



NCAP Circular No. 8

NCAP elevates camps to new levels of excellence...

National Council, Boy Scouts of America

November 4, 2016

NCAP Releases Standard Revisions for 2017 Season

At its October 17, 2015 meeting, the NCAP Committee considered and adopted revisions to the BSA National Camp Standards that will take effect in 2017. All of the revisions released this year are considered to be clarifications of existing Standards and Recommended Practices, so a delayed effective date was not deemed necessary. NCAP is also releasing a change to the COPE and Climbing Standards that will become effective in 2018 and a change to the Continuous Camp Improvement Standard that will become effective in 2019. These changes are being released now to give councils and camps time to prepare.

The majority of changes in the 2017 revisions reflect the finalization of the Interim Shooting Sports Program Standards released in **NCAP Circular No. 7**. In the interest of keeping the National Camp Standards simpler, the multiple interim shooting sports standards were consolidated into the existing shooting sports Standards PS-213 (shooting sports: archery, which now includes sporting arrows) and PS-214 (shooting sports: firearms programs, which now includes the Boy Scout pistol safety and marksmanship program, cowboy action shooting, chalk balls, and the multigun airsoft experience). The interim standards for personal watercraft (PS-201.1) and all terrain vehicles (PS-205) remain in interim form as some additional adjustments to environmental requirements may be made.

The other major changes to the National Camp Standards for 2017 include updates to clarify that the camp health officer/camp director review of medical records is mandatory.

This edition of the **NCAP Circular** sets forth the final changes to the National Camp Standards for 2017, which are shown with new language shown in underline and deleted language shown in ~~strike-through~~. Commentary giving the rationale for the Standard or Recommended Practice revision or addition follows each Standard or Recommended Practice, but is not part of the Standard or Recommended Practice.

Revised Standard

PS-206. COPE AND/OR CLIMBING PROGRAMS

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

....

C.

8. Measures are in place to provide for the safety of everyone at the program site, including observers. Everyone must be belayed or tethered ~~anchored~~ when within 8 feet of an edge where a fall of more than 6 feet could occur. All zip line staff who are working on

launch or landing areas where the staff member can come in contact with a moving participant must be tethered.

INTERPRETATION

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[Insert new paragraph between Soft Goods and Proper Belay:]

Life Safety Systems: Life safety systems are generally required where a fall of more than 6 feet could occur. Some low COPE course elements such as "The Wall" may have a fall potential of more than 6 feet. Proper spotting techniques or life safety systems may be acceptable practices on these elements.

Acceptable rappel belay methods: Rigged using a releasable rappel or other belay system that allows participants to be quickly and safely lowered if the rappel device becomes jammed.

- Recommended: Double-line rappel with an independent belay line
- Recommended: Single-line rappel with an independent belay line
- Acceptable: Double-line rappel with a fireman's belay
- Acceptable: Single-line rappel with a fireman's belay

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REFERENCES

Many states regulate some or all COPE elements and may require permits. See Standard AO-801. Staffing requirements are set forth in SQ-409. Facilities requirements are set forth in FA-715. Additional information on COPE and Climbing programs may be found in *Belay On!*, No. 300-530.

Rationale for the Revision

The first change to Specific Requirement C.8 clarifies language to use “tethered” rather than “anchored” to improve consistency.

The second change to Specific Requirement C.8 codifies the best practice that zip line staff working on launch or landing areas that may contact a moving participant must be tethered. This change is required to ensure that the staff member is not dislodged from their working position by such contact.

The third change adds a definition of “Life Safety System” and when they are needed and how the requirement may be satisfied.

The fourth change clarifies the COPE and Climbing task force’s determination that independent

belay lines are preferable to fireman’s belays, but fireman’s belays remain acceptable.

The fifth change adds cross references and additional considerations in administering a COPE and Climbing program.

Revised Standard

PS-213. Shooting Sports: Archery Program

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard:

A. Range requirements. The range shall be designed and posted in accordance with Design Guideline 313. Proper design and posting of the archery range. Ranges and programs that will use compound bows or crossbows must review age appropriateness and complete a risk assessment per Standards PD-111 and PD-112 before starting the program.

....

C. Safety. Qualified supervision is present at all times. There is ready access to communication and first-aid at the range.

D. Sporting Arrows Program.

This program is authorized for Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, Sea Scouts and Explorers.

1. Participants shoot proprietary Laporte “Flu-flu” arrows at foam disks launched into the air or rolled along the ground by a proprietary Bow trap manufactured by Laporte. The program may not be offered in ambient wind speeds are greater than 30 mph. The program area must be outfitted with a means of determining approximate wind speed.

2. Only the Laporte proprietary “Bowtrap” for projecting the disks is authorized.

3. Only the Laporte proprietary “Flu-flu” arrows are authorized.

4. Bows are limited to a maximum 26-pound pull.

5. In addition to the basic design in Design Guideline 313, the following requirements for BSA Design Guideline 316 – Sporting Arrows must be maintained:

a. An inner 90 degree primary fall area, which must be cleared of trees and tall vegetation.

b. An outer 180 degree safety fall area. The outside perimeter of this area must be clearly marked by a fence or a temporary fence/caution line that is well-maintained.

6. Council review and approval.

a. Prior to seeking council executive board or executive committee approval, the council has convened a task force to review: all local, state, and federal guidelines, including age restrictions, licensing and/or certification courses, equipment and personal protective equipment standards, and any other standards recommended by the original equipment manufacturer or other governing body, costs, risks to participant and staff safety, impact on other camp programs, and impacts on the camp environment. This task force must complete a risk and safety review consistent with PD-111 and ensure that the program conforms to BSA’s Sweet Sixteen of Safety.

b. The council executive board or executive committee must have reviewed the costs and risks of the proposed program prepared by the task force prior to authoriz-

NCAP Circular No. 8
PUBLICATION OF THE
 NATIONAL CAMP ACCREDITATION PROGRAM
 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Editors
 Eric Hiser
NCAP Standards Chair

Brian Gray
NCAP Staff Advisor

Published for the use and guidance of BSA council, area and region camp and camp accreditation personnel.
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ing the program. A copy of the executive board or executive committee resolution authorizing the program must be available.

c. The council has submitted its board resolution to Outdoor Programs at the National Service Center (email to outdoorprograms@scouting.org) and has written approval before conducting the course.

INTERPRETATION:

The council should specify whether it will allow personal equipment and, if so, under what conditions, in its literature.

The proper layout of a Sporting Arrows course is demonstrated in Design Guide 316 – Sporting Arrows (updated January 2016).

The Sporting Arrows video training will be available on the Shooting Sports website.

VERIFICATION:

- Observation of procedures in practice
- Councils operating Sporting Arrows courses pursuant to this Interim Standard must produce a copy of the Interim Standard, the Board resolution, national service center approval, any landowner approvals (if located off council property).
- Review the safety areas to ensure properly marked.
- Ensure safety equipment present.

REFERENCES

Design Guidelines 313 and 316 are available at:
<http://www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/Properties/Resources/DesignGuidelines.aspx>
Staffing requirements are set forth in Standard SQ-408.

Rationale for Revision

The National Council conducted pilot programs at a number of BSA resident camps. The sporting arrows program was highly regarded by participants and, when conducted in accordance with the Standards, occurred with relatively few, minor incidents. The Standard was first released as an Interim Standard in NCAP Circular No. 7. No adverse comments were received from the field on the Interim Standard and feedback from camps remains positive. To simplify the Standards, Interim Standard PS-213.1 is being consolidated into Standard PS-213.

Revised Standard

PS-214. Shooting Sports: Firearms Programs

Effective January 1, 2017

STANDARD:

If offered, the camp operates a safe, age-appropriate firearms shooting sports program.

