

Factsheet:

43: InTouch Systems

Last updated: February 2022

Last reviewed: February 2022

1. Overview:

This factsheet provides information about what an InTouch System is and what it is needed for. For full information and requirements please see the 'InTouch' Policy Document available in the resources section of the SSAGO website.

You can also find information about how to set up a InTouch system on The Scouts Website:

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/intouch/>

2. What is an InTouch System:

An InTouch System is a procedure set up to ensure that in the case of an emergency during a SSAGO event a SSAGO member's next of kin can be contacted and a SSAGO member can be contacted by their next of kin.

InTouch Systems are likely to vary depending on the type of event that they are for. Each system should have a person designated to be the person responsible for making and receiving contact with next of kin. For some events this will be a member of the club committee. For others, such as a weekend camp, this is better and more likely to be a Third Party who is unconnected to the group.

Club committee's are responsible for organising the suitable InTouch System for every event and ensuring members know the procedures where necessary.

3. When do we need an InTouch System?:

Every SSAGO event MUST have an InTouch System. This means that weekly socials and weekend camps all have to have a suitable system put in place.

When you attend a SSAGO National Event the whole time you are on the event the event organisers will have an InTouch System in place in case of emergency. However, you must ensure that there is a suitable InTouch System organised for your club traveling to and from National Events.

For events involving under 18s it is especially important to have a detailed InTouch system that manages procedures working with SSAGO, The Scouts, Girlguiding and your Students

Union.

4. Creating an InTouch System

- A. Consider how the communication with the following people will work:
 - a. Event Organisers
 - b. Participants (Everyone at the Event)
 - c. Emergency Contacts
 - d. National SSAGO & Students Union
- B. Decide how event organisers and emergency contacts will communicate, what contact details for them will need collecting and if what information or advice they will need providing with.
- C. Decide how participants and their emergency contact will communicate. At SSAGO events participants are free to be contacted directly by people not at the event during the event.
- D. Confirm how communication with National SSAGO and your Students Union will work in the event of an emergency. Ensure it follows the requirements outlined in the 'Accident and Incident Reporting' Policy Document.
- E. Decide if participant records need to be held by a person not present at the event as a Home Contact as detailed in this Policy Document.
- F. Confirm how the local Commissioner or their designate be contacted in the case of an emergency at any point during the event.
- G. Where a mobile telephone is being relied upon for communication there needs to be a plan in place for if there is no signal and consideration to how the phone will be kept charged.

5. Collecting Information for an InTouch System:

All the information required to be collected is listed on the SSAGO Emergency Information Sheet in the 'InTouch' Policy Document. Clubs should hold members' names, date of birth, address, telephone numbers and email addresses plus full contact details of their next of kin (ie the person to contact in the case of an emergency). Clubs should also gather information about any medical or dietary information. This is useful to have in case a person has an accident and is taken to hospital/requires treatment. On the side, having this information will also help clubs to plan events that are suitable for all members to join in with. This information can be collected when a person first becomes a member of SSAGO. Club committee's should however ensure that members are asked to update their records should any information change.

All this information is collected and stored for you on the SSAGO website, with all the members of your club or event committee given access online through their SSAGO account. You can also use the website to export this information to a spreadsheet or print

it out.

6. What do we need to take on events?:

In order to be able to make contact with members' next of kin it is essential that all events have a designated person carrying relevant information. For a weekly social at least details of participants' next of kin should be taken, the participant's date of birth and address may also be carried if you wish. Such information would help to find medical records if a person was taken to hospital. Any information brought to the social must be available in the case of an emergency. If you have a member with a medical condition it may be worth making a note of this on the record that is carried just in case of emergency.

If a Third Party is being used as the person to make contact in the case of emergency (most likely to be if clubs were away for the weekend or out on a night hike but there may be other occasions when this is deemed more appropriate) this person must be supplied with names and contact details of the next of kin of all participants.

When you book onto a National Event all of this information is supplied in the booking page.

7. Reliance on Technology:

If information regarding members is stored on a computer it may be worth keeping a paper copy as back up incase anything goes wrong with the machine. It may be deemed appropriate to take a laptop to a social event with all the relevant information stored on it. Consideration needs to be given to how to ensure the laptop has power throughout the evening and therefore whether this is the most suitable form in which to take the records to an event.

