



Guide to the Continuous Camp Improvement Program

**National Camp Accreditation Program
National Council, Boy Scouts of America**

January 13, 2020

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Part One – Understanding Continuous Camp Improvement | 4 |
| 1.1 – Standard AO-810 | 5 |
| 1.2 – National Expectations | 6 |
| Part Two – CCIP Minimum Elements | 7 |
| 2.1 – CCIP Categories | 7 |
| 2.2 – Camp Strategic Improvement Plan | 7 |
| 2.3 – Annual Camp Improvement Program | 9 |
| 2.4 – Declaration of Readiness Report | 9 |
| 2.5 – Interim Report | 10 |
| 2.6 – Application for Authorization | 11 |
| Part Three – Evaluating the Continuous Camp Improvement Program | 12 |
| 3.1 – Authorization “Meaningful Progress” Review | 12 |
| 3.2 - Assessment: Evaluating CCIP Implementation During Assessment | 13 |
| <<< The Following Part and Sections Provide Optional Information >>> | |
| Part Four – Recommended Procedures for CCIP Success | 16 |
| 4.1 – CCIP Overview | 16 |
| 4.2 – CCIP Preparatory Work | 17 |
| 4.3 – Camp Strategic Improvement Plan | 20 |
| 4.4 – Annual Camp Improvement Program | 23 |
| 4.5 – Implementing CCIP During the Year | 27 |
| Appendix “A” – Example Camp Strategic Improvement Plan | 29 |
| Appendix “B” – Example Annual Camp Improvement Program | 32 |

Introduction

The purpose of the BSA's National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP) is to "help councils elevate camps to new levels of excellence in delivering Scouting's promise to youth. Councils will engage in rigorous review of camps and properties, continuous improvement, and correction or elimination of substandard practices."

The National Camp Standards are the foundation upon which a BSA camp is built. Upon this foundation, three pillars ensure that camps both meet the minimum expectations of the National Camp Standards and undergo continuous improvement to bring each participant a better experience year over year:

1. The multiyear Authorization Cycle;
2. The Continuous Camp Improvement Program, which has both multiyear and annual components; and
3. The annual Assessment and Accreditation Cycle.

This Guide assists councils as they seek to implement the second pillar, the Continuous Camp Improvement Program (CCIP), in their local camps and explains how Authorization, CCIP and the annual Assessment and Accreditation cycle mutually support each other to ensure a continuously improving camp experience for camp participants, their families, staff and councils. The goal of both CCIP and, indeed, of NCAP is meaningful improvement in four areas: safety, participant experience, attendance, and financial sustainability and return to the council's bottom line. NCAP's experience is that the better the participant experience, the more likely it is that future attendance will be strong and the camp and council financially sustainable.

The Guide consists of four parts:

1. Understanding Continuous Camp Improvement
2. Minimum Requirements for the Continuous Camp Improvement Program
3. Assessing the Continuous Camp Improvement Program
4. Recommended Process for Developing the Continuous Camp Improvement Program

Councils should read and understand Parts 1 through 3 as these parts of the CCIP are required by National Camp Standard AO-810 and assessed during Authorization and Assessment. Part 4 is recommended; but whether a council chooses to use the recommended procedures is optional so long as the requirements of Standard AO-810 are met and the council and its camping program are making meaningful progress toward camp safety, participant experience, attendance, and financial sustainability and return to the council's bottom line.

CCIP in a Nutshell

The CCIP is very simple in concept: the council identifies, through its strategic planning process, areas of strength and areas of improvement at its camp(s). It develops a plan—called the camp strategic improvement plan—on how it will build on the camp's areas of strength and improve the areas needing improvement over the next four to seven years with a schedule of what it intends to do during which year. Then, annually, the council and camp staff develop an annual improvement program that implements items from the camp strategic plan, but also adds improvements suggested by camp staff, participants, and stakeholders before and during the camp season. The annual program is a living one—as opportunities or needs arise during the camp season, the annual program evolves to address them. The result: a continuous effort to improve the camp leading to changes that enhance the camping experience for campers, visitors and staff and over time, improvements in camp attendance and the council's bottom line.