Specific Requirements of the Standard:

- A. Shooting is confined to approved ranges. Each range is designed in accordance with guidelines at www.scouting.org/ properties, which provides examples of approved range layouts.
- B. Age-appropriate restrictions on firearms used:
1. Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts may use BB guns in council-operated programs.
 2. Webelos Scouts may use pellet rifles on a council-operated range meeting the requirements of paragraph A of this standard.
 3. Boy Scouts may use BB guns,

pellet rifles, .22-caliber rimfire, bolt action rifles, shotguns, and muzzle-loading rifles. If magazines are used, range commands must include “magazines out after firing all your shots” to ensure the firing line is safe after shots are fired, if repeaters are used.

4. Venturing youth, Sea Scouts and Boy Scouts who are 14 years of age or older, or are 13 and have completed the eighth grade may participate in the Scouting pistol safety and marksmanship program.

5. Venturing youth and Sea Scouts may use BB guns; pellet rifles; any cartridge-firing rifle with open, scope, or dot sights; shotguns; pistols; and muzzle loading rifles and pistols.

C. Safe, age-appropriate equipment is maintained in good repair. Firearms modified to fit the size of the shooters are desirable:

1. Bolt-action .22-caliber rifles used in BSA shooting sports must have a trigger pull in excess of 3 pounds and are tested with a 3-pound weight or scale at least once a week while in use. If any mechanism fails, the firearm is immediately removed from service. Test documentation is maintained.
2. All pellet rifles (CO₂, pump, break barrel, etc.) are limited to single shot, designated for target shooting, velocity of 500 to 540 feet per second, and energy levels not to exceed 732 joules per second with a minimum of 2.5 pound trigger pull. Pellet rifle propellant is limited to CO₂ cylinders or air compressor/scuba tanks. If scuba tanks are used, each tank must be labeled appropriately, visually inspected annually, and hydrostatically tested every five years by a qualified technician. Refilling

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of scuba tanks used for shooting sports only is conducted by qualified adults with appropriate controls. Scuba tanks used for shooting sports purposes may not be used for scuba purposes.

3. Use of approved shooting safety glasses and ear protection is required for all shooters and instructors. Ear protection is not required for BB guns and air rifles. All personal protective equipment and standard operating procedures required pursuant to Specific Requirement D shall be followed at all times the program is in operation.

4. Safe, separate, and locked storage (can be the same building) is provided for firearms, ammunition, and CO₂ cylinders and bulk tanks.

5. Qualified supervision (see SQ-407) and appropriate ratio of adult coach/instructor to youth participants is present at all times.

6. Ready access to communication and first-aid is required.

D. Prior to initiating the program in Specific Requirements E, F, G or H, the council has convened a task force to review: all local, state, and federal guidelines, age restrictions, licensing and/or certification courses, equipment and personal protective equipment standards, and any other standards recommended by the original equipment manufacturer or other governing body, costs, risks to participant and staff safety, impact on other camp programs, and impacts on the camp environment. This task force must complete a risk and safety review consistent with Standard PD-111 and ensure that the program conforms to BSA's Sweet Sixteen of Safety. Appropriate standard operating

procedures should be developed. The complete program, including standard operating procedures, must be specifically named and approved pursuant to Standard PD-112.

E. Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program requirements. Instruction shall follow the Scouting Safety and Marksmanship Program Instructor Syllabus as written. No sections shall be moved or changed. Participant range instruction must occur in the order assigned in the syllabus.

1. Each youth participant shall be provided a copy of Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship for the course. It is recommended that each youth take this copy with them as a reference for safety and maintenance of pistols at the conclusion of the course.

2. Only one type of pistol action shall be demonstrated and used per course session.

3. Only .22-caliber handguns are authorized for this program.

4. The council must submit to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of, the Shooting Sports Application identifying that the council will operate this program

F. Cowboy Action Shooting Program requirements. Instruction shall follow the "level 2" open shooting experience guidelines in the BSA Shooting Sports Manual, No. 430-938.

1. Before moving to the shooting positions, each participant shall participate in a cowboy action shooting safety briefing using the outline in BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide, No. 530-318 (2016), Appendix 4.

2. The course of fire must be clearly explained during the safety briefing so that the participants understand what they are to do at each station and when and where they are to move. No variation from the course of fire is allowed.

3. Each youth participant shall be assisted by an instructor at each shooting position.

4. No variation in the course of fire is authorized during any session. Different courses of fire, consistent with the BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide may be used at different sessions.

5. Only .22-caliber handguns, bolt-action or lever action .22 rifles, and 12- or 20-gauge shotguns are authorized for this program. Only council-maintained firearms and ammunition shall be used.

6. In addition to Specific Requirement A, each cowboy action shooting range is designed in accordance with Appendix 2 of the BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide, No. 530-318 (2016). Each shooting position shall have a "red" ready line behind each shooting position.

7. The instructor responsible for each shooting position shall load the firearms prior to the participant arriving. Participants shall not load the firearms in this program.

8. The council must submit to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of, the Shooting Sports Application identifying that the council will operate this program.

G. Chalk Ball programs. Venturers, Sea Scouts and Boy Scouts may participate in the chalk ball program. Instruction shall follow the "level 2" open shooting experience guidelines in the BSA Shooting Sports Manual, No. 430-938.

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1. Pointing any type of firearm or simulated firearm at any individual is prohibited. Participants shall shoot at targets that are neither living nor human representations.

2. Before moving to the shooting positions, each participant shall participate in a safety briefing using the outline in *BSA Chalk Ball Program Guide*, No. 530-317 (2016), Appendix 4.

3. The trail and rules of the trail must be clearly explained during the safety briefing so that the participants understand what they are to do at each station and when and where they are to move. No variation from the trail and its defined shooting areas is allowed.

4. No variation in the trail and stations is authorized during any session. Different trails and stations, consistent with the *BSA Chalk Ball Program Guide* may be used at different sessions.

5. Range staff must accompany the participants along the trail and at each station. Range staff shall carry the markers between shooting positions. Range staff shall carry markers in a box between shooting stations.

6. Only paintball markers using chalk balls or paintballs are authorized for this program. The camp will need an adequate number of chalk ball containers (15 recommended) and targets (10 metal targets and 6 cowbell targets recommended). Only council-maintained equipment and chalk balls shall be used.

7. The camp will need a supplier/vendor to refill 20-ounce CO₂ canisters. Alternatively, the camp will need an approved CO₂ cylinder (two 50-pound cylinders are recommended) and several 20-ounce CO₂ canisters (a mini-

mum of eight is recommended). If the alternative is chosen, the camp must follow training and safety requirements outlined in its risk review (see Specific Requirement D).

8. The Laporte throwing system and Flashball® program or any program shooting a flying target are not authorized under this Standard.

9. Each range is designed in accordance with Appendix 2 of the *BSA Chalk Ball Program Guide*, No. 530-317 (2016). Each shooting position shall have a “red” ready line behind each shooting position.

10. Each chalk ball course shall have a radio or telephone, a first aid kit, and adequate number of face masks for the number of participants. Face masks must be cleaned between participants.

11. The council must submit to the National Council, Outdoor Programs, and retain a copy of, the *Shooting Sports Application* identifying that the council will operate this program.

H. Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Program requirements. Venturers, Sea Scouts and Boy Scouts may participate in the multi-gun airsoft experience program. The program shall follow the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide*, No. 510-316.

1. Only airsoft guns and accessories listed in Appendix 7 of the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide* are permitted. All airsoft guns must be obtained from an approved supplier listed in Appendix 6.

2. Fully automatic operation of airsoft guns is not authorized. All guns must be set to semiautomatic or single shot position. A gun that fires multiple airsoft pellets at a trigger pull, but does not continue

to fire, is not considered fully automatic.

3. Each range is designed in accordance with the section “Airsoft Range Layout” and Appendices 8 and 9 of the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide*. Each shooting position shall have a ready line and a control line behind each shooting position. The coach and instructor must be able to see all areas at all times.

4. Each range shall have a radio or telephone, a first aid kit, and an adequate number of safety glasses for the number of participants.

