1.   Background

The brief was to facilitate a self-examination by the European Scout Committee of its progress in:
1. Delivering results towards achieving the Regional Scout Plan (RSP)
2. Working together in achieving a corporate way of working
3. Working with others – key volunteers, other committees, regional staff
4. Identifying and solving problems that have occurred

2.   Methodology and Target Groups

The methodology and the target groups are set out below. ESR staff, Working Group members and a selection of NSOs were invited to contribute. Following discussions there were no 'other contacts' invited to participate, so the review is internal to Scouting.

Objective/ Target group	Interview	Questionnaire				
		RSC	ESR Staff	Core Group members	Sample of NSOs	Other contacts
1. Delivering results towards achieving the RSP		✔	✔	✔	✔	
2. Working together to achieve results		✔				
3. Working with others		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
4. Identifying and solving problems	RSC					

In total 58 questionnaires were sent out to obtain feedback on objectives 1 and 3. There were sent to:
- A random selection of NSOs (12)
- Elected members of the European Scout Committee and the Treasurer (7)
- Members of staff of the European Scout Office (10)
- Coordinators of the Working Groups (6)
- Members of the Working Groups (23)

The overall response rate is 59%.

A short questionnaire was sent to the members of the European Scout Committee and an interview, (lasting around 30 minutes) was conducted with all members using Skype to gather information for objectives 2 and 4.

3.   Results

Table 1: Delivering results towards achieving the Regional Scout Plan.
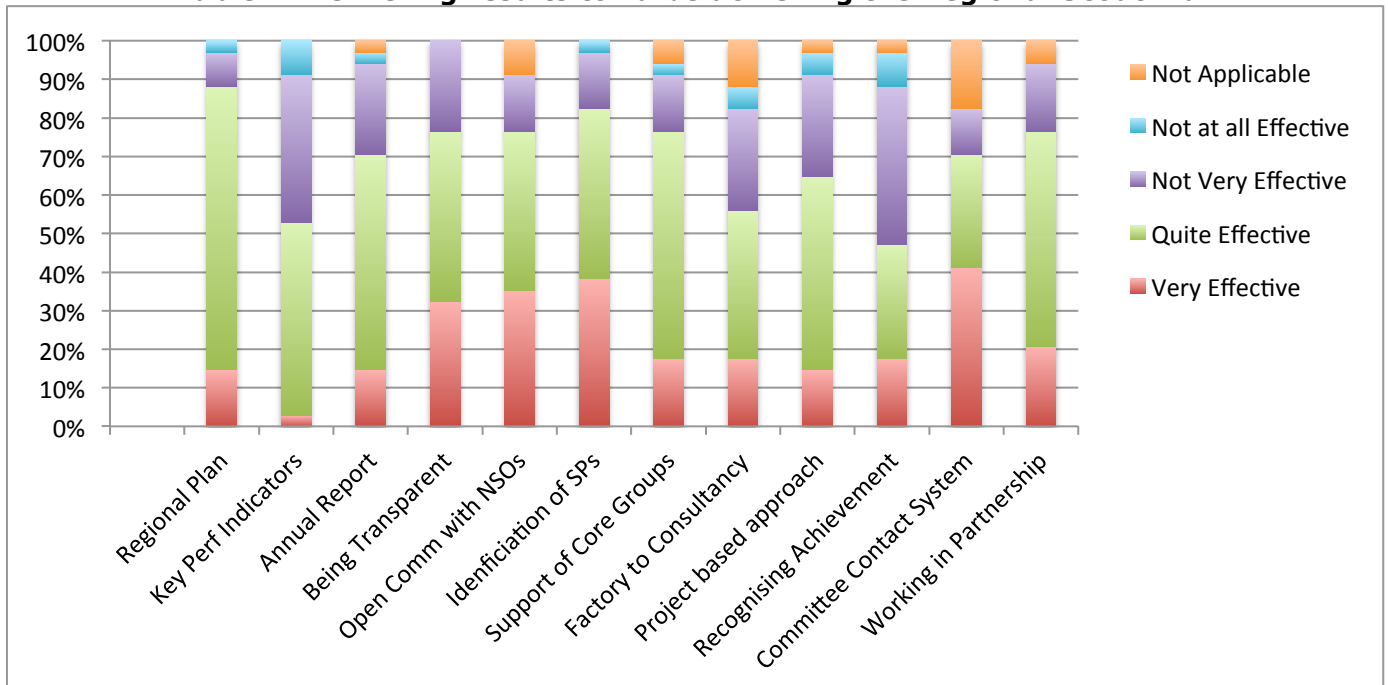
Report on the mid-term review of the European Scout Committee

In the current triennium the European Scout Committee developed an operational framework which sets out the way it 'does business' and how it works to fulfil its constitutional functions supporting the development and growth of Scouting across Europe.

