



VENTURING - SOPs

National Officers' Standard Operating Procedures

THE MISSION

The mission of the National Venturing Officers' Association is to promote and support the Venturing program, utilizing a standard organizational structure that enables local councils to grow membership by advancing leadership opportunities through communication, program, and administration.

Venturing Leadership Beyond the Crew

This document contains the prescribed organizational schemes for the administration of a Venturing leadership structure for the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America at the national, region, and area tiers. It also provides recommended models for local councils to adopt. This document provides a minimal set of practices; leadership at all tiers may expand upon this standard operating procedure by creating more specific guidelines.

Leadership for Venturing at the national tier of the Boy Scouts of America consists of a National Venturing Officers' Association composed of a National Venturing President, National Venturing Vice President, and Region Venturing Presidents, supported by a National Venturing Advisor, and National Staff Advisor and Region Venturing Advisors and Staff Advisors. The National Venturing Officers' Association reports to the National Venturing Committee.

Leadership for Venturing at the region and area tiers shall consist of a Venturing Officers' Association (VOA) composed of required and optional youth and adult positions described within this document. Each VOA shall report to the Venturing committee at its tier.

This document contains:

- Methods to select youth officers and appoint adult advisors to VOAs
- A timetable for the selection and appointment of officers and advisors
- Position descriptions
- Model organizational charts for a standard VOA
- A short glossary for reference and clarification of terms

Youth Officer Selections

Applications for youth officer positions are available at www.scouting.org/Venturing, and all applicants will require the prior approval of their crew Advisor and local Scout Executive.

The term of office for all national, region, and area youth officers will be June 1 to May 31 each year.

Region Presidents and the National Venturing President shall have a single term limit.

All applicants for every youth office must be under age 21 throughout the duration of the term for any office held.

If an applicant is not selected for a position, the application must be passed down to the next tier if the candidate so requests. Each youth not selected for an office should be offered the opportunity to be considered for the next tier down. If the candidate accepts the opportunity, the application should be promptly transferred to the selection panel of that office for consideration.

If no applicant for an office exists at the time of selection, the advisor and staff advisor for that office may extend the current officer's term unless they do not meet the age requirements.

All youth officer positions shall have an adult advisor to provide support to the youth throughout their term.

A Venturer may hold only one area, region, or national position during their term. It is recommended that a Venturer serve in no more than one crew, district, or council position while holding an area, region, or national position.

Selection Process: National Venturing President

The National Venturing President is to be selected by **March 31**.

Current and past National Venturing Vice Presidents, Region Venturing Presidents, Region Venturing Vice Presidents, and Area Venturing presidents will be eligible to submit an application.

If selected, the applicant must attend the National Venturing Officers' Association orientation.

Steps in the Selection Process: National Venturing President

1. Eligible applicants may submit an application by **the last day of February**.
2. The Key 3 of each tier may choose to eliminate candidates for the presidency if they deem that the pool of candidates is too large to effectively conduct the selection process. The Key 3 shall select a process to determine who the most qualified and competitive candidates are based upon the job description within this SOP and present those candidates to the complete selection panel. If practical, each eliminated candidate should receive a personal interview, but this is not required. The preferred pool size is three to four, but the Key 3 may choose to present a different size pool of no less than two but no more than four.
3. The National Venturing Advisor and Staff Advisor, the National Venturing President, the National Venturing Vice President, and any Region Venturing Presidents or Vice Presidents who are not candidates will form a panel to interview and select a new National Venturing President among the qualified applicants.
4. If a member of a presidency selection panel is for any reason unable to participate in the selection process, then the Advisor and Staff Advisor of the represented lower tier may appoint another Venturer from that tier to serve as replacement selection panelist.
5. The interview process will occur via video or phone conference.
6. The new National Venturing President will be notified and announced immediately.

Selection Process: Region VOA President

Region VOA Presidents are to be selected by **April 15**.

Current or past Region Venturing Vice Presidents, current or past Area Venturing Presidents, current or past Area Venturing Vice Presidents, and current or past Council Venturing Presidents, are eligible to submit an application

If selected, applicants must attend the National Venturing Officers' Association orientation.