INTERPRETATION:

A .22-caliber rimfire, bolt-action rifle is defined as either (1) a breech-loading, single-shot, bolt-action rifle or (2) a repeater bolt action rifle with a box magazine. Tubular, extended, or high-capacity magazines are not allowed. Trigger pull will be three pounds. Effective in 2013, a participant can load more than one round directly into the box magazine and shoot.

A pistol is defined as: (1) .177-caliber air pistol with a 2.5-pound trigger pull; open, scope, or dot sights; air, CO₂, or precharged pneumatic; or (2) a cartridge-firing pistol with a three-pound trigger pull; open, scope, or dot sights.

It is recommended that 20-, 16-, or 12-gauge semiautomatic shotguns be used. ~~Scuba tanks used for shooting sports purposes may not be used for scuba purposes.~~

The council should specify whether it will allow personal equipment and, if so, under what conditions, in its literature. Consult the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual* for additional guidance.

The current *Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Program Syllabus* is available at the BSA Ad-

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vanced Pistol Safety and Marksmanship Class.

Paint balls are authorized as an alternative to chalk balls under Specific Requirement G.

VERIFICATION:

- Observation of procedures in practice
- Review of Shooting Sports Application, council's Standard PD-112 risk and safety review, and standard operating procedures and compliance with cited manuals and guides if programs pursuant to Specific Requirements E, F, G or H are offered.

- Review of course operation consistency with FIRST Steps Syllabus and standard operating procedures.

- Verify age, equipment and permission slip controls

REFERENCES

Staffing standards are set forth in Standard SQ-407.

Sample standard operating procedures are available in Appendix 3 of the BSA Shooting Sports Manual. Please note that the Manual has not yet been fully updated to reflect the programs in Specific Requirements E, F, G and H.

Program information for the Scouting pistol safety and marksmanship program, including sample budgets and permission forms, is available at:

[http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/430-607\(16\)_WEB.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/430-607(16)_WEB.pdf)

Participant completion cards may be purchased by the council from National Supply using SKU 623012.

The current BSA Cowboy Action Shooting Program Guide is available at:

[http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/510-318\(16\)_WEB.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/510-318(16)_WEB.pdf)

The current BSA Chalk Ball Program Guide is available at:

[http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/510-317\(16\)_ChalkBall.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/510-317(16)_ChalkBall.pdf)

The current BSA Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Manual is available at:

<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/mga.pdf>

Rationale for the Revision

The National Council conducted pilot programs at a number of BSA resident camps. The programs were highly regarded by participants and, when conducted in accordance with the Standards, occurred with relatively few, minor incidents. Each of these new programs: Boy Scout pistol safety and marksmanship program, cowboy action shooting program, chalk ball program, and multi-gun airsoft experience program, were initially released in NCAP Circular No. 7 as Interim Standards. No adverse comments were received from the field on the Interim Standards and feedback from camps remains positive. To simplify the Standards, Interim Standard PS-214.1 through 214.4 are being consolidated into Standard PS-214.

Revised Standard

SQ-403. Camp Management

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

- A. ...
- 2. Training
 - a. For resident, trek, specialty-

adventure, and high-adventure camps, possesses a valid certificate of training from the Camp Director or Resident Camp Administration section of National Camping School.

...

B. ...

2. Training:

- a. For resident camps, possesses a valid certificate of training from the Resident Camp Program Director or Resident Camp Administration section of National Camping School.

....

D. The council's family camp administrator:

2. Possesses a valid certificate of training from the Resident Camp Director or Resident Camp Administration section of National Camping School.

INTERPRETATION:

[Replace second and third paragraph as follows:]

The director of a subcamp in a multiple-camp facility possesses a valid certificate of training from one of the following National Camp School sections: Resident Camp Director, Resident Camp Program Director, former Resident Camp Administration, former Resident Camp Management, or former Program section.

Camp directors holding a valid certificate of training from the former Resident Camp Administration or Resident Camp Management sections of National Camping School meet the requirements of this standard.

Rational for the Revision

After review, the National Camping School has determined that it is preferable to return to separate sections for Camp Directors and

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Program Directors. This will start in 2017. The former Resident Camp Administration or Day Camp Administration training remains valid for Program Directors until the National Camping Card expires.

Standard Revision

SQ-407 Firearms Range Staff

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard:

A. ***Boy Scout or Venturing day, family, and resident camps; trek camps; specialty-adventure camps; high-adventure camps.***

1. Program supervision. The firearms program is supervised by a shooting sports director, at least 21 years of age, who holds a valid certificate of training from the Shooting Sports section of National Camping School.
 - a. The shooting sports director must hold current NCS and NRA or USAA credentials in each discipline (rifle (also includes pellets and BBs), shotgun, muzzleloading, pistol and archery) offered at the camp.
 - b. If an individual trained as a BSA shooting sports director is not available, the camp may be granted a waiver so that the shooting sports program may be operated by military, law enforcement, 4-H, or NRA instructors for one season only.
 - c. The shooting sports director must be in camp when any firearms range is in use.

d. An NCS trained shooting sports director is not required if the camp offers only a chalk ball, paintball or airsoft program and no other shooting sports program.

2. ***Firearms range supervision.*** Each firearms range must have an NCS shooting sports director or NRA Instructor 21 years of age or older in charge of the firing line at any time it is in operation. A chalk ball/paintball course is subject to Specific Requirement A.6 in lieu of this requirement. An airsoft range is subject to Specific Requirement A.7 in lieu of this requirement.

....

4. ***Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program instructor requirements.***
 - a. Each instructor must be an NRA certified pistol instructor.
 - b. At least two of the instructors or RSOs on the range must also hold a Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program certificate.
 - c. Only an instructor holding the Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program certificate may serve as lead instructor for the classroom portion of the course and shall present the material. Other NRA certified pistol instructors may assist participants, but may not present material.
 - d. Only an RSO holding the Scouting Pistol Safety and Marksmanship program certificate may serve as the

range supervisor/RSO for this program. This individual may not serve as an instructor for purposes of the instructor to student ratio. No more than 6 participants shall be supervised by the range supervisor/RSO.

e. The instructor-to-student ratio when on the range working with the firearms in this program is one NRA certified pistol instructor to every two participants.

5. Cowboy action shooting program instructor requirements.

a. Each shooting position will have an NCS or NRA-certified pistol, rifle or shotgun instructor, depending on the firearm at the shooting position.

b. Notwithstanding Specific Requirement A.2, the range supervisor must hold a current NRA RSO certification in addition to any other required certifications.

6. Chalk Ball program instructor requirements. Notwithstanding Specific Requirement A.1, A.2 and A.3, the chalk ball trail/course shall be under the supervision of an NRA-certified RSO.

7. Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience.

a. Each bay in a multi-gun airsoft experience must be supervised by an airsoft instructor, who must be a BSA BB-gun range master, BSA shooting sports director or an NRA instructor, and all of whom also require an airsoft endorsement. An airsoft endorsement may be granted by

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the local Scout Executive (or designee) if the requirements of Appendix 5 of the *Multi-Gun Airsoft Experience Operations Guide* are met. The endorsement is evidenced by a card good for two years.

b. It is recommended that each bay also have a coach, who is an individual authorized by the airsoft instructor. If there is no coach, the airsoft instructor shall perform the duties of coach.

INTERPRETATION:

For 2016 only, if a camp operates only traditional firearms courses not subject to Interim Standards PS-214.1, PS-214.2, PS-214.3 or PS-214.4, the camp may operate pursuant to existing Standard SQ-407 in lieu of Interim SQ-407. But if the camp offers any of the additional programs, then it must also comply with SQ-407 as it applies to that program. Subject to this exception for 2016 only,

NCS shooting sports directors shall hold current NCS, NRA or USAA/NFAA certification in each discipline that they supervise at camp. A camp may utilize multiple NCS shooting sports directors to fulfill this requirement. The staff plan shall detail which NCS shooting sports director supervises which programs and this shall be made available to the camp assessment team.