Twelve elements of the operational framework were identified and respondents were invited to assess the effectiveness of each of these elements.

From the responses received the highest 'very effective' element is the committee contact system, followed closely by transparency, open communication with NSOs and identification of strategic priorities.

However the committee contact system also has the greatest variation in results and just under 20% of the respondents feel that this is not applicable and a further 13% feel that it is not at all effective, so around one third of respondents are not using this system or feel it is not at all effective.

When taking into account very effective and quite effective responses, the 'Regional Plan' scores highest, followed closely by 'identification of strategic priorities', 'working in partnership' and 'being transparent'.

The least effective are considered to be 'recognising achievement', 'key performance indicators' and the concept of 'factory to consultancy'.

Chart 2: Effectiveness of the Methods used to Involve Others
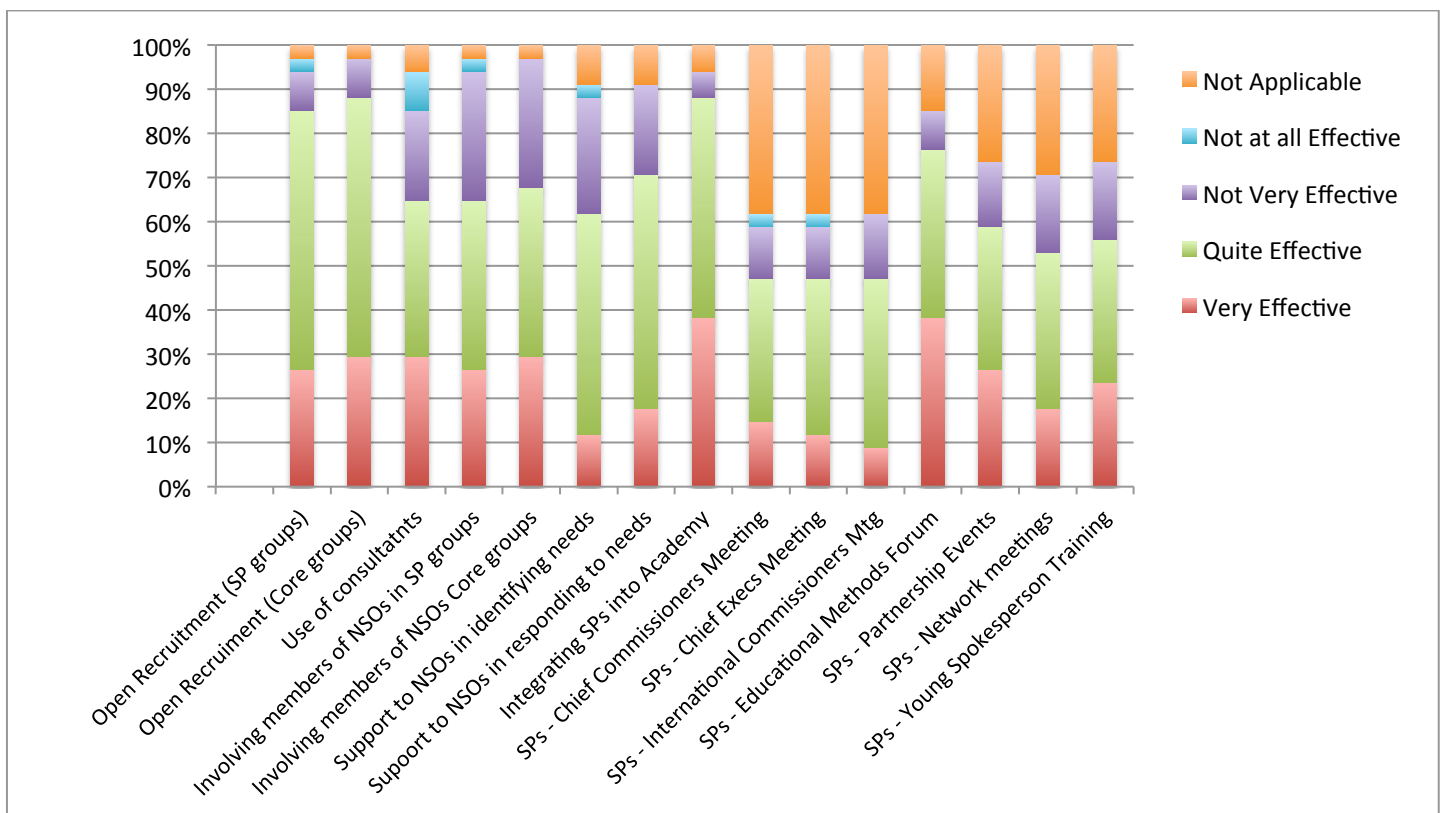
In relation to the methods used to involve others in achieving the Regional Scout Plan the most effective are considered to be integrating strategic priorities into the Academy and the Educational Methods Forum. However taking out the Academy and the EM Forum only 50-60% feel that integrating strategic priorities into events is very or quite effective and 25-40% feel that these are 'not applicable'.