PART ONE

UNDERSTANDING CONTINUOUS CAMP IMPROVEMENT

Overview

The continuous camp improvement program (CCIP) is a consultative process the local council uses to improve the quality of the camp experience for participants. In CCIP, the council, its camp staff and stakeholders identify areas of strength that should be maintained or expanded, areas of weakness that need improvement (“areas of improvement”), and a plan to maintain or build strength and improve or eliminate weaknesses. The CCIP has two components: a multiyear ***camp strategic improvement plan***, and an ***annual camp improvement program***.

The camp strategic improvement plan identifies areas of improvement and areas of strength that the council will address over the next four to seven years, which collectively should address at least five of the continuous camp improvement categories. The annual camp improvement program identifies one or more areas of improvement and one or more areas of strength that the camp will address during the year or camping season, which collectively address at least four of the continuous camp improvement categories. Some of the measures in the annual camp improvement program may come from the camp strategic improvement plan. The annual improvement program may change during the course of the summer based upon feedback from campers, staff and others. Changes to address concerns or seize opportunities are part of continuous improvement!

In both cases, the council and camp will develop goals, a plan for achieving the goal, defined success criteria, and metrics for tracking progress toward the goal and success criteria. The camp strategic improvement plan and annual camp improvement program can be developed for all camps at a ***camp property*** or separately for each ***camp***, but each ***camp*** must have a plan and program (either its own or as part of the camp property plan and program) that fully satisfies the requirements of the BSA National Camp Standard AO-810. NCAP also allows a council to create a group plan for all day camps that share a common program template (e.g., day camp in a box or multiple camps following a common program) and a group plan for all family camps that share a common program template.

A council’s and camp’s progress under both the camp strategic improvement plan and annual camp improvement program is evaluated in the authorization process. A camp’s implementation of the annual camp improvement program is evaluated in the annual assessment and accreditation process. A council whose CCIP does not achieve meaningful improvement in camp safety, participant experience, attendance, and financial sustainability and return to the council’s bottom line will be required to undertake a plan of improvement, receive a conditional authorization, or, in extreme cases, may be denied authorization to operate camps using the trademarks and trade dress of the Boy Scouts of America.

1.1 Standard AO-810: The Foundation of CCIP

Standard AO-810 provides as follows:

STANDARD

The camp participates in the BSA Continuous Camp Improvement Program that addresses improvements in:

- Staff
- Program
- Program equipment
- Facilities
- Sustainability
- Marketing and communication
- Attendees and participation

Specific Requirements of the Standard

- A. The council has performed an analysis to identify its stakeholders and involved them in gathering information on areas of possible improvement and areas of strength.
- 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.
- C. Each year, the camp will develop an annual camp improvement program that identifies one or more areas of improvement and one or more areas of strength that the camp will address during the year, which collectively address at least four continuous camp improvement categories. Some of these measures may be based on the camp strategic improvement plan and some should be based on postcamp/precamp inspections, camp staff reports, customer satisfaction surveys, or other feedback. For each area identified, the council determines a goal, a quantitative metric, and success criteria.
- D. Annually, the council collects data that indicates progress on the measures, and at the start of the following season includes in the Declaration of Readiness a report on the measures, their categories, their success criteria, and whether the measure succeeded.

As set forth in Standard AO-810, the CCIP provides councils and camps with a structured approach to identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement, setting measurable goals (success criteria) for these areas, and monitoring progress against the success criteria. Over the authorization period, councils and camps must demonstrate concrete improvements in the quality of the camping experience provided to their participants. The nature and extent of this improvement is evaluated during the authorization process. Councils and camps that do not make meaningful progress will be required to undertake a plan of improvement and risk conditional authorization.

In contrast, the annual assessment and accreditation process reviews whether councils and camps are participating meaningfully in the continuous camp improvement process and not whether the council is achieving its success criteria.¹ Due to this different focus, councils and camps are strongly encouraged to set (and meet) challenging goals that, if successfully attained, will significantly improve the camp experience for participants, resulting in a program

¹ The focus of authorization review is on results: whether the CCIP, including the annual camp improvement programs has achieved meaningful improvement. The focus of assessment is on meaningful participations: whether the camp has engaged its staff in continuous improvement, set SMART goals, and is tracking progress, metrics and opportunities. Evaluation of CCIP is discussed in Part 3.

that will enable the council to deliver a program that is exciting, dynamic, and appealing to today's youth.