Shooting at camp properties other than as part of a camp subject to this Standard must meet the requirements of the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* requires different supervision outside of the supervised camp environment.

Information on obtaining the *Scouting pistol safety and marksmanship program training certification* may be obtained from Outdoor Programs or NCAP.

For the multi-gun airsoft experience, the instructor must hold a current airsoft endorsement. An NRA range safety officer (RSO) is not considered a qualifying certification because the training differs from that of an NRA Instructor.

REFERENCES

Additional recommendations for operating a shooting sports program are found in the *BSA Shooting Sports Manual*.

History: CSTF 2013; Rev. Circ. 7 (interim); Circ. 8.

Rationale for the Revision

These changes were introduced as part of the Shooting Sports Interim Standards released effective April 15, 2016. They were field tested during the pilot project period and again during 2016. The National Camp Accreditation Program is now adopting these revisions permanently.

Revised Standard

SQ-408. Shooting Sports: Archery Staff

Effective January 1, 2017

STANDARD:

The archery range must be supervised by trained and qualified persons at least 18 years of age. A National Camping School-trained shooting sports director or USA Archery/National Field Archery Association instructor must train the archery range master and issue a training course pocket certificate.

The certificate must be renewed every two years. A Sporting Arrows range operated pursuant to Interim Standard PS-213.1 must be supervised by a USAA/NFAA Level 1 instructor at least 18 years of age who has successfully completed the Sporting Arrows module, and who may supervise a maximum of three participants at a time.

INTERPRETATION

The Sporting Arrows training module is available on the Outdoor Programs website.

VERIFICATION:

- Documentation of age
- Relevant certificates on file (may be submitted with declaration)
- Observation of program implementation during assessment

REFERENCES

Design Guidelines 313 and 316 are available at:

<http://www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/Properties/Resources/DesignGuidelines.aspx>

History: CSTF 2013; Circ. 7 (Interim); Circ. 8.

Rationale for the Revision

This revision is part of Interim Standard SQ-413.1 and is being finalized along with the rest of the Interim Standard (which is codified at PS-213).

Revised Standard

SQ-409. COPE and Climbing Staff

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

[In Specific Requirement C, change row 14 (Portable Climbing Wall Facilitator) as follows:]

Revised Standards for 2017 *continued*

Staff Member

Portable Challenge Structure
Facilitator

Required Training

COPE & Climbing Foundation
Level II training and manufacturer
authorized training

INTERPRETATION

[Add at end of existing Interpretation section]

Program site: For the purposes of this standard, program site is defined as the general location of COPE and/or climbing activities, which may be separated by a reasonable distance, but still able to be supervised by a single director or Level II Instructor.

Rationale for the Revision

The COPE and Climbing task force has changed the name of the portable climbing wall facilitator to portable challenge structure facilitator to more clearly indicate the scope and added a Level II training requirement based on the risk of incidents. The task force also clarified that the Level II Instructor can supervise reasonably adjoining courses, but cannot supervise remote courses. The revision ensures that the Level II Instructor is available should a participant get into difficulty on the course.

Revised Standard

SQ-410. Trek Leadership and Staff

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

A. The trek director must be at least 21 years of age and hold a current certificate of training from the Trek Leader section of National Camping School. If another

member of the staff holds a current certificate of training from the Trek Leader section of National Camping School, then the trek director may hold a current certificate of training from the Resident Camp Director or former Resident Camp Administration section of National Camping School and have prior trek leadership training or experience

Rationale for the Change

After review, the National Camping School has determined that it is preferable to return to separate sections for Camp Directors and Program Directors. This will start in 2017. The former Resident Camp Administration or Day Camp Administration training remains valid for Program Directors until the National Camping Card expires.

Revised Interim Standard

SQ-412. Other Program Staff Qualifications

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

A. In a Boy Scout, Venturing or Sea Scout resident camp, at least one adult camp commissioner (at least 18 years of age) is on staff. These individuals may be assigned other duties. Camp commissioners have a valid certificate of training from Resident Camp Administration, Resident Camp Director, Resident Camp Program Director, Commissioner sections of National Camping School or have 6 months service as an active and trained commissioner in the BSA and have the Council Commissioner's approval and have been trained by the Camp Director with NCS training program. ~~or equivalent skills.~~

H. [Interim] If an ATV program is offered,

1. Two staff members must participate in ATV activities. At least one must be 21 years of age or older; the other must be 16 years of age or older.

2. At least one ATV staff member must hold a valid current ATV Safety Institute's instructor certification. All other ATV staff must have been trained by an ATV Safety Institute certified instructor.

3. All ATV staff must be familiar with applicable outdoor ethics principles and conservation limits on ATV activities.

INTERPRETATION:

[Delete first paragraph;]

- ~~Camp commissioner -- "Equivalent skills" may include an experienced unit, district, or council commissioner.~~
- ~~---~~
- Chaplains are encouraged to participate in the Chaplain section of National Camping School or Chaplain's course at the Philmont Training Center.

Rationale for the Revision

The first revision reflects a change at National Camping School to recognize standard BSA commissioner training when approved by the council commissioner and trained by the camp director or, in the alternative, to allow commissioners to attend one of the the current or former camp management sections.

This second revision is part of Interim Standard PS-205 and is being carried over into Standard SQ-412 to ensure consistency. It follows familiar principles of two-deep leadership and programmatic requirements set forth in PS-205. The Standard was revised to clarify the age expectations (21 years or older for the area director, 16 years

Revised Standards for 2017 continued

of age or older for other staff), previously contained in the National Council agreement and inadvertently omitted from the Interim Standard.

The first change to the Interpretation section eliminates the discussion of equivalent skills as NCAP has included the requirements for use of a commissioner in the Specific Requirements of the Standard.

The second change to the Interpretation section adds Philmont Training Center as an alternative recommendation for Chaplains.

Revised Recommended Practice RP-454. Business Manager

Effective January 1, 2017

INTERPRETATION:

Multiple camps that share a common reservation may share a common business manager and satisfy the conditions of this recommended practice. It is recommended that this individual be 21 years of age or older and attend the Resident Cmap Director section or Resident Camp Administration section of National Camping School.

Rationale for the Revision

This revision reflects the change in the title of the relevant National Camping School section.

Revised Standard

HS-507. Medical Record-keeping and Reporting

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard:

- A. ...
 - 1. ...
 - b. Trek crews shall keep daily documentation of all first aid performed during the trek, which

shall be recorded in the program’s official First Aid Log at the completion of the trek.

2. The camp health officer shall review the First Aid Log with the camp director during each camp session, not less often than once a week, to determine trends to be analyzed and any corrective actions to be taken. The camp director shall sign or initial the book during each review to indicate that the records have been reviewed.

B. All injuries, illnesses, and incidents requiring the intervention of a medical provider beyond basic Scout-rendered first aid are reported promptly following BSA guidelines. The camp health officer or his/her designee shall follow the procedures outlined in the First Aid Log to report incidents involving the intervention of a medical provider beyond camp resources. The camp director shall be immediately informed, and reports shall be filed in accordance with MyBSA/Resources/Incident reporting system.

INTERPRETATION:

Medical logs must be in a bound book with prenumbered pages. Separate books for staff and for campers shall include both medical treatment and medications administered. Electronic systems may be approved by application for variance. At a camp that does not operate for a full week, the camp health officer and camp director must meet at the end of each camp session to conduct the review required in Specific Requirement A.2.

Rationale for Revision

The changes being made are to clarify that completion of the First Aid Log is mandatory, not recommended. Similarly, the require-

ment that the camp director and camp health officer review records for trends is mandatory.