In relation to involving people from NSOs in the work of the Region and helping NSOs to identify needs, the 'not applicable' and not effective results are very low. Overall the open recruitment of people to the Working Groups is seen to be effective, with the open call for members of groups scoring 85% or higher.

Comments on most Effective Methods

The comments on the methods that were considered to be most effective related mostly to

  a) *integrating strategic priorities into events* – this was felt to be very important as it targets decision makers and the messages reach many people. The Academy was highlighted as being particularly effective. Integrating strategic priorities was felt to be well done and it was recognised that this is not always easy.

  b) *responding to the needs of NSOs through the global support system and consultancy* – the process of global support seems to be clear, with the support of good consultants and effective follow up with NSOs following needs identification.

  c) *open recruitment* – it was felt that open recruitment had the potential to involve a wider group of people with a range of skills and a fresh approach. It was also recognised that more work is required to get the right people in the roles and offer good induction.

Comments on the least Effective Methods

The comments on the methods that were considered to be the least effective related to:

  a) *the open call for recruitment to core groups* – comments related to the appropriateness of those selected, based sometimes on people known by Committee members, and people selected not having the skills required. It was suggested that there should be some targeting (headhunting) to ensure groups have the skills required. The heavy workload of those involved was also commented upon, feeling that this was a demotivated factor for members of the group.

  b) *identification of needs in NSOs* – comments that this is difficult in isolation and has not always happened.

  c) *communication with NSOs* – the flow of information is through the International Commissioners is not always effective.

  d) *integration of strategic priorities into events* – respondents did not always think there was a correlation between the content of the event and the strategic priorities so not always easy to integrate them.

Overall it was felt that the Regional Plan provides background and content to the work of the Region and that support is mainstreamed through the activities and global support system.

Effectiveness of Institutional Relationships

The respondents were invited to rate the effectiveness of the institutional relationships in helping the European Scout Committee deliver results to the NSOs.

