

## Overview

The importance of safety is set out in Article 9 of the Constitution of Scouting Ireland which states that: “**Scouting Ireland recognises the safety and welfare of its members and Leaders as a foremost priority**”. Many Scouting activities, by their nature, contain an element of risk. It is important that this risk is properly identified, assessed and managed to reduce the likelihood of an accident or emergency occurring, and to limit the consequences if an accident or emergency does occur.

## Relevance to you

You are required to have oversight of activities within the Group and to ensure that appropriate safeguards and plans are put in place to provide a safe environment for members, visitors and members of the public.

## Risk Management

The person in charge of activities or events in your Scout Group should be encouraged and, if necessary supported, in completing a risk assessment.

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to participants during the course of the activity or event and a plan of practical risk control measures that the person in charge will put in place to minimise (to reduce to an acceptable level) the risk of harm occurring.

A risk assessment is particularly important when members of the Scout Group are taking part in activities which present a heightened level of danger such as mountaineering, remote hillwalking, climbing, water activities involving sail or power, etc.

You should also review periodically the meeting place of the Scout Group, regardless of its ownership, to identify risks relating to the use of the meeting place therein and taking actions to negate or resolve those risks, you should keep a record of such reviews and actions for reference later on.

## Incidents & Accidents

Despite your best laid plans it is possible that harm may occur to someone on an activity that the Scout Group organises or attends or on premises controlled by or in use by the Scout Group, this must be reported.

In the event of a serious accident or incident you should follow the Crisis Management Procedure Guidelines set out in SID 20/11A. In particular this procedure is appropriate where:

- A person is seriously or fatally injured whilst on Scout premises or on a Scout activity
- A large group of Scouts and Scouters fall into harm's way, for example they become lost in the mountains or involved in a coach accident.

Those guidelines set out that you should contact a senior member of the Association immediately in the event of a crisis. For regular Scout Group activities the appropriate person to contact would be your County Commissioner.

In the event of other, less serious accidents or incidents, the form you should use for reporting accidents or incidents is SIF 10.05 - Accident / Incident Report Form and it is available at [www.scouts.ie](http://www.scouts.ie). The completed form should be sent to National Office within 7 days of the accident or incident, following that you should expect to be contacted by a member of the professional staff for some follow-up. It is also recommended that you keep a copy of the completed forms for your Scout Group records and that you inform your County Commissioner as soon as any such accident or incident takes place.

## **Useful Documents and Publications**

SID 12.03 - Risk Management

SID 20.11A - Crisis Management Procedure Guidelines

SIF 10.05 - Accident / Incident Report Form

## **Where to get help**

The County Commissioner should be your first point of contact for any support which you might need, the Group Support Facilitator and the Provincial Support Officer may also be called upon for assistance.

You can contact Scouting Ireland's National Office on 01 495 6300 if you require any advice during normal office hours. You can also use the same number on Monday night's between 7pm and 9pm to contact a member of the National Adult Resources Committee.