Revised Standard

FA-712. Tree Removal and Chainsaws

Effective January 1, 2017

Applies to:

[Add] COPE/Climbing

Rationale for the Revision

The COPE and Climbing task force requested that “COPE/ Climbing” be added to Standard FA-712 to ensure coverage of COPE courses anchored in trees and using chainsaws for course maintenance.

Revised Standard

FA-715. COPE and Climbing Facilities

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard

C. Until January 1, 2018, the COPE course and artificial climbing structures where the climber’s feet can exceed 6 feet above the ground surface must have an annual inspection. Effective January 1, 2018, the COPE course and artificial climbing structures shall be inspected annually by a qualified professional inspector.

D. Portable challenge structures (e.g. portable climbing walls, portable challenge courses) shall be setup, operated, maintained, inspected, and re-certified according to manufacturer’s recommendations. Effective January 1, 2018, custom fabricated portable challenge structures shall be inspected by a qualified professional inspector prior to use and annually thereafter.

Revised Standards for 2017 *continued*

[Add new subsection]

F. Effective January 1, 2018, all newly constructed COPE and Climbing facilities must have an initial acceptance inspection by a qualified third party inspector who has no vested interest in the installation or operation.

Rationale for the Revision

The COPE and Climbing task force recommended that BSA bring its practice into conformity with the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) standards. In Specific Requirement C, effective January 1, 2018, **all** COPE course and artificial climbing structures must to be inspected annually by a qualified professional. Similarly, in Specific Requirement D, pre-use and annual thereafter inspection will be required for portable challenge structures (including portable climbing walls) effective January 1, 2018. Finally, new Specific Requirement F requires newly constructed COPE and Climbing facilities to have an independent third party inspection before use. All of these requirements are being phased in starting 2018 to allow councils time to plan and budget for changes.

New Recommended Practice

RP-753. COPE FACILITY INSPECTION

Effective January 1, 2017

Recommended Practice.

The camp uses BSA recommended “Request for Proposal for BSA Challenge Course Inspections” and “Suggested Agreement with Independent Contractors and Consultants” to secure professional inspection services by qualified professional inspectors who are certified

and/or accredited by a national accrediting organization.

VERIFICATION

- Camp produces appropriate request and suggested agreement form.

REFERENCES

These documents are located at scouting.org/outdoorprograms in the COPE & Climbing section.

Rationale for the Addition

Many camps and councils have struggled with finding, retaining, and obtaining appropriate final reports from third party, ACCT recognized inspectors for their courses. The Request for Proposal and Suggested Agreement present standardized approaches to obtaining the needed documentation that all BSA local councils and camps may use.

Revised Standard

AO-810. CONTINUOUS CAMP IMPROVEMENT

Effective January 1, 2017

Specific Requirements of the Standard:

B. Effective January 1, 2019, the camp has a camp strategic improvement plan that identifies one or more areas of improvement and one or more areas of strength that the council will address over the next four to seven years, which collectively address at least five of the continuous camp improvement categories. For each identified area, the plan sets forth improvement measures, an approximate time for initiation and completion, and how the camp will determine the success of its measures.

INTERPRETATION:

....

Requirement B, effective in 2019, is the multiyear camp strategic improvement plan. It is intended that this plan ultimately work in concert with the Application and Authorization to Operate process, where the plan is prepared and submitted with the application and then updated during the Interim Progress Report. Beginning with councils submitting their Application for Authorization in 2016, councils will be rolled into this process. Until then, councils are to develop a plan that takes them to or beyond their next application period. This requirement will become an enforceable part of the standard in 2019, but councils are encouraged to start well before January 1, 2019. The camp strategic improvement plan is not a term or condition of the Authorization.

Rationale for Revision

The camp strategic impact plan is being pushed back to 2019 to give councils more time to prepare. NCAP anticipates that prior to 2019, it will release an updated *Guide to the Continuous Camp Improvement Program* to provide clear expectations for the second round of the application and authorization process.

Analysis of 2016 National Camp Assessment Results

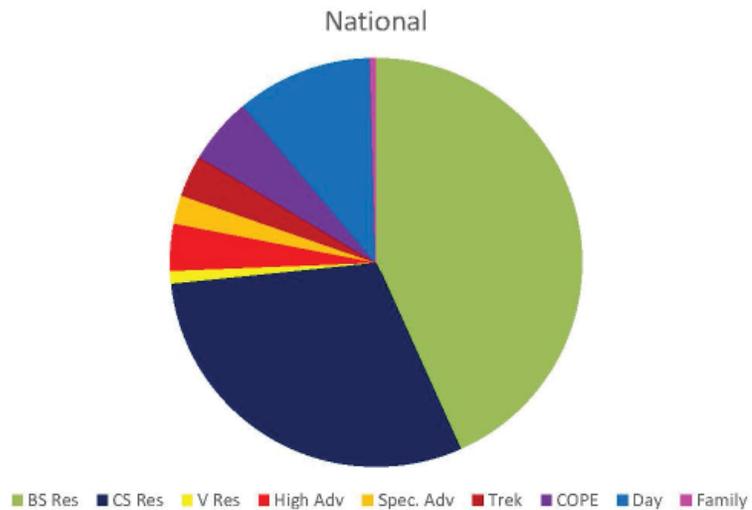
In 2016, NCAP assessed 691 total camps. A team of over 1100 volunteer assessors assisted NCAP in assessing these camps. Sixty-five training courses were offered across the United States. NCAP appreciates the efforts of these dedicated volunteers and the area assessment chairs responsible for their training. The area assessment chairs and assessment teams ensured that all Nationally-assessed camps received timely assessments. The amount of effort and planning that goes into ensuring high quality and safe programs is impressive, as is the effort of our National and local councils to develop and operate high quality camping programs. Together, our councils and camps are elevating the performance of our camps to bring a better experience to our youth!

The 2016 camp assessment assessed 691 camps with the following breakdown:

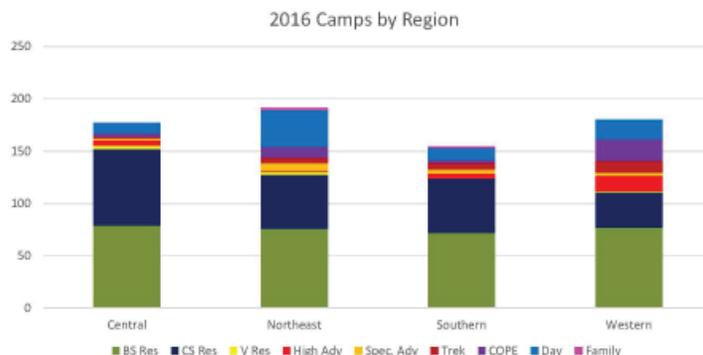
- 302 Boy Scout resident camp
- 203 Cub Scout resident camp
- 7 Venturing resident camp
- 28 High adventure camp
- 15 Specialty adventure camp
- 22 Trek camp
- 37 COPE/climbing
- 74 Day camp
- 3 Family camp
- 691 TOTAL CAMPS

177 of these camps are located in the Central Region; 191 in the Northeast Region, 154 in the Southern Region, and 180 in the Western Region. A breakdown of the camps by region and type is presented in the column at right. As can be seen, the number of Boy Scout resident camps is similar in each region, but the Central

2016 Camps by Type



2016 Camps by Region/Type



Region operates considerably more Cub Scout resident camps than the other regions. The Northeast Region reported the greatest number of Cub Day Camps, while the Western Region reported the largest number of high adventure and trek camps.

Self-Assessment Issue

The first issue that NCAP identified in the 2016 results, even before reaching the findings of the individual assessments, is that many local councils are not reporting their self-assessment results

to NCAP and the area assessment chair. This can be seen in the low number of day camp and family camps reported as assessed compared to numbers reported as day or family camping in the National Camping Report. NCAP wishes to emphasize that ***all councils conducting self-assessments must submit the self assessment forms to NCAP@scouting.org with a copy to their area camp assessment chair.*** Documenting and submitting self-assessments is critical to the BSA's ability to maintain itself as a self-regulating and accrediting body. The assis-

Analysis of 2016 National Camp Assessment Results

tance of Scout Executives, council camping professionals and council NCAP chairs is sought in ensuring that these reports are timely filed.