Steps in the Selection Process: Region VOA President

1. Eligible applicants may submit an application by **March 15**.
2. The region Key 3 may choose to eliminate candidates for the presidency of their tier if they deem that the pool of candidates is too large to effectively conduct the selection process. The Key 3 shall select a process to determine who the most qualified and competitive candidates are based upon the position description within this SOP and present those candidates to the complete selection panel. If practical, each eliminated candidate should receive a personal interview, but this is not required. The preferred

pool size is three to four, but the Key 3 may choose to present a different size pool of no less than two but no more than four.

3. The current National Venturing President or their designee, the Region Venturing Advisor, the Region President, and any Area Presidents and Region Vice Presidents who are not candidates will form a panel to interview and select a new Region President from the qualified applicants.
4. If a member of a presidency selection panel is for any reason unable to participate in the selection process, then the Advisor and Staff Advisors of the represented lower tier may appoint another Venturer from that tier to serve as replacement selection panelist.
5. The interview process will occur via video or phone conference.
6. The new Region President will be notified and announced immediately.

Selection Process: Area VOA President

Area Presidents are to be selected by **May 1**.

Current or past crew presidents and above (e.g., District VOA President, Area Vice President) are eligible to submit an application.

Steps in the Selection Process: Area VOA President

1. Eligible applicants may submit an application for consideration by **April 1**.
2. The area Key 3 may choose to eliminate candidates for the presidency of their tier if they deem that the pool of candidates is too large to effectively conduct the selection process. The Key 3 shall select a process to determine who the most qualified and competitive candidates are based upon the position description within this SOP and present those candidates to the complete selection panel. If practical, each eliminated candidate should receive a personal interview, but this is not required. The preferred pool size is three to four, but the Key 3 may choose to present a different size pool of no less than two but no more than four candidates.
3. The Region President or their designee, the Area Venturing Advisor, the Area President, and any Area Vice Presidents and Council Presidents who are not candidates will form a selection panel to interview and select a new Area Venturing President from the qualified applicants.

4. If a member of a presidency selection panel is for any reason unable to participate in the selection process, then the Advisor and Staff Advisors of the represented lower tier may appoint another Venturer from that tier to serve as replacement selection panelist.
5. The interview process may be determined by the Area VOA leadership and may include remote conferencing.

Selection Process: Vice Presidents

All National and Region Vice Presidents are to be selected by **May 1**.

All Area Vice Presidents are to be selected by **June 1**.

Any registered Venturer is eligible to submit an application.

Each Area and Region shall have, at a minimum, a Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Program, and Vice President of Communication. At the national level, there shall only be one Vice President.

Steps in the Selection Process: Vice Presidents

1. Eligible applicants will submit an application by the date of the president's announcement at the tier for which they are applying.
2. The president-elect will review all the applications and then, with help from his/her advisor, select a pool of candidates.
3. The president-elect can determine his or her own selection process.
4. The advisor must approve of each vice president selection and the president-elect must not promise any position prior to talking with their advisor and getting their agreement.
5. It is recommended that the appropriate associate advisor be involved in the selection process.

Subsidiary Position Appointments

All subsidiary youth positions to support the Venturing standard organization structure at every tier will be appointed by the Venturing youth president at that tier with the approval of that president's advisors and the applicant's crew Advisor and council Scout Executive. Subsidiary youth positions serve at the appointer's pleasure. Adults are appointed by the Advisor and with the approval of the appropriate professional advisor and the Scout Executive of the person's council.

Example: Region structure

The Region Venturing President appoints the Region VOA Vice President of Communication, Vice President of Program, and Vice President of Administration.

The Region Venturing Vice President will identify individual candidates to fill the functions under their leadership, such as a webmaster, recording secretary, or activity chair.

The Region Venturing Advisor acquires related approvals from the individual candidate's home Crew Advisor and Council Scout Executive prior to a candidate being considered official. All of this should be done without talking to the candidate so that there will not be any hurt feelings if the person is denied.

The Region Venturing President appoints youth to serve in any subsidiary position on the Region VOA.

Advisor and Staff Advisor Appointments

The Venturing Advisor shall be appointed by the top officer at each tier (e.g., Region President, District Chair) with the approval of the candidate's Council Scout Executive and serve at the appointer's pleasure. Regional and National Venturing Advisor positions may involve a nominating committee per Region and National Policies.

The Venturing Staff Advisor shall be appointed by the Scout Executive at each tier (e.g., Area Director, Scout Executive) and serve at the appointer's pleasure.