1.2 National Expectations

The National Council has established expectations for the CCIP in the authorization process. It is important that councils understand these expectations so that they are prepared for the authorization review process. There are three expectations:

1. At the conclusion of the multi-year authorization process, each camp will have made meaningful improvement in program safety, quality and participant experience.
2. At the conclusion of the multi-year authorization process, the council's camping program as a whole is sustainable and has improved its contribution to the council's financial bottom line.
 - a. NCAP's minimum expectation is that, on a three-year rolling average, the camping program contributes revenues of at least 5% over all camping program expenses, including personnel (both seasonal and full-time), insurance and mortgage expenses.
 - b. NCAP's goal is that, on a three-year rolling average, the camping program contributes revenues of at least 5% over all camping program expenses, including personnel, insurance, mortgage expense, and 5% of the capital value of the council's camps, facilities and program equipment, excluding land.
3. At the conclusion of the multi-year authorization process, the council has made improvements in attendance as shown by comparing the three-year trend at the conclusion of the authorization period to the three-year trend at the beginning of the authorization period or the council has achieved 80% or better occupancy in each camp and has maintained that level of occupancy (or better).

Councils are expected to demonstrate meaningful improvement with appropriate documentation of reduction in health and safety incidents, improved staff retention, customer satisfaction survey data, financial data, camp attendance records, and other documentation of the council's choosing.

PART TWO

CCIP MINIMUM ELEMENTS

Developing and implementing the CCIP can take many forms and each council should use the form that works best for it. This Part provides an overview of the minimum elements for a successful CCIP. Councils and camps that grasp the concepts can proceed directly to development and implementation. Councils and camps seeking more detail should review the additional resources in Part Four, which provides a step-by-step guide to CCIP. The Part Four process is not required.

2.1 CCIP Categories

CCIP works broadly to achieve improvements in a council's camps. From past assessments and research, NCAP knows that participants respond most strongly to staff excellence, followed by good program and good program equipment, with facilities and other items being of somewhat lesser importance to participant experience. NCAP also knows that without sound financial foundations and a plan for marketing the camp and making it attractive to participants, the camp will not thrive. The CCIP builds upon this recognition by challenging councils and camps to make improvements across the entire spectrum of camp operation to improve safety and participant experience, build attendance, and improve financial sustainability and return to the council's bottom line. Accordingly, CCIP has established different "categories" or areas on which the council and camp must focus. These categories are as follows:

- Staff
- Program
- Program equipment
- Facilities
- Sustainability (both financial and ecological)
- Marketing and communication
- Attendees and participation

These seven categories are known as the "CCIP categories."

Some of these categories may be areas of strength at a camp, while others may be areas of weakness that need improvement. Another fundamental aspect of NCAP is that a council and camp must build on the strengths of their camps (to improve their competitive position and make them attractive or compelling destinations) while also improving or removing areas of weakness. A camp with no areas of strength is unlikely to be competitive in today's highly competitive world. A camp with a significant weakness may underperform even if it has other strengths. Improving both is part of "elevating camp performance" and delivering the promise of Scouting to youth.

In the following sections, you will see that NCAP requires a certain number of the CCIP categories be addressed in the camp strategic improvement plan and in the annual camp improvement program. Councils and camps are encouraged to focus on those categories that will bring the biggest results.

2.2 Camp Strategic Improvement Plan

Developing the camp strategic improvement plan requires setting up a team to review the camp, beginning with understanding the council's goals for its camping program and camps, evaluating each camp's needs in each of the continuous camp improvement categories, selecting the most important needs, developing measures to meet those needs, scheduling them in the camp strategic improvement plan format (or moving more tactical issues to the annual camp

improvement program), and then obtaining any necessary council approvals. As specified in Standard AO-810, Specific Requirement A, the team must include stakeholder representatives. See Part 4.2 for additional guidance.

