“Youth are the motivators of the world. Their voices can create real change.”

Conclusion

Roar NT has been a very challenging project that has brought me closer to Scouts than ever before. It has given me the opportunity to open up to my surroundings and try to create real change for the Scouting youth of the NT. This project proved to have very positive outcomes that could really improve Scouting in the NT as we know it.

This group is still a long way off starting but thanks to this report and the progress I have made this year, the project is off the ground and has started to develop.

The research investigated through this report proved that a BYC would be a great opportunity for youth to have a real say in what happens in Scouts NT. Although the group is still far from being operational, the research has shown that through time, promotion and positive development, this group will be created and will lead to create better outcomes for Territorian Youth. With the help of the NTG though the presented recommendations, the NT BYC could sustainably get up and running and continue to evolve and build great advances in Scouts NT.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Northern Territory Government:

1. help provide financial support when the group needs funds for transport, accommodation, and meeting venues;
2. if needed, provide a meeting place for the annual meeting and other meetings that will be held each year; and
3. have continuous communication that links between the NTG, in particular the Office of Youth Affairs, and Scouts Association NT to share information about youth issues and development opportunities.

Evaluation

2013 started a busy year for me when I accepted my position on the Round Table, even more so as I was the second youngest member in the group. When the Round Table was just starting up for the year and our first meeting was commencing, I chose to base my community-based project around creating an event for young people in Darwin to provide opportunities and information about youth issues.

I started doing some research and talked to some of my fellow Round Table members who supported my initial project idea. However, I soon came to realisation that I would not be able to complete it within the year. I then decided that it would be better to base my project and research around something closer to home and something I was more passionate about. An opportunity arose when a friend of mine brought the idea to me about starting a BYC for the Scouting community in the NT.

This community-based project of researching the viability of starting a BYC in the NT has been a great success, which has had both its ups and downs throughout the year. I was clear at the beginning of this project that I was not going to be able to successfully present a developing and functioning group by the end of this year. It was to my disadvantage that the my Round Table experience only went for one year which made it hard for me to get the group up and running in time.

Through this report I was able to increase awareness about *Roar NT* and I was able to receive positive interest from young Territorians involved with Scouts NT. The lessons that I learnt from this project are:

- ✚ Even when I thought I had no where to go, there was always someone there to help me
- ✚ Quitting is never an option
- ✚ Hard work pays off
- ✚ Youth are the motivators of the world. Their voices can create real change.

My passion for Scouting was the reason why I began this community based project. I first became a Venturer Scout in 2011 when my Scout Leader, who happens to be my Aunty, took me on a couple of Venturer camps and got me familiar to what Scouts and Venturers is like and how it was something I could really get into. When I finally joined the Humpty Doo Venturer Unit I did not know many people and I knew nothing about Scouting at all. Over the past two years I have grown accustomed to Scouting and know so much about what Scouting is and achieves to be.

Not only have I learnt how important and beneficial my involvement in Scouts is, but I have achieved a huge number of things from becoming a Venturer Scout. Over the past two years I have achieved a number awards and accomplishments, last year I received

my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award and continued on to receive my Silver award in 2013. I also received my Venturer Award and am now working towards reaching my Queen Scout award, which is the highest award scheme for a Venturer to receive. These past two years have taken me to places in which I would never have imagined I would go. Thanks to Venturers I have canoed down the Katherine Gorge, hiked the Motor Car Falls track in Kakadu, Completed two Environment trips to Cobourg Peninsula and one of greatest achievements so far was planning and completing one of the hardest sections on the Larapinta Trail in Alice Springs for my Expeditions one badge.

Currently, I am in the process of fundraising for the Australian Venturer in 2015, which will be my last year as a Venturer Scout. Not only does Scouting let me see outside my own little world but it gives me an opportunity to give my support and assistance to others and to be an active member in my community. Every single opportunity that Scouts has shown me has opened up my life and given me an amazing opportunity to see the world differently and achieve the unimaginable.

This project has really given me an amazing opportunity to develop as a person. Through the formation of a BYC, I will hopefully be able to work more closely with youth and give them the opportunities to have their say and to feel like they really are making a big difference. I personally feel that this group will go very far and prove that the youth of our Territory can move mountains.

