

Commissioner Moment - Special Edition

4.02.2026

Unit Service Today



Time allotted	25 minutes
Teaching format	Instructor-led discussions with PowerPoint support

Resources

Handouts	Unit Metrics Chart – 1 per person
Equipment and materials	- CM Special Edition 4.02.2026 – Unit Service Today Discussion Guide - CM Special Edition 4.02.2026 – Unit Service Today PowerPoint presentation - Computer and Projector
Resources for additional participant learning	- National Commissioner Website (https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/) - Unit Connections—A Commissioner's Guide to Positive Impact

Course Connections

Connections to other courses	MCS 316 – Unit Service Today
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 2 minutes (Slide 2)

Introduce the course objectives, noting that by the end of this session, each participant should...

- **Understand** the core concepts and approach of unit service
- **Know** the role of the commissioner and how building relationships creates partnerships
- **Be familiar with** Unit Metrics and Connections

Core Concepts and Approach of Unit Service – 5 minutes (slides 3-4)

Core Concepts of Unit Service (Slide 3)

Let's start here. This is foundational and guides our interactions with units.

Culture Statement

Be the Heart: Scouting's units are its heart; its success is dependent upon them; they deliver its programs to youth. Commissioners Support unit leaders in developing a safe, welcoming environment and delivering Scouting's programs effectively. We exist to support Scouting's heart.

Build Relationships: Commissioners must develop relationships with unit leaders we serve based on mutual respect, candor, and trust. Without that, the communication and collaboration required to effectively support units is impossible.

Change Lives: Scouting changes lives – of the youth it serves and the adults who support it (both volunteers *and* professionals). As they adopt Scouting's values, they become engaged citizens who strengthen our communities, nation, and world.

Our Purpose

Being the single best resource...

Unit leaders need to know that they have someone to go to who can either give them an answer or find an answer. While commissioners won't have the answer to every question, they should be the single best resource for unit leaders who need answers or support.

Our Objectives

Membership retention

Membership growth

While many commissioners may not be **directly** involved in recruiting and retaining youth and adult members, all commissioners **contribute to membership growth by working closely with units to ensure their** success. Growing Scouting requires commissioners to partner with volunteers throughout Scouting America, and if we do that well, Scouting's growth will be significant **and** sustainable.

Our Current Approach to Unit Service (Slide 4)

- Contemporary approach encourages commissioners to work more closely with unit leaders
- Unit metrics are more objective
- Listening to the needs of unit leaders helps commissioners be more responsive

For this approach to be effective, commissioners must be seen as trusted advisors who collaborate with units to help them achieve success. Put more focus on listening and less on data. Every council is different. Start where you are...

The role of the commissioner and how building relationships creates partnerships – 5 minutes (slides 5-7)

What is the Role of a Commissioner? (Slide 5)

At its core, the role of commissioners is to support unit leaders, provide guidance, and help ensure that every unit thrives. But the real questions are:

- Does that align with what our unit leaders experience?
- Do they walk away from each interaction feeling supported, empowered, and understood—not just in theory, but in the reality of their day-to-day challenges?

Ultimately, the measure of our success is not in what we intend but in how our leaders experience our presence alongside them.

How Can I Help? (Slide 6)

This is the first—and most powerful—question a commissioner can ask: not the vague “Let me know if you need anything,” but the intentional, action-oriented “How can I help?” It shifts from passive availability to active partnership, signaling a genuine readiness to support.

It’s more than a question—it’s a mindset. When we ask it of others and ourselves, we become more aware of needs, spot opportunities sooner, and take meaningful action to strengthen both our units and our service.

Relationship Drives Partnership (Slide 7)

Defining Relationships

Relationships are built through connection and interaction, shaped by trust, respect, and understanding. Our focus is on positive relationships—those that uplift, build confidence, and foster collaboration. Strong relationships encourage honest communication, create a sense of belonging, and reinforce that success is rooted in connection.

Defining Partnership

A partnership is working together toward a shared purpose. Effective unit service depends on strong relationships between unit leaders and commissioners. Without that foundation, meaningful support is difficult to provide.

Rather than prescribing activities, focus on three key milestones. How you achieve them will vary based on unit culture and your personal style:

- **Be known.** Make a strong first impression. Be approachable, exchange contact information, and look for opportunities to connect.
- **Be liked.** Show authenticity and kindness. Listen fully and be present.
- **Be trusted.** Be responsive, dependable, and follow through on commitments.

The Challenge

Building lasting relationships in units with frequently changing leadership—especially packs.

Unit Metrics and Connections – 10 minutes (slides 8-16)

Review of Unit Metrics (Slide 8)

Let’s take a few minutes to review the Unit Metrics:

- Key Leaders Trained
- Unit Size
- Membership Growth
- Advancement/Youth Leaders
- Outdoor Activities
- Youth Retention

Think of unit metrics as a pathway to understanding the unit’s needs.

Metrics serve three primary functions:

- **Guide conversations:** They serve as a starting point for conversations and provide insight into a unit's overall status, helping commissioners and leaders work together to strengthen program delivery—not to compare units.
- **Indicate renewal and retention:** Metrics highlight a unit's likelihood of charter renewal and long-term sustainability, reflecting leadership, membership, and program strength.
- **Focus support:** Objective thresholds identify performance trends, giving commissioners a clear way to target help where needed, without labeling results as strictly “good” or “bad.”