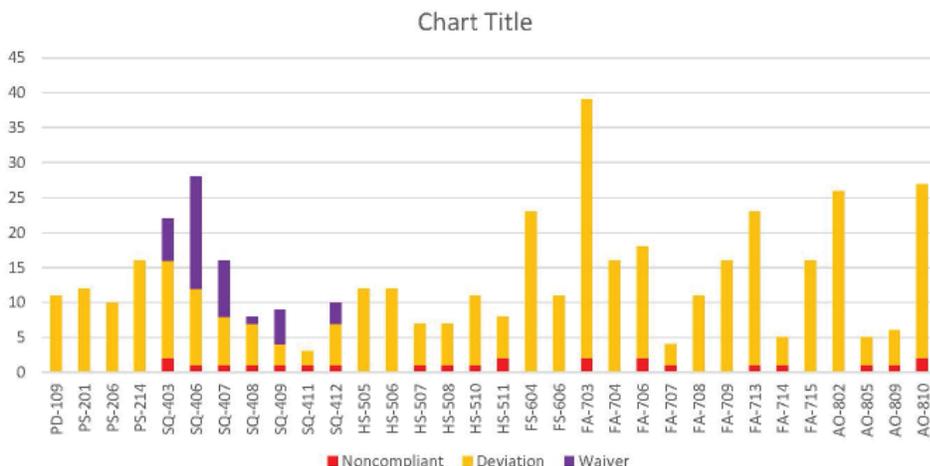
Standards Assessment

A summary of the 2016 assessment results is produced at right. The red represents the number of noncompliant findings; the yellow represents deviation findings; and the purple represents waivers that were sought from the Standard. Waivers are included because they represent an instance where the Standard is not attained in its full form. All Standards with any noncompliant findings or more than five deviation findings are shown.

Noncompliant Findings. No Standard has more than two camps with a noncompliant finding, which is encouraging. Standards with two noncompliants include SQ-403, Camp Management, HS-511, Buddy System, FA-703, Fire Detection and Prevention, FA-706, Stationary Fuel-Fired and Electromechanical Equipment, and AO-810, Continuous Camp Improvement. NCAP is pleased to note that there were no noncompliant findings for Standards HS-505 and HS-506, which have caused problems for some councils in the past. In general, the noncompliant findings are about what NCAP would expect given the sheer number of camps (nearly 700) in the BSA camping system.

Deviation Findings. The number of deviation findings increased, likely as a result of increased training of NCAP assessment team members in the proper use of deviation findings. All regions were fairly consistent in deviation findings except the Southern Region, which issued fewer than the other three compared to its number of camps.

2016 Standards Results



The Standard with the greatest number of deviation findings for the second year in a row is FA-703, Fire Detection and Prevention. NCAP’s expectation is that all fire detection and protection equipment will be fully deployed and operable throughout the camping season. If one or two smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors are found with battery issues or fire extinguishers with a missed inspection date, that may not rise to a deviation, but any additional one (or a combination of the items noted above) warrants a deviation. If the issue is systemic across multiple parts of the camp, then a noncompliant finding is warranted. Camps are encouraged to carefully inventory their fire detection and protection equipment so that it can be checked routinely throughout the camping season. These steps can help ensure proper operation of alarms, allowing prompt escape and avoided injuries and diminished property loss.

The Standard with the second greatest number of deviations (and waivers) is SQ-406, Aquatic Staff.

Many camps are having trouble recruiting aquatics directors that meet all aspects of SQ-406. Councils and camps need to be aware that there is a national shortage of trained lifeguards across the United States, estimated at close to 100,000 shortfall. This means that they are in competition for a limited supply of individuals. In addition, the Model Aquatic Health Code, which is in the process of being adopted by many jurisdictions, is increasing the requirements applicable to lifeguards and lifeguard instructors (like the BSA Aquatics Instructor). These individuals now require prior “on the water” time before they may serve in those roles. *It is incumbent upon councils and camps to think through their succession planning for aquatics directors and ensure that there is an adequate pipeline of potentially qualified individuals.* We can no longer assume that an aquatics director can be found at the last moment, not when they must already be pre-qualified as a lifeguard before being sent to National Camping School.

The Standard with the third

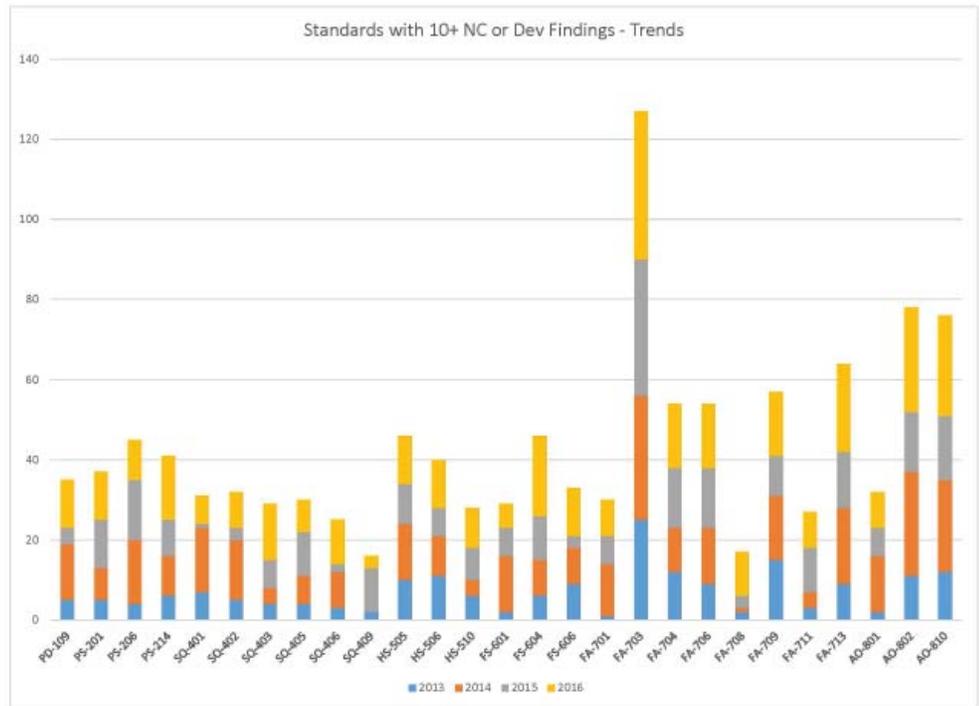
Analysis of 2016 Assessment Results *continued*

highest number of deviations is **AO-810, Continuous Camp Improvement**. Continuous Camp Improvement to improve the camper experience and sustainability of the camp is one of the pillars of the NCAP program. Scouting no longer operates in a “monopoly” position on summer camps -- we compete with the YMCA, church camps, band camps, sports camps, and specialty outdoor programs. If we do not continuously improve our product, we will not be able to compete with these other providers and one of the principal places where the “magic” of Scouting -- camp -- will become less powerful. Continuous camp improvement is critical to both our mission and our financial sustainability as a movement.

Standard AO-802 requires camps to have an Authorization to Operate. In this last year, several camps received deviations because not all authorizations were in place. NCAP is working diligently with local councils to ensure that they meet this Standard. If you are having issues, please contact both the regional camp accreditation chair and your area camp assessment chair so that they can assist you.

Other Standard with more than fifteen combined noncompliant, deviations and waivers included the following:

- **Standard FS-604, Food Storage.** NCAP is concerned because deviations and noncompliant with this Standard have been increasing. Councils are encouraged to review their food storage practices for conformity with the Standard and local ordinance. In addition, NCAP notes that the U.S. De-



partment of Agriculture has released a Model Food Code that establishes uniform standards for food storage and preparation across the United States. NCAP is evaluating possible adoption of these federally-recommended practices.