If you're relying on the SSAGO website to access the data then you should consider if you will have reliable access to the internet and what to do if there are issues with the website.

If you decide to rely on a mobile telephone as a method of communication or storage of information careful consideration must be given to what will happen in the event of there being no signal, of something happening to the mobile phone to stop it working or if the battery runs flat. This does not mean you can not use a mobile phone to communicate but it does mean that you should check out how much signal there is and how you can charge it before you decide to rely on it for an event.

8. Examples

The following gives some examples of activities SSAGO clubs may take part in and suitable InTouch systems.

Weekly Social Event

1. The club holds details (including next of kin) for all their club members on the SSAGO website, a member of committee brings a offline copy of this to each social. They all have

mobile phones with them and other committee can access the details using reliable signal and WiFi in the city centre.

2. The organisers contact details are included in all information provided about the event.
3. Communications with people not on the event are left to each individual.
4. Organisers have contact details of the SSAGO Exec and a list of which club members are attending.

(Multi-)Club Social Camp

1. Members are required to book onto the event on the SSAGO website, giving the event organisers their next of kin details for those outside their club. A copy is printed and held centrally. The organisers have mobile phones if they need to contact anyone. They also have an event website that they can update with general messages.
2. Contact details of the organising team are made available.
3. Communications with people not on the event are left to each individual.
4. Organisers have contact details of the SSAGO Exec and have read the relevant SSAGO policies. They also keep a centralised record of those who have turned up at the event along with their next of kin details.

Club Caving Weekend

1. The club holds details (including next of kin) for all their club members on the SSAGO website, which they take on each event. They have mobile phones with them and there is a phone at the bunkhouse where they are staying.
2. The organisers contact details are included in all information provided about the event.
3. Communications with people not on the event are left to each individual.
4. Organisers have contact details of the SSAGO Exec and a list of which club members are attending.

National Rally

The National Event Committee organise an InTouch Policy for the Rally. Which looks as follows:

1. Members are required to book onto rally on the SSAGO website, giving the event organisers their next of kin details. A copy is printed and held centrally. The organisers have mobile phones if they need to contact anyone. They have a designated home contact who has access to all the information by being an admin on the event and they can use this person if they need to make contact with multiple people. They also have an event website that they or the home contact can update with general messages.
2. Contact details of the organising team are made available using the Rally Hotline.
3. Communications with people not on the event are left to each individual.
4. Organisers have contact details of the SSAGO Exec and have read the relevant SSAGO policies. They also keep a centralised record of those who have turned up at the event along with their next of kin details.

Shared travel to a National Rally

Two clubs are looking to share a minibus to a rally. As club organised travel to a national event this isn't covered by the Rally InTouch Policy. As members of both club committees will be travelling on the minibus it is decided each club will use it's InTouch policy for regular meetings while travelling.

9. Differences from Girlguiding:

Girlguiding instead uses the Home Contact system for event's taking place outside of the regular meeting place and time. You can find more details here:

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/running-your-unit/safeguarding-and-risk/managing-risk/setting-up-a-home-contact-system/>

SSAGO only requires a dedicated (non-participant) Home Contact in the following situations:

- There's an under 18 member of Girlguiding in attendance, outside of events taking place at a set time and place,
- The event takes place outside of the UK
- A Rally, Ball or other event as requested by the Exec.
- Where event organisers decide it is appropriate.

As part of the accommodations for accepting a young person from Girlguiding clubs will be able to choose a fixed location or 'meeting place' (which should be Scout, Guide or University buildings) and time (e.g. Wednesday 1900-2100). Events which do not take place at the meeting place and take place at a different time will require a home contact. You can find details of this on the Girlguiding website.

10. Further Information:

More information on the requirements of an InTouch System can be found in the 'InTouch' Policy Document available in the resources section of the SSAGO website. Anyone who requires further clarification should contact the SSAGO exec (exec@ssago.org.uk).

Please be reminded that the National Exec can ask what your InTouch System is for ANY of your club events. If you are unsure of the requirements please ask. It is always better to Be Prepared!