Chart 3: Effectiveness of Institutional Relationships
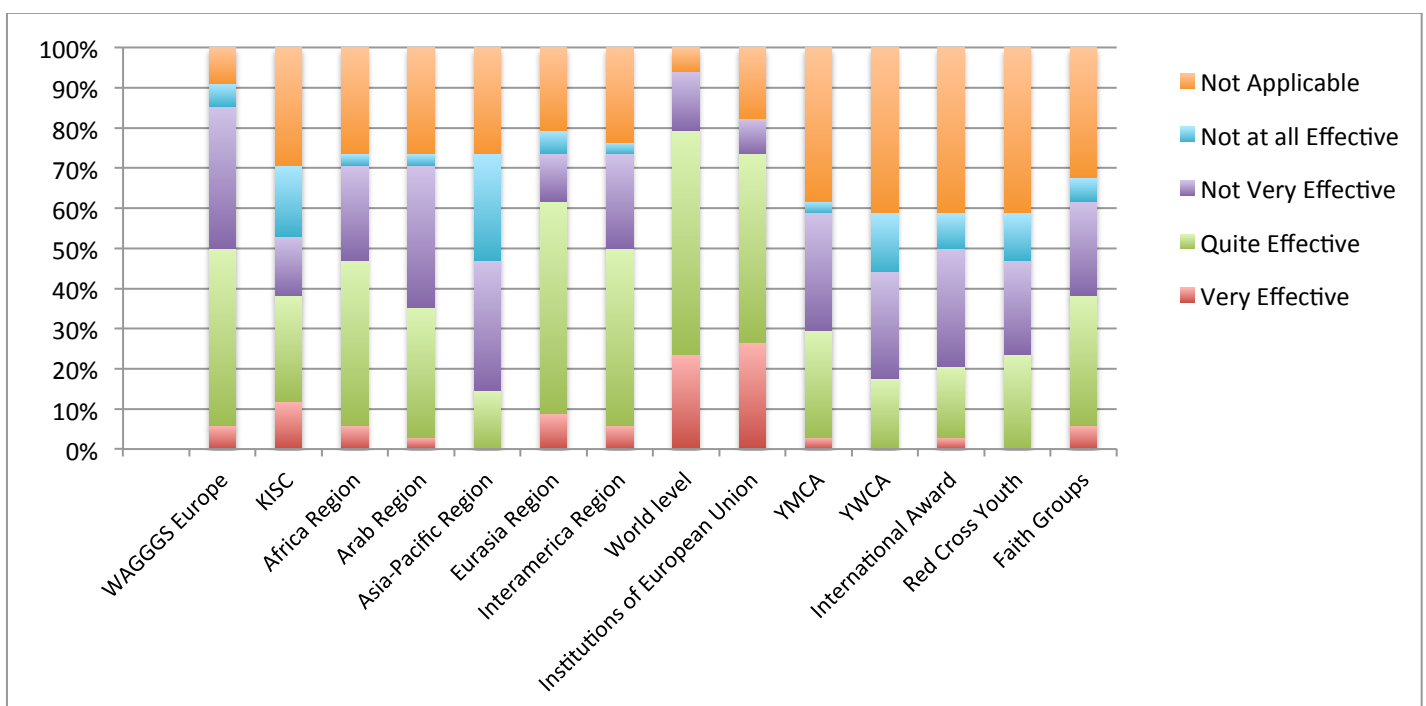
From the results the two institutional relationships that are considered to be most effective in achieving the Regional Plan are the relationship with WOSM at world level and with the institutions of the European Union. These are followed by relationships with WAGGGS Europe and the Eurasia Region. Although more than 10% of the respondents feel that the relationship with KISC is very effective, around 50% view is as 'not at all effective' or 'not applicable'.

With the exception of WOSM at world level and WAGGGS Europe, 20-45% do not see the applicability of the other institutional relationships in achieving the Regional Plan. The effectiveness of the relationships with the other Regions range from 15% (Asia-Pacific Region) to over 60% (Eurasia Region). The effectiveness of relationships with other members of the 'Big Six' and faith groups (excluding WAGGGS), in achieving the Regional Plan, ranges from 20%-40%.

Actions of the Committee that have had most impact on NSOs

The element which is considered to have had most impact on NSOs is Global Support, followed by direct contact with NSOs and contact through the Committee Contact system. The field visits to NSOs are felt to be very useful in providing support. It is also felt that direct contact provides opportunities to inspire NSOs and challenge current thinking.

Bringing people together for events, particularly the large events, where there are opportunities for learning and networking are considered to have impact on NSOs in the Region.

Effective communication with NSOs and opportunities for funding are also considered to be important and have impact.

Summary

The respondents are primarily from individuals engaged in supporting aspects of work at Regional level. A sample of NSOs (12) were invited to participate and responses were received from 6. It was not considered to be significant to separate these replies to elicit an NSO response at this stage.

From the results received it seems that many of the key elements put in place to support the growth and development of Scouting in the Region are considered to be effective.

The Scout Plan and the identification of strategic priorities, support of the core groups and working in partnership are all rated highly. Open recruitment to the working groups is scored highly and the using the Academy and Educational Methods Forum are considered useful. Integrating the strategic priorities into other events are considered less useful.

In the main, apart from the institutional relationships with WOSM at world level and the institutions of the European Region, the other institutional relationships are not considered very effective in achieving the Regional Plan.

Anne Whiteford
9.6.15