Data is secondary to helping units:

Caution: The danger lies in presuming that units should do it one way or that there is only one way to define success.

- Metrics are **not** intended to be a tool for us to use to tell unit leaders what they are doing wrong or point out where they fail.
- Metrics can help us determine which units might need help and which commissioners might be the best fit to help them.
- Metrics are not conclusive – they don't tell the whole story. That's where having a relationship helps us.

We need to look beyond metrics to understand how commissioners can interact effectively with units, ensuring that youth who join Scouting don't drop out due to disorganization or a lack of understanding among unit leaders.

Unit Metrics (Provide as a handout) (Slide 9)

Objective metrics set thresholds tied to unit renewal. For example, Cub Scout packs under 20 youth are less likely to renew, while Scout troops with 12+ youth can sustain two patrols and leadership roles. Data comes from Scoutbook Plus and other sources; shaded metrics (e.g., Crew/Post leadership, Outdoor Activity) rely on unit input. Recording activities is now as simple as entering a date.

Meaningful Conversations (Slide 10)

Does our approach to technology help commissioners focus on unit success?

Ask yourself: Am I merely focusing on the data itself, or am I using those metrics to figure out how I can best support unit leaders?

Data is valuable only when it drives action. Use metrics to understand each unit's situation, guide conversations, and focus support where it matters most. The goal isn't collecting data but turning insights into meaningful results.

Our tools should help identify struggling units, track goals, and provide timely support. Technology should simplify spotting trends and challenges—if it creates barriers, we need to refine or replace it.

Unit Connections (Slide 11)

Simply put, Unit Connections is based on focused conversations designed to help unit leaders provide a great, safe Scouting program.

- **Metrics:** Review membership, advancement, and participation to assess unit status.
- **Conversations:** Listen, share ideas, and build trust.
- **Goals:** Set clear, realistic targets aligned with the unit's vision.
- **Support:** Connect leaders to training, resources, and mentorship to ensure success.

Benefits of Unit Connections (Slide 12)

- Build trust, respect, and shared goals—the foundation of teamwork.
- Encourage open communication for better understanding and problem-solving.
- Promote collaboration by leveraging strengths and resources.
- Provide a support network for guidance and encouragement.
- Lay the groundwork for partnerships that drive innovation and long-term success.

Key Considerations (Slide 13)

The commissioner's role is to support and facilitate—not take over. Address challenges, but start by recognizing unit strengths and successes. Empower leaders to create and carry out their own solutions, offering guidance on goals as needed.

Building relationships takes time—stay consistent and persistent. Trust is essential: respect confidentiality, focus recorded visits on facts and support needs, and avoid personal details or quotes. Escalate sensitive issues only through proper commissioner channels to balance privacy with accountability.

To support these conversations, Connection Guides are available for each of the six metrics. Found on unit and district dashboards, they provide simple, leading questions to guide unit-level discussions. A QR code also links directly to the full library.

Key Considerations—Commissioner Tools (Slide 14)

Connections should be simple and focused—capturing not just what happened, but the essence of the conversation in a clear, actionable summary that informs next steps.

Why document in Commissioner Tools?

- Turns conversations into a shared communication tool
- Preserves context with a reliable history
- Supports better decisions by capturing what matters
- Reveals patterns and trends, helping anticipate needs and address challenges early

Outdoor Activity (Slide 15)

Units own the metrics. Commissioners help unit leaders understand the benefit of entering activity in Scoutbook or My.Scouting. An unmarked metric does not necessarily indicate a lack of outdoor activity or program.

The unit may track activity using another platform... and that's okay.

Unit Goals (Slide 16)

Commissioner Tools are not intended to track and monitor unit goals. It is a way for commissioners to stay informed about what the unit considers important.

- Units own their goals

- Units decide whether to set goals or not to set goals
- Commissioners do not mandate

Commissioner Tools is a means of communication for noting and commenting on goals.

Defining Success (Slide 17)

Success looks like this:

- Unit leaders feel supported and empowered—with the tools, resources, and confidence to deliver great programs.
- Commissioners feel valued, see their impact, and take pride in their role.
- Service is rewarding—and fun—built on camaraderie, connection, and purpose.
- Recruiting new commissioners becomes easier because the role is seen as meaningful and worthwhile.
- Support remains flexible, adapting as unit needs change.

The result: stronger units, more satisfied leaders, and more youth staying engaged.

Success will vary by council or district, depending on local goals and needs.

Summary/Conclusion – 1 minute

Summary

Start with where you are...The impact we have can reach farther than any spreadsheet can show.

You should now:

- **Understand** the core concepts and approach of unit service
- **Know** the role of the commissioner and how building relationships creates partnerships
- **Be familiar with** Unit Metrics and Connections

How Can We Help?

This should be the first question a commissioner asks; it should guide all we do; it will enable us to partner with the unit leaders we support to serve more youth better through Scouting.

Let's talk...

Questions? – 2 minutes