Associate and other subsidiary Venturing Advisors shall be appointed by the top Venturing Advisor at that tier, be approved by the Venturing Staff Advisor at that tier and the candidate's local council Scout Executive, and serve at the appointer's pleasure.

Removal from Office

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to remove a VOA member from a position.

Any youth or adult may resign from office.

Any appointed youth or adult may be removed from office at any time by the appointer.

Due to the short time frame of the Venturing youth officers term, if the officer has not been significantly completing duties or has exhibited behavior inconsistent with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the officer may be removed from office by agreement of the Venturing Advisor and Staff Advisors.

The removal and replacement of Venturing presidents should be undertaken rarely and only for just cause. Advisors should consult with their own leadership and the president's leadership prior to taking this action. Any member of the VOA may request the removal process of the president to take place; however, the VOA Advisor and VOA Staff Advisor will then have the authority to conduct the removal process.

Venturing presidential vacancies shall be filled through appointment by the Venturing Advisor and Staff Advisors, with the consent of their leadership (the person to whom each of them reports), for the remainder of the term of office. Other VOA vacancies shall be appointed by the current Venturing President with approval by the Advisor.

Council Scout Executives should be notified if any member of their council is removed from office.

Duties of Area, Region, and National Establishments

National Venturing Officers' Association

The duties of the National Venturing Officers' Association shall be:

- Maintain a positive image of the Venturing program, nationally.
- Serve as ambassadors for the Venturing program when travelling around the country.

- Strive to fulfill the mission statement within the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Provide direct support to each Region in better developing their VOA and improving Venturing within each Region.
- Provide training or orientation to the newly selected region Venturing presidents that will prepare them for their year as a Region Venturing President.
- Provide input on Venturing-related topics to the National Venturing Committee and the Design and Development task force.
- Understand the strengths, weaknesses, and future plans of each region VOA and focus resources on helping them improve.
- Maintain contact with each region VOA at least twice a month.
- Conduct monthly Venturing Officers' Association meetings or conferencecalls as needed.
- Ensure that each region has an up-to-date contact sheet with Region, Area, and Council VOA Advisor, Staff Advisor, and President (or representative)
- Any other duties, as requested by the National Venturing Committee or Regional Operations Department.

Region Venturing Officers' Associations

The duties of the Region Venturing Officers' Associations shall be:

- Maintain a positive image of the Venturing program within the region.
- Strive to fulfill the mission statement within the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Act as an example VOA for Area VOAs within their region.
- Provide direct support to each Area in better developing their VOA and improving Venturing.

- Provide training or orientation to help develop the newly selected Region and Area VOA youth officers that will provide each Area with the knowledge and resources to effectively work with their councils.
- Understand the strengths, weaknesses, and future plans of each area VOA and focus resources on helping them improve.
- Encourage Area VOAs to start at least one new council VOA within their area with a goal of one per council that is in their Area.
- Maintain contact with each area VOA at least once a month.
- Encourage networking among each Area within the Region.
- Conduct monthly VOA meetings or conference calls or as needed.
- Ensure that each region has an up-to-date contact sheet with Region, Area, and Council's VOA Advisor, Staff Advisor, and President (or representative)
- The Region Venturing President serves as a member of the National Venturing Officers' Association.