- **Standard FA-713, Hazardous Materials.** Many camps are still facing difficulties properly securing hazardous materials. In some camps, issues arise with historic preservation or similar concerns. If such concerns exist, identify a safe alternative that meets the goals of the Standard and seek a variance from NCAP.
- **Standards SQ-403, SQ-406 and SQ-407.** Many councils and camps continue to seek to use underage personnel for program directors, aquatic directors and shooting sports directors. NCAP generally

will not approve underage personnel unless the council demonstrates it used **best efforts** to locate a qualifying candidate first.

- **Standard FA-704, Conservation Plan.** Part of camp sustainability is maintaining the ecological and biological value of the camp. A proper conservation plan is an important step in this process. The Natural Resources Conservation Service and local land grant university may be resources.

Standards Trend Data

The next chart shows trend data over the length of NCAP, 2013-2016, starting from those Standards that showed 10 or more noncompliant or deviations in any year. It shows that over time Standards FA-703, Fire Detection and Prevention, AO-802, BSA Authorization, AO-810, Continuous Camp Improvement, and FA-713, Hazardous Materials have been

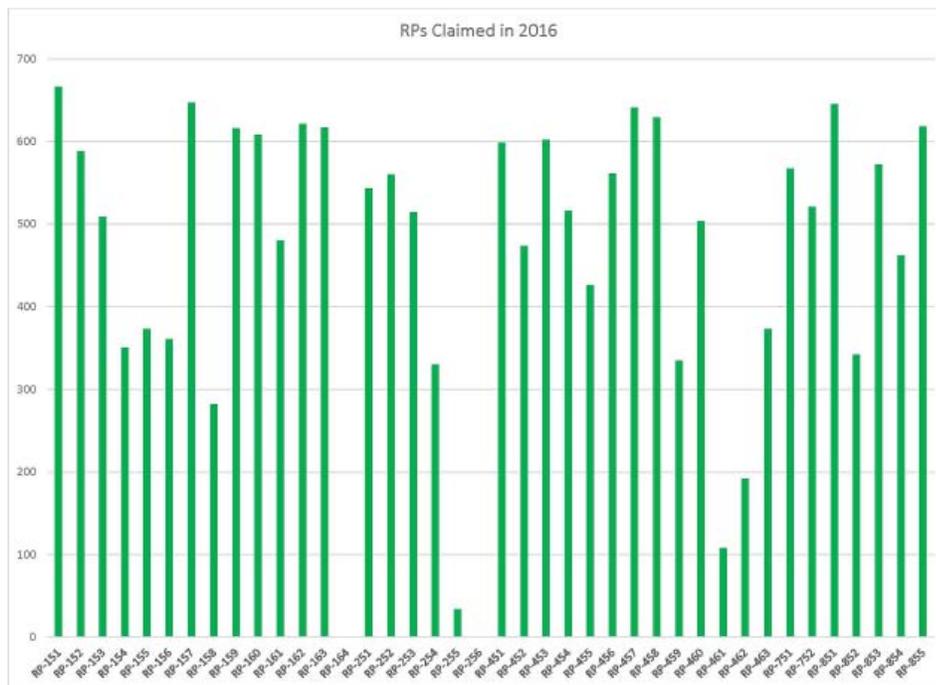
Analysis of 2016 Assessment Results *continued*

a continuing challenge for BSA camps. It also shows that after a relative improvement in 2015, performance on these Standards was worse again in 2016. All camps are encouraged to review this list and particularly the most frequently missed Standards as possible of areas for improvement in 2017 and beyond.

Recommended Practices

Most camps have adopted many of the Recommended Practices. At this time, the following Recommended Practices (RPs) have achieved sufficiently great adoption (e.g., over 90% in all resident+ camps) that they are under consideration for possible translation into Standards in lieu of Recommended Practices:

- **RP-151. Precamp Marketing.** This RP directs the camp to have a marketing program that reaches its potential customers.
- **RP-157. Inspirational Ceremonies.** This RP directs the camp to provide inspirational programs, including starting and ending ceremonies.
- **RP-162. Exposure to BSA Programs.** This RP directs the camp to expose participants to the next BSA program the participant is eligible to join.
- **RP-451. Reservation, Base and Camp Director Experience.** This RP directs that the camp, base, or reservation director is at least 25 years of age and has at least two seasons of prior Scout camp administrative or supervisory experience.
- **RP-457. Camp Staff Age.** This RP directs that the camp staff should consist of at least



50 percent individuals 18 years of age or older (excluding food service, CITs, and den chiefs).

- **RP-458. Camp Leadership Experience.** This RP directs that at least 50 percent of individuals holding camp leadership positions (director or supervisory position) have (a) three or more years of experience on camp staff or (b) a college degree in recreation management or a related field.
- **RP-851. Council Committee/Volunteer Support.** This RP directs that Council committees provide support to camp staff, as requested by the camp director, to ensure continuity, quality of training, and resources for high-quality programming.

Waivers Results

The next chart, "2016 Variance and Waiver Requests by Region"

shows the number of waivers requested, granted and denied by region. NCAP is pleased that the number of waivers has declined to 53 and is hopeful that they will continue to decline in the future. The Central Region has been the source of the most waiver requests since the inception of NCAP and that trend continued in 2016.

Turning to the merits of the waivers, NCAP remains concerned about the number of waivers being requested for program directors and aquatics directors. All camps should have a succession plan that looks to fill these spots even before the end of the current season. NCAP is reluctant to approve waivers for underage program directors because they are part of a camp's "two-deep" leadership and approving underage leadership could be questioned in the event of a problem at camp, regardless of the merit of the individuals involved. Similarly, NCAP is concerned about underage aquatics director because of the risks involved in aquatics programs. The other

Analysis of 2016 Assessment Results *continued*

waivers were most often for military range officers, which NCAP has approved in the Standards (although an application is still required) and some occasional waivers and interpretations for other staff.

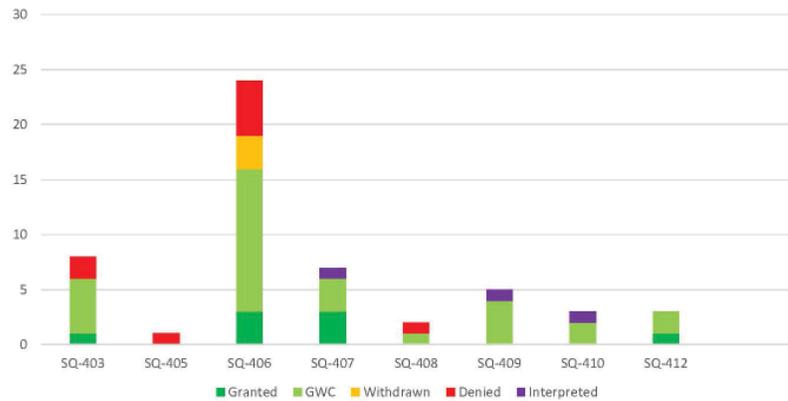
Evaluating What It Means

The final chart, “2016 Camp Accreditation Results,” presents an informal breakdown of camp performance. NCAP officially recognizes only three classifications: Accredited, Conditionally Accredited, and Unaccredited. In 2016, out of 692 camps assessed, there were 12 camps (1.7%) that were conditionally accredited. The balance were accredited.