In developing the plan, the team must consider both areas of strength that can be built upon and areas of weakness that need improvement (“areas of improvement”) as the plan must include at least one of each. It is recommended that councils choose one or two strengths and the balance of the plan address weaknesses.

Existing plans, such as a council strategic plan or a camp long-range plan, can be used to satisfy Specific Requirement B so long as the following required elements can be identified:

1. The plan sets forth measures that address at least five of the CCIP categories, including at least one area of strength and one area of improvement.
2. For each measure, the plan must identify:
 - a. The year(s) in which the measure is planned to take place,
 - b. The category(ies) in which the measure falls,
 - c. A description of the measure,
 - d. The metric to be used to determine if the measure is successful, and
 - e. The success criteria.

It is also permissible to extract the measures from existing plans and present it to NCAP as the camp strategic improvement plan, so long as the Standard’s requirements are met. Examples of how to draft appropriate measures, metrics and success criteria are presented in Part Four.

Submitting the camp strategic improvement plan. The camp strategic improvement plan is submitted to NCAP as part of the application for authorization. NCAP will review the plan and may make suggestions for the council’s consideration. NCAP will approve the plan if it demonstrates that continuous improvement will occur at the camp (or camp property and each camp on the camp property, if the council submits a camp property-based plan). As noted above, councils must either be making progress toward the National expectations for program safety, participant experience, attendance and financial contribution toward the council’s bottom line or else present justification for why achieving the National expectations is not necessary due to other factors or considerations.

Amending the camp strategic improvement plan. A camp strategic improvement plan may be amended by submitting a revised plan to NCAP at NCAP@scouting.org at least 30 days prior to the camping season if the change is to take effect during a seasonal program. The amended plan is considered approved after 30 days unless NCAP seeks additional information or rejects the amended plan. A copy of the amended plan (and all prior plans during the current authorization period) must be kept with the authorization to operate. It is recommended that councils use the interim report (third year of the authorization period) as a great opportunity to review and revise the camp strategic improvement plan in light of progress and financial constraints.

Documentation. The council should document the improvements contemplated by the camp strategic improvement plan as they occur with reference to the measure, planned implementation date, actual implementation date, and whether the measure was a success based upon the initial criteria and in practice. Documentation of successfully completed measures will be submitted with the interim report and the next application for authorization and will be part of the critical “meaningful improvement” demonstration.

2.3 Annual Camp Improvement Program

Developing the annual camp improvement program requires setting up a team before camp to review possible improvements. It is *recommended* that this team include the council program professional responsible for the camps (if your council has one), several council volunteers, the camp director, program director and some selected additional staff or volunteers.

Improvements for the annual camp improvement program should be drawn from the following sources:

- Council strategic plan
- Camp long range plan or master development plan (if available)
- Camp strategic improvement plan
- Recommendations from outgoing staff
- Recommendations from camp attendees (typically from questionnaires)
- Recommendations from program professionals and volunteers
- Other stakeholders, if available

In developing the annual program, the team must consider both areas of strength that can be built upon and areas of weakness that need improvement (“areas of improvement”) as the plan must include at least one of each. It is recommended that councils choose one or two strengths and the balance of the plan address weaknesses. Four of the CCIP categories must be addressed.

The annual improvement program should identify at least the following:

1. Measures that address at least four of the CCIP categories, including at least one area of strength and one area of improvement.
2. For each measure, the plan must identify:
 - a. The category(ies) in which the measure falls,
 - b. A description of the measure,
 - c. The metric to be used to determine if the measure is successful, and
 - d. The success criteria.

Examples of how to create appropriate measures, metrics and success criteria are presented in Part Four.

Unlike the camp strategic improvement plan, which is a relatively fixed document, the annual camp improvement program is intended to be a living document that is used and amended extensively during the camp season. The camp director and program director should be empowered to add measures to address specific concerns that arise during the summer so that participants have the best possible experience.

Documentation. Documenting the annual improvement program is important both to demonstrate commitment to the continuous camp improvement process, which will be evaluated by the assessment team during the annual camp assessment, but also to demonstrate the meaningful improvement that the authorization team will evaluate during the authorization period. Documentation should include the measures implemented during the year, the metrics, the results, and whether the measure was a success based upon the success criteria and after-action evaluation. These records should be retained for submission as part of the next year’s declaration of readiness and in the interim report and next application process.