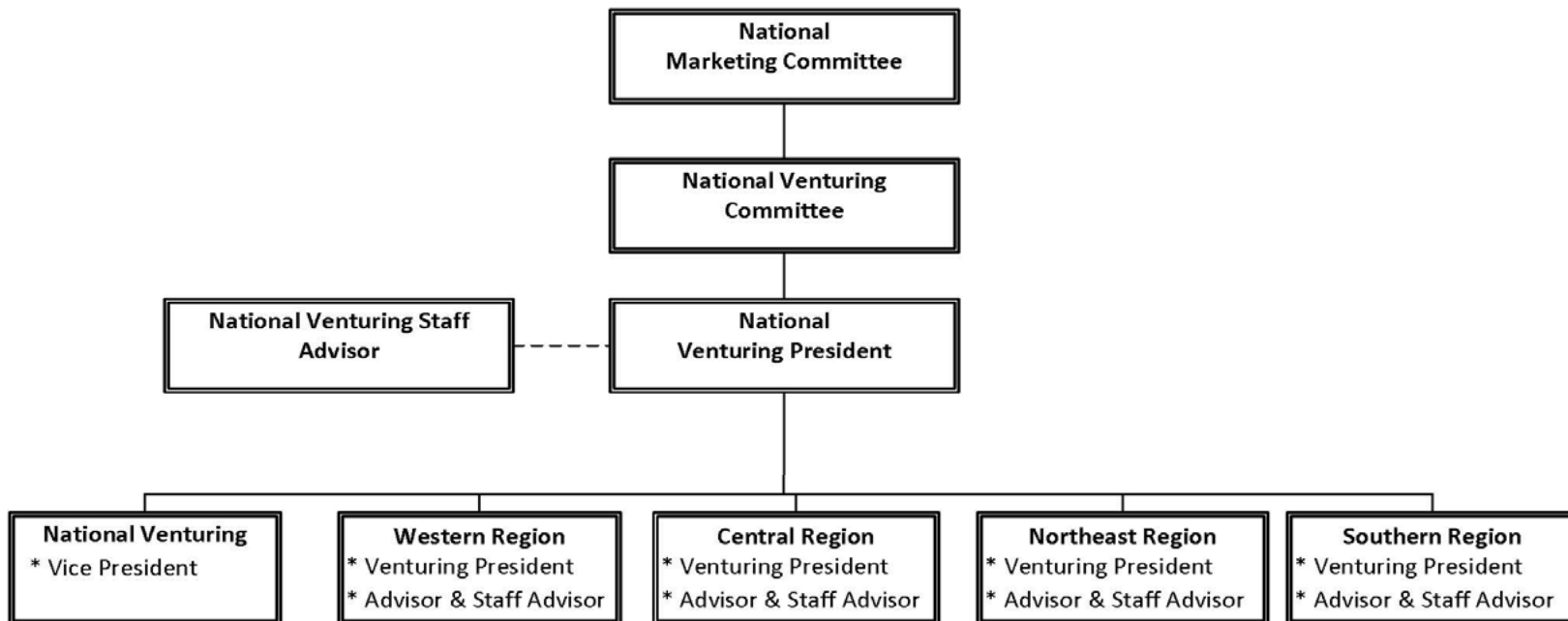
Area Venturing Officers' Associations

The duties of the Area Venturing Officers' Associations shall be:

