THE KENYA SCOUTS ASSOCIATION WHATSAPP REGULATIONS 2019

A. INTRODUCTION

The use of technology in communication has proliferated in the last decade, more so with the advancement of mobile technology which has made information dissemination and reception instantaneous. With the advancement in mobile communication technology, various platforms have come up and have been adopted by many organizations as a means of communication among its members. One of these platforms is WhatsApp, whose adoption rate has enormously grown from its inception in 2009, with the current number of users surpassing 1 billion in over 180 countries according to WhatsApp statistical data in 2016.

This is largely due to WhatsApp’s communication features, which include instantaneity, capability of sending messages in both graphics and texts and its boundary-less communication capability.

Communication plays a vital role in the survival of any organization. Knowing how to communicate is key to achieve the desired outcome, especially because communication is need-based and targets to meet particular needs within the organization.

The Kenya Scouts Association has adopted the use of various platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook to not only promote its brand, content sharing and advertisements but also as an effective media that provides a platforms for group communications.

This policy lays down the rules applicable to all Kenya Scouts Association WhatsApp pages and is an annex to the KSA Communications and IT Policy.
B. DEFINITION OF KSA WHATSAPP PAGES

KSA Official WhatsApp Group in this context will mean where a particular category of KSA members such as County Commissioners, Scout Leaders, Trainers are added into a group either bearing the Association’s name or brand elements or a group discussing Scouting matters in Kenya.

This implies that only KSA will have the right to create such official groups through designated admins.

C. SCOPE

The scope of this policy is limited to all KSA Sub-County, County, Regional, Boards, Committees, Task Forces, Camps, Centres, and Staff WhatsApp groups. This policy is an annex of the Kenya Scouts Association Communications and Public Relations Policy.

D. GUIDELINES

1. The Association has as a matter of policy that all WhatsApp official groups under its umbrella are Created and Managed by KSA designated Admin who will be responsible for

   i. Addition or removal of members from the group
      a) Before setting up the group, the designated Admin for the same should send an invitation to the people identified to fulfil the purpose of the group using the WhatsApp broadcast feature. This allows one to send the same message to a big though limited number of individuals.

      b) The Admin to include only those who have agreed to be part of it when setting up the group.

      c) The Admin to add confirmed members directly and not via the ‘group link’.

      d) The Admin to add persons with authentic identifications in terms of numbers and names.
e) The Admin to add only KSA Registered Members into KSA WhatsApp groups.

f) The Admin to NEVER add random people to a close-knit group

ii. The information shared in the group
The Admin has the right to bring down and remove non-complying members to ensure the group remains focused on its purpose.

2. The Associations WhatsApp work groups should adhere to the following guidelines:

a) Respect the purpose and objective of each group.
A “WhatsApp work group under KSA” should not be used to send messages or content of a personal nature.

b) Do not use KSA WhatsApp groups just to send memes, irrelevant videos, pictures and news, without reading and reacting to the content shared by others. The purpose of WhatsApp groups is to establish collective conversations with others, but when you only place content, but never read or interact, the existence of such groups loses their purpose. No one likes monologues.

c) Never send content, information or “news that HAS NOT been verified. Placing content whose authenticity has not been definitively proven can be very dangerous and may harm many people. KSA WhatsApp groups should not be infested with fake news and it is better to put a stop to them than to be guilty of spreading them.

d) If a member feels uncomfortable in a group for any reason, one is free to leave or “mute” the notifications. It is better to be criticized for leaving than for always complaining.

e) Before sending a complaint to a group, identify the “administrator” and share your thoughts with him/her.

f) Do not get angry if someone does not respond to your messages in a group. No one is obliged to do so. You can always send him/her a direct message.

g) Before sending a video, picture, meme or any content, analyze if such material will be in the interest of the majority of the members of the group. If NOT do not send it.

h) Avoid placing religious or political content/comment on KSA work group WhatsApp pages, since hardly all will have the same religious beliefs or political preferences. This will avoid unnecessary debates

i) Never use a group to berate someone else or air grievances. If you have an issue address it one on one with the relevant person.
j) DO NOT send any content that is violent or pornographic. It is important to always keep in mind that many people may feel uncomfortable with such content.

k) When replying to a specific comment from a person in the group, use the “reply” function to make sense of your comment and avoid confusion.

l) When you notice that you are having a dialogue with a single member of the group, consider changing the conversation to direct message, because the rest of the group may not be interested in reading your conversation with another person.

m) Keep in mind that your words can be interpreted in multiple ways, so use short sentences that cannot be misinterpreted.

n) Do not abuse emojis. There are some like this 😂 or 😞 that do not require explanation, but others like this 😞 or 😶 can be interpreted in different ways and generate confusion.

o) Avoid sending videos or files that are very large, since nobody likes to saturate the memory of their smartphone or waste their data/internet plan on such.

3. All members of KSA WhatsApp work groups to sign an adherence form of the stated guidelines before being added to the group.

4. The Association to implement a monitoring mechanism for all WhatsApp pages under its umbrella through page Admins.

5. Actions to be taken against those contravening stated guidelines to be enforced as per the KSA Constitution, POR, and KSA Communications and Public Relations Policy.

The owner of this policy will be the KSA Communications and Public Relations Department and the KSA Communications Officer will responsible for its execution.

The Admins of all KSA WhatsApp groups as defined in this policy will be required to pull down their groups within 72 hours to allow new rules to be implemented.

E. REGULATIONS REVISION HISTORY

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>29/09/2019</td>
<td>The Kenya Scouts Association WhatsApp Regulation 2019</td>
<td>National Scout Board</td>
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