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Please note that photos featured in this Report are courtesy of the Scouts Australia website

APPENDIX A – Youth Survey



BRANCH YOUTH COUNCIL (SCOUTS NT) SURVEY

Lizzie Fogarty is a member of the 2013 Chief Minister’s Round Table of Young Territorians (Round Table) and is investigating the establishment of a Branch Youth Council for Scouts NT. This survey is targeted at Scouts in the NT. Your comments will remain anonymous and will be used for the purpose of data collection. Lizzie would really appreciate your help with her project. Please complete and submit this survey by 9 August 2013.

Q.1. Please specify your age and level!

- Scout (11-14 years)
- Venturer (15-18 years)
- Rover (18-25 years)
- Leader

Q.2. Which Scout group do you belong to? eg: Humpty Doo Venturers

.....

Q.3. What do you enjoy the most about being involved with Scouts?

.....

Q.4. What elements of Scouts in the NT do you dislike, or not agree with?

.....

Q.5. How do you suggest that these issues could be resolved?

.....

Q.6. Do you believe an NT Branch Youth Council would benefit Scouting in the NT?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Why/why not?

.....

Q.1. Would you join the NT Branch Youth Council? Yes No Maybe

Why/why not?

.....
.....

Thank you for participating in this survey ☺

If you would like to be notified of my project report, please provide your details to the Office of Youth Affairs when you submit this survey.

All queries should be directed to the Office of Youth Affairs on 8999 3890.

Please send completed surveys to:

Office of Youth Affairs	OR	Fax: (08) 8941 5291
GPO Box 4396		Email: oya@nt.gov.au
DARWIN NT 0801		

APPENDIX B – Scouts Australia Membership Census Comparison Report

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT	
									Youth Member Total
2012	1,314	1,300	1,014	859	506	145	89	42	5,369
JOEY SCOUTS 2013	1,093	1,453	1,130	922	621	185	21	42	5,867
2012	5,524	6,019	3,174	2,070	1,804	485	41	124	19,741
CUB SCOUTS 2013	5,779	6,094	3,315	2,049	1,730	471	34	124	20,136
2012	5,746	5,685	2,969	1,790	1,794	557	48	161	19,250
SCOUTS 2013	5,270	5,648	3,115	1,768	1,683	596	55	161	18,798
2012	1,545	1,597	654	390	329	145	31	30	4,821
VENTURER SCOUTS 2013	1,459	1,611	718	402	362	128	149	30	4,859
2012	707	1,003	372	157	195	85	65	3	2,507
ROVERS 2013	792	1,088	415	174	179	90	76	3	2,817
2012	14,836	15,604	8,183	5,266	4,628	1,417	1,74	360	51,768
Branch Total Youth 2013	14,393	15,894	8,693	5,315	4,575	1,470	1,75	360	52,275
									Adult Leader Total
2012	3,891	3,631	1,962	1,494	1,053	478	381	53	12,941
Adult Leaders 2013	3,793	3,744	1,856	1,459	1,071	490	370	53	12,836
									Scout Fellowship Total
2012	162	516	69	167	155	87	16	0	1,172
Scout Fellowship 2013	194	516	104	160	190	97	17	0	1,278
									Total Members
2012	18,889	19,751	10,214	6,927	5,836	1,980	1,871	413	65,881
Total Membership 2013	18,380	20,154	10,653	6,934	5,836	2,057	1,962	413	66,389
Comparison +/-	-509	403	439	7	0	77	91	0	508
									Group Total
2012	440	393	261	115	156	67	44	10	1,488
Total Groups 2013	435	398	251	112	161	58	40	10	1,465
									Total Queen's Scout Awards
2012	57	56	35	12	9	6	6	0	188
No. Queen's Scout Awards 2013	25	69	19	11	8	11	4	0	147
									Total B-P Scout Awards
2012	5	5	4	1	2	1	4	1	23
No. B-P Scout Awards 2013	0	8	4	1	1	1	4	1	20
									Total Rovers /Leaders
No. Rovers Also Leaders 2013	135	167	70	49	17	14	12	3	467
% Rovers also Leaders	17.0%	15.3%	16.9%	26.2%	9.9%	15.6%	15.6%	100.0%	16.0%
									Note: No NT Census yet Used 2012 figures