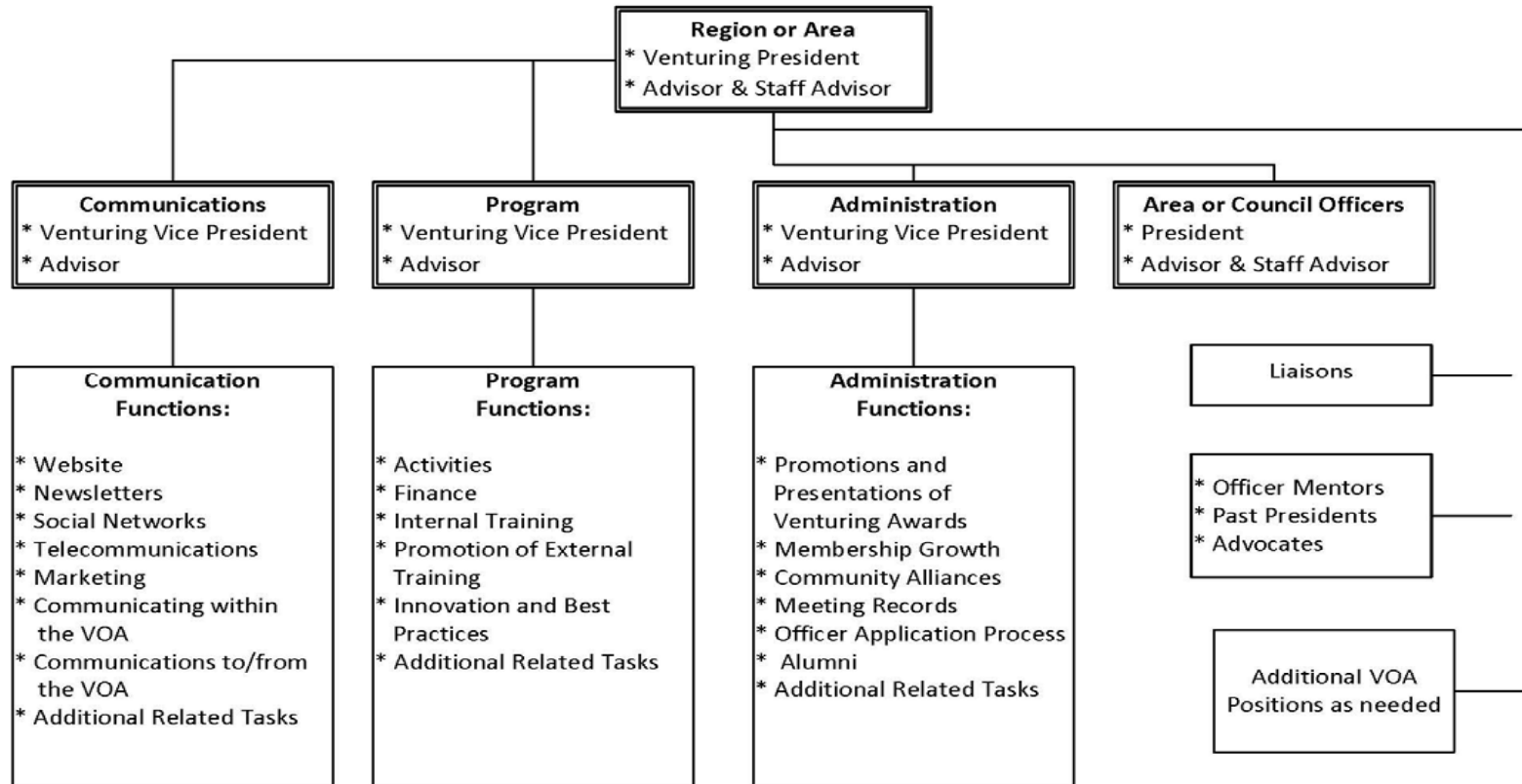
- Maintain a positive image of the Venturing program within the area.
- Strive to fulfill the mission statement within the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Act as an example VOA for Council VOAs within their area.
- Provide direct support to each council in better developing their VOA and improving Venturing within each council.
- Encourage and assist with the organizing of Council VOAs and consistent improvement of their Venturing program.
- As a recommendation, host two events per year, one being program/activity-based (e.g., area assemblages, etc.), the other training- oriented (e.g., area Venturing conference, etc.).

- Any Area Venturing event (program/activity or training-based) shall be defined as an activity put on by that area's VOA that is open to either all councils and Venturing crews or specific leadership groups within the area.
- An Area event should be planned with the aid of Council VOA to bring about awareness of other leadership opportunities, teach and/or provide connections and resources for training, and have a fun and engaging program. Area events must not compete with Council Venturing events.
- Maintain contact each month with each Council VOA assessing the strengths, weaknesses, and future plans of each Council VOA, and focusing resources on helping each Council VOA improve.
- Encourage networking among each council within the area.
- Conduct monthly VOA meetings or conference calls.
- Encourage at least one youth representative from each council to be a member of the Area VOA.
- The Area VOA president serves as a member of the Region VOA.

National Venturing Officers' Association Organization Chart



Standard VOA Organization Chart Regions and Areas



VOA Position Profiles

President

The president is selected by a prescribed process to serve for a specific term of office (June 1 to May 31).

The President:

- Works with Advisors and Staff Advisors of their own VOA and Venturing Presidents at the tiers above and below them.
- Appoints and supervises Vice Presidents, VOA liaisons, and additional optional VOA youth positions.
- Leads the youth officer selection process and interviews.
- Represents the VOA to Scouting leadership at the same tier.
- Motivates and coordinates the Vice President(s) and any other appointed VOA members in assigned tasks and conducts meetings with them as needed.
- Helps train and mentor presidents in lower tiers.
- Plans and leads regular meetings of the VOA.
- Assists VOA members with the selection of subsidiary youth members.
- Tracks all goals for the VOA and provides regular progress reports to the appropriate committees.

Region/Area Vice President of Administration

The Vice President of Administration is appointed by the President-Elect (for a term concurrent with that of the President's), and serves at the President's pleasure.