2.4 Declaration of Readiness Report

Each year, with the declaration of readiness, the camp (or group of camps for the group of day camps or group of family camps sharing a program), the camp must submit the prior year’s

annual camp improvement program report to the camp assessment team lead. This report should include the following elements:

- Each continuous camp improvement measure selected;
- Its CCIP category(ies) and whether an areas of strength or improvement;
- Brief synopsis of measures used to achieve goal;
- The metrics used to track success;
- The success criteria;
- Whether the measure was successful or not.

The camp assessment team will use this information, plus the current's years measures, metrics, and measurements, to evaluate whether the camp is adequately participating in the continuous camp improvement program. A camp is adequately participating if it is choosing goals that improve the participants' experience or safety or the quality of the program equipment and facilities, increase the number of participants, or improve the financial return to the council. The larger focus of the annual improvement program is on safety, program quality and participant experience, as these are most in the control of the camp staff.

A camp is adequately participating if it has selected one area of strength and one area of improvement, covered at least four CCIP categories, selected at least one stretch goal that would result in significant improvement, and has achieved at least one or two of its goals in the past season (or has a good explanation why it did not), and has its goals, metrics, and is collecting metric information in the current season.

Councils are strongly advised to retain a copy of this report, as this information for the past 5 years must be submitted to NCAP as part of the next application for authorization.

2.5 Interim Report

In the interim report, the council should include the following continuous camp improvement program elements:

Camp Strategic Improvement Plan

The interim report should include:

- Statement of measures to be implemented by this time and their CCIP categories;
- Identification of areas of strength/areas of weakness addressed;
- Metrics used to evaluate success
- Whether the measures have been successfully implemented and, if not, why not.

The interim report is also a good time for a council to update its camp strategic improvement plan if future goals are infeasible. Justification for the change should be presented. If approved, the revised camp strategic improvement plan will be approved in writing and should be attached to the National, Regional, and council copies of the Authorization to Operate.

Annual Improvement Program

The interim report should include:

- Brief statement of number of measures adopted each year and their categories;
- Brief statement of the success or failure of those measures, with reference to metrics where needed; and
- Brief statement of whether the camp is making progress and, if so, in what ways.

If the camp is not making good progress, the interim report should address changes in the way the council is handling the annual improvement program to facilitate future progress.

2.6 Application for Authorization

The application for authorization is where the council must demonstrate that it has made “meaningful progress” in implementing the continuous camp improvement program. The CCIP is one of the three pillars of NCAP and councils that are struggling with implementing the CCIP will be targeted for additional assistance and attention.

Application: Meaningful Progress Demonstration

The meaningful progress demonstration must include data that the council has gathered to address the degree of improvement in its camping operations.

Application: Submittal of Camp Strategic Improvement Plan

As stated above, the camp strategic improvement plan is due with the application. See guidance on minimum requirements in Part Two above and Part Four for recommended procedures.

PART THREE

EVALUATING THE CONTINUOUS CAMP IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Council and camp compliance with the requirements of the CCIP is critical to the long-term success of Scout camping as a unique, identifiable and respected brand. Assessment of the council program under the CCIP is conducted during both the application and authorization to operate process and during the annual camp assessment. The authorization review process is a significant review of whether the council's CCIP has made "meaningful improvements" in the quality of its Scout camping program as reflected in participant experience, attendance, and financial sustainability. The annual assessment focuses on whether the council, through its camp staffs, is appropriately implementing the CCIP process.

3.1 Authorization: "Meaningful Progress" Review

During the authorization process, NCAP will evaluate whether the council has made "meaningful progress" toward improving participant experience, attendance, and financial sustainability based upon the CCIP categories:

- Staff
- Program
- Program Equipment
- Facilities
- Sustainability
- Marketing and Communications
- Attendance and Participation

In evaluating "meaningful progress", NCAP will focus on the areas of strength and areas of improvement identified in the camp strategic improvement plan and will consider improvements obtained in the annual improvement program. Councils should not overlook the importance of the annual improvement program in improving the participant experience, which along with attendance and finance, is a key metric NCAP will consider.