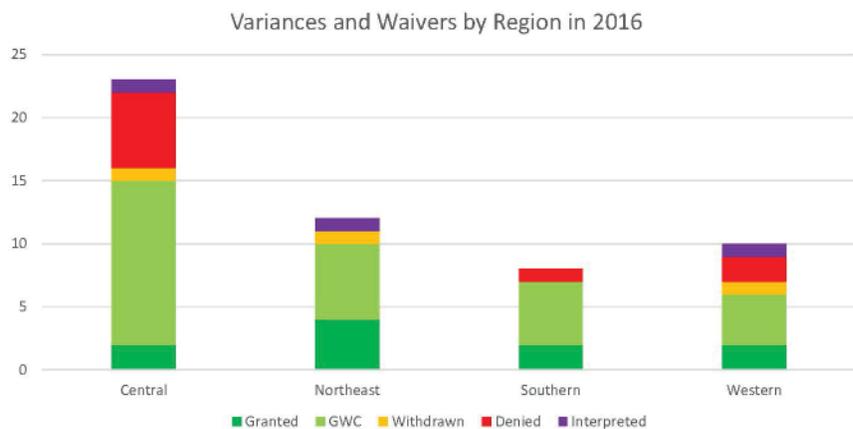
Eric Hiser, the National Standards Chair, *unofficially* has further broken down the accredited category into three additional categories: Fully Accredited (72.7%), which had one or fewer deviations, Accredited with deviations (20.7%), which had two to four deviations, and Accredited with 5+ Deviations (4.9%), which are camps struggling to fully meet NCAP expectations. NCAP will be reaching out to assist those whom are struggling. This breakdown presents a fairly hopeful overview of Scout camping in the fourth year of NCAP, with approximately 73% of camps performing very well and 90% of camps performing with no substantial deviations or problems. NCAP hopes to see a decrease in repeat findings.

Many thanks to the thousands of camp staff, council volunteers and professionals, and assessment personnel who go through training, review the Standards and Authorizations, and then work and visit all of our Scout camps in an effort to improve the experience for future generations of Scouts!

2016 Waivers and Variances

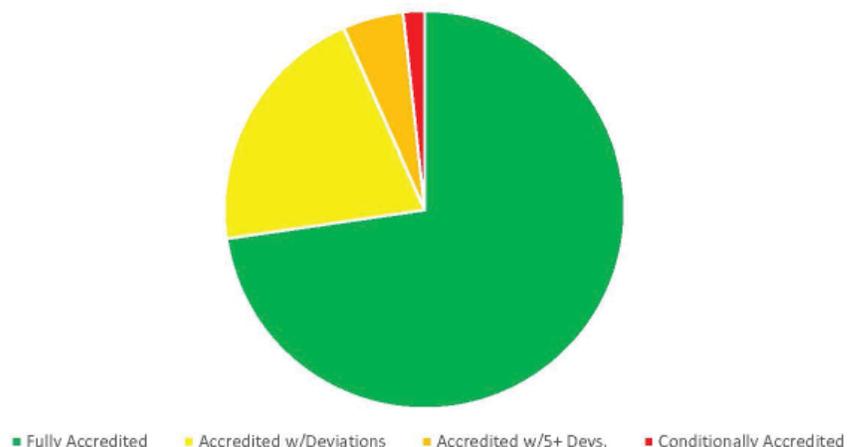


2016 Waivers and Variances by Region



2016 Camp Accreditation Results

Eric’s Camp Classification 2016



NCAP Decides Not to Adopt Accreditation with Recognition

After extensive review of the pros and cons of pursuing Accreditation with Gold or Silver recognition, as initially recommended by the Camp Standards Task Force in 2013, and review of feedback from the field resulting from a survey conducted by the NCAP standards chair, the National Camp Accreditation Committee has determined that NCAP will not further pursue the concept of Accreditation with Recognition at this time.

Principal concerns with adopting an Accreditation with Recognition program as part of NCAP included: (1) difficulty in developing suitable, objective criteria for the award; (2) concerns by field staff and area assessment staff about the complexity that would result from adding recognition to the existing NCAP program; and (3) practical and logistical concerns with management of the program and possible costs of adding recognition elements.

As part of the upcoming second round of NCAP authorization, NCAP will be evaluating ways to incorporate the Recommended Practices and some of the continuous improvement goals of the Accreditation with Recognition proposal into the primary NCAP program. More information on these changes and the future direction of BSA camping under NCAP will appear in subsequent NCAP Circulars and publications.

NCAP National Leadership Team

Authorization: Mark Rose
Mark.Rose@BuschGardens.com

Assessment: Jack Hess
jhess@geosociety.org

Standards: Eric Hiser
ehiser.BSA@gmail.com

NCAP Chair: Mark Rose
Mark.Rose@BuschGardens.com

Out Adv Chr: Doyle Parrish
dparrish@shg ltd.com

Out Prog Chr: Mark Stinnett
mstinnett@stmasterslaw.com

Camping TF Chr: Jim Blair
jebclair@msn.com

NCAP Staff Lead: Brian Gray
Brian.Gray@scouting.org

Out Prog Lead: Frank Reigelman
Frank.Reigelman@scouting.org

Gen Serv Mgr: Keith Christopher
Keith.Christopher@scouting.org

NCAP Region and Area Leadership Team

NCAP Position	Northeast	Central	Southern	Western
Accreditation Chair	Bill Downey <i>bdownowl@aol.com</i>	Dr. Denis Ward <i>deniswardphd@gmail.com</i>	Steve Gerber <i>stevegerber68@gmail.com</i>	Carl Nicolaysen <i>cnicolaysen@esoen.com</i>
Assessment Coordinator	Bob Dealaman <i>r.dealaman@stny.rr.com</i>	Rich Koch <i>richard.a.koch@boeing.com</i>	Bob Miller* <i>RAMAG64@aol.com</i>	Marty Webb <i>mjwebb240@sbcglobal.net</i>
Area 1 Assessment Chair	Paul Sliney <i>psgrtowl@gmail.com</i>	Bruce Williams; Dan Segersin <i>williamsrow@yahoo.com; seger005@comcast.net</i>	Chip Griner <i>chip@grinerdrillingservice.com</i>	Dave Bone <i>Bone@ccountry.net</i>
Area 2 Assessment Chair	Cheryl Izyk <i>cdizyk@comcast.net</i>	Jason Kasiorek <i>jkasiorek@comcast.net</i>	Jay Cash <i>jayhcash@gmail.com</i>	S-Don Paul; N-David Dean Bishop <i>DonPaulNCAP@gmail.com; CampVisit_BSA_WR2@outlook.com</i>
Area 3 Assessment Chair	Bob Dealaman <i>r.dealaman@stny.rr.com</i>	S-Glenn Hay; N-Dave Windish <i>Gihay@design9.com; dave9n@hotmail.com</i>	Warren Wenner <i>wwenner@imgh.org</i>	Doug McDonald <i>drmcndon@aol.com</i>
Area 4 Assessment Chair	Jay Zimmerman <i>jzimmerman1@atlanticbb.net</i>	Allen Hoy <i>allen.hoy@att.net</i>	Jeffrey Kosic <i>Jeffrey.kosik@Disney.com</i>	Rick TerBorch <i>rterborch@earthlink.net</i>
Area 5 Assessment Chair	Alan Rissmiller <i>alanriss@gmail.com</i>	Jay Oakman; Tom Sheely; Brent Worley <i>bsafox@yahoo.com; tsheely@sbcglobal.net; BrentW@wallties.com</i>	Jose Meier <i>gmeier2@att.net</i>	[Combined with Area 2]
Area 6 Assessment Chair	Glenn Achey <i>glennachey@comcast.net</i>	David Williams <i>david.williams.h@gmail.com</i>	Alan Watts <i>logeagle@gmail.com</i>	Randy Driscoll <i>driscollsanran@cox.net</i>
Area 7 Assessment Chair	NA	[Vacant]	Jeffrey Irving <i>jeffreyirving@cox.net</i>	NA
Area 8 Assessment Chair	NA	NA	Rick Woodbridge <i>drjw@ardmore.com</i>	NA
Area 9 Assessment Chair	NA	NA	Austin Landry <i>austinlandry88@gmail.com</i>	NA
		17	Jim Miles, Reg. Vice Coord* <i>jim9miles@aol.com</i>	