The Vice President of Administration:

- In consultation with the President, appoints and supervises subsidiary youth positions needed to perform the administrative functions of the VOA.
- Develops and implements strategies to increase Venturing membership within the territory of the VOA.
- Actively pursues positive relationships with representatives of BSA chartered organizations, religious groups, businesses, community organizations, and other groups of interest to the VOA and Venturing.
- Develops and maintains knowledge of customs, traditions, and relevant facts about BSA chartered organizations, religious groups, businesses, community organizations, and other groups of interest to the VOA and Venturing.
- Promotes and organizes the youth officer selection application processes (at the same tier). They can also assist the president in communicating with the selection committee, organizing the call, etc.
- Promotes and facilitates the selection and presentation of the Venturing Leadership Award and other appropriate Venturing awards at the same tier.
- Maintains records of recognitions, membership, officer selections, and VOA leadership alumni.
- Takes minutes at VOA meetings.
- Performs any other duties as assigned by the president.

Region/Area Vice President of Program

The Vice President of Program is appointed by the President-Elect (for a term concurrent with that of the President) and serves at the President's pleasure.

The Vice President of Program:

- In consultation with the president, appoints and supervises subsidiary youth positions needed to perform the program functions of the VOA.

- Supervises activity chairs and the planning of activities (conferences, outings, summits, and other events).
- Facilitates internal training events of the VOA.
- Manages VOA finances, if required.
- Coordinates and implements innovative ideas for development.
- Performs any other duties as assigned by the President.

Region/Area Vice President of Communication

The Vice President of Communication is appointed by the President-Elect (for a term concurrent with that of the President) and serves at the President's pleasure.

The Vice President of Communication:

- In consultation with the President, appoints and supervises subsidiary youth positions needed to perform the communication functions of the VOA.
- Actively studies and remains aware of the best way to communicate to Venturers on the VOA and in its jurisdiction, understanding that several methods of delivery must be utilized for maximum effectiveness.
- Ensures that the VOA web presence is being maintained, updated, and scaled appropriately for effective publication of information and collection of feedback.
- Periodically publishes a newsletter of past, current, and future events, including articles of noteworthy events and other items of interest to Venturers.
- Maintains groups, pages, blogs, calendars, message boards, etc., on the most relevant social media and social networking sites.
- Submits articles about VOA activities to other Scouting media (e.g., Council or Region newsletter and websites).
- Actively pursues opportunities to increase VOA exposure by submitting articles, comments, photos, and upcoming event announcements, and reports to external publications such as local newspapers and other appropriate venues.

- Develops and maintains the tools to communicate with all relevant parties using a variety of methods such as telephone, text message, email, and postal mail as appropriate.
- Maintains rosters of VOA members and frequently involved persons, including as many forms of readily available communication paths as possible, and identifies preferred methods, making it available to the VOA as needed and appropriate.
- Develops, updates, maintains, and makes readily available marketing strategies, solutions, and materials.
- Actively pursues contact information for people, groups, and businesses of interest to the VOA.
- Performs any other duties as assigned by the President.

National Vice President

The National Vice President is appointed directly by the National Venturing President (for a term concurrent with that of the President).

The National Vice President:

- Serves in a support role for the National Venturing President. He or she shall help to accomplish the goals set by the National Venturing President and the national Venturing Committee during the term served.
- Provides assistance during the National Venturing President's term in working with each region and area, as applicable.
- Fills in during the absence of the National Venturing President at meetings or during conference calls.
- Follows the position job description received from the National Venturing President for guidance in how to best work together as a cohesive team.
- Serves as the youth liaison of the Design and Development task force for the Venturing program.
- Completes any other duties, as assigned by the National Venturing President or the National Advisor.

Subsidiary VOA Member

The subsidiary VOA member is appointed by the President and serves at the President's pleasure.

The subsidiary VOA member:

- Reports to a Vice President or President.
- Completes duties as assigned by the Vice President or President to accomplish the objectives of the VOA.

Ad Hoc VOA Members

A position profile will be established by the President and approved by the commensurate tier advisor for any appointed ad hoc (temporary) positions.

Advisor

The Advisor is appointed by the top officer at each tier (e.g., District Chair, Area President) and serves at the appointer's pleasure.

The advisor:

- Reports to the Region or Area Vice President of Program (This is not the Venturing Vice President but the Region or Area) and serves as a member of that committee.
- In consultation with the Staff Advisor and President, appoints and supervises Associate Advisors and subsidiary advisors to work with any youth appointed by the President.
- Works with the President and Associate Advisors, and coordinates with Advisors at the immediate tiers above and below him or her.
- Serves as a mentor and advocate for the President.
- Ensures fiscal, programmatic, and risk management issues are properly addressed.
- Is familiar with the operations of any relevant Scouting organizations in their territory.

Staff Advisor

The Staff Advisor is a professional Scouter appointed by the Scout Executive/Area Director/Regional Director at that tier and serves at the appointer's pleasure.

The staff advisor:

- Serves as a member of the program committee at that tier.
- Ensures that the policies and interests of the BSA are maintained.
- Approves all adult appointments of the VOA.

Associate Advisor

The Associate Advisor is appointed by the Advisor and serves at that Advisor's pleasure.

The Associate Advisor:

- Supervises any subsidiary adults appointed by the Advisor.
- Serves as a mentor and advocate for the youth members they advise.
- Supports the Advisor in ensuring that fiscal, programmatic, and risk management issues are properly addressed.
- Provides expertise and/or training to specific youth officers to help them accomplish assigned tasks.

Glossary of Terms and Clarification

Ad hoc: Ad hoc groups and positions are formed for the purpose of completing a specific task, and the group or position dissolves at the conclusion of the task. An ad hoc position might exist for a very short time, or for a period that overlaps multiple terms of office. When a new Venturing President assumes office, they may confirm or replace ad hoc leaders.

Adult Advisor: Each youth position has a corresponding adult Advisor to support that youth in fulfilling the required tasks.

Delegation of authority: The authority to appoint youth and adult positions lies with the officials designated within this document. However, that official may delegate the authority to appoint to a subsidiary. For example, a Region President (note: not the Region Venturing President) may ask the Region Program Committee Chair to appoint the Region Venturing Advisor.

District: Local councils of sufficient size are divided into geographical (or occasionally special-purpose administrative) territories. Frequently Venturing membership within a district may not constitute an appropriate number of participants to fulfill the functions of a VOA. Councils are free to substitute with “sector” or “service area” as desired.

Key 3: The Venturing President, Advisor, and Staff Advisor form a tier.

Liaison: A youth officer who represents a special-interest group of significance to Venturing within the territory that the VOA serves. Liaisons should be drawn from existing organizations whenever possible (e.g., Sea Scout Boatswains, Council Relationships Committees, Girl Scouts of the USA, etc.), but are appointed to the VOA by the VOA leadership.

National Venturing Officers’ Association: The National Venturing Officers’ Association consists of the National Venturing President, National Venturing Vice President, and the four region Venturing presidents and their supporting Advisors.

President, chair: Occasionally, this document refers to offices that are not Venturing offices, such as the President of a region or chair of a district. Venturing officers are always youth members and generally bear the word “Venturing” in their title in this document (except in the position profiles section, when all offices refer to Venturing positions unless otherwise stated); other officers mentioned herein are always adults.

Representation: Leaders may designate a person to represent them in functions. For example, a Council Venturing President may ask a subsidiary to represent the council to the Area VOA or help select the Area Venturing President.

Subsidiary positions: Supporting positions within the VOA’s organizational structure may be appointed by the respective youth Venturing president as needed for the specific group they are serving. Subsidiary positions can be standing (permanent) positions.

Tiers: The tiers used in this document are, in order: national, region, area, council, district, and crew. “Above” refers to tiers that appear earlier in this list, “below” to tiers that appear later.

Venturer: A registered youth member of a Venturing crew. The word “Venturer” should be used only as a noun referring to a youth member. Use “Venturing” when a modifier is needed. The forms: “One Venturer built a kayak.” “One member of the Venturing Crew built a kayak.” Venturing is different from the Boy Scout Venture program.

Venturing: The young adult program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women age 14 (or 13 and have completed the 8th grade) through 20. Venturing is both a noun and a modifier. The forms: “Venturing is a program for young adults.” “Young women and men take part in Venturing activities.” “Good Venturing Advisors are crucial to successful Venturing crews.” Venturing is different from the Boy Scout Venture program.

Venturing Officers’ Association (VOA): A group of youth officers on a district, council, area, or region tier that promotes membership, resource sharing, and events for Venturing in their territory.