NCAP will look at the following areas in evaluating **participant experience**:

- **Staff.** The report should discuss the council's goals for staff retention and experience, the staff retention and experience at the time of the prior application, and whether it has improved or met the council's goals. Measures proposed, tried, and succeeded should be identified. Were any staff improvement measures very successful that should be used more widely? If so, they should be identified.
- **Program.** The report should discuss the council's goals for new programs, refreshing existing programs, and keeping the camp experience fresh for attendees or inviting new attendees. Did the council achieve these goals? Were participants safe while participating in them? What measures were proposed, tried, and successful. Were any new programs developed that may be successful nationally? If so, they should be identified.
- **Program equipment.** What are the council's goals for provision, replacement and refurbishment of program equipment. Were these goals met? Were measures proposed, tried and successful in improving provision and condition of program equipment to enhance the program experience?
- **Facilities.** What was the council's CFET start score and goal for the camp properties? Was the intended improvement obtained? What measures were tried and successful in improving the quality of facilities and participant experience?

NCAP will look at the following areas when considering **attendance**:

- **Marketing and communication.** What steps has the council taken to improve the marketing of its properties, communication of program opportunities to unit leaders and/or participants and their family? Have these measures had success?
- **Attendance and participation.** What was the attendance at each camp at the time of the prior application and what is the attendance at the time of this application? What is the breakdown in attendance between in and out of council? Is attendance and participation moving in the direction of the council's plans or away from them?

NCAP will look at the following areas when considering financial sustainability:

- **Sustainability.** What were the camping programs average expenses and revenues at the time of the last application? What about each camp? Has the council improved any camp's revenue versus expense percentage? The overall camping program's revenue versus expense percentage? Has the council made progress toward reaching the NCAP minimum expectation of 5% revenues over expenses or the NCAP goal of 5% recovery of capital plus 5% additional return over expense to the council budget? What measures were proposed, tried and successful in improving sustainability? What measures has the council taken to preserve the physical and biological sustainability of its properties?

Councils that achieve the National goals of improved participant experience, improved attendance or high capacity utilization, and improved sustainability and return to the council bottom line can expect relatively quick approval of their application for authorization and CCIP. Councils that fall short of the National goals in one area, but which are moving in the direction of the National expectations may expect some questions about the rate of progress and choice of methods but should obtain approval. Councils in this position should be prepared with justification for past setbacks and good plans for future improvements. Councils that fall short in two areas or are not meeting the minimum financial expectations may expect hard questions and a demand for progress in improving camp safety, participant experience, attendance and financial sustainability and return to the council's bottom line and should expect to provide stronger commitments or have specific conditions attached to their Authorization to Operate by the region or area. Councils failing in all three areas should expect to develop a plan of improvement and may see specific conditions developed by the region and/or area, and possible conditional authorization or even denial of authorization, if progress is not shown, particularly if the council has already been in a plan of improvement in the past.

Council's may vary from the National expectations set forth above, but if they do, they should expect to justify that variance by submitting documentation showing that the camping program is supporting, and not draining, the council's overall Scouting mission and that the council has sufficient financial wherewithal to sustainably carry on with an approach that falls short of the National expectations.

3.2 Assessment: Evaluating CCIP Implementation During Camp Assessment

NCAP assessment teams review a council's CCIP in two separate ways. First, in the annual assessment and accreditation cycle, NCAP assesses the camp's implementation of the annual camp improvement program. Second, the assessment team will monitor and report on the council's progress in implementing its camp strategic implementation plan.

Assessment review of the annual camp improvement program implementation. During Assessment, the focus is on the *process* of CCIP: Does the camp have an annual camp

improvement program? Does it have goals? Does it have metrics? Is it measuring the metrics? How did the camp do on last year's goals? A good CCIP should have clearly stated goals, measures and metrics. The staff responsible for the goal and metric should know them and be able to demonstrate that they are collecting the required information.

What does an Assessment team do if a camp is not implementing an annual camp improvement plan?

- **No CCIP.** If a camp has no CCIP in place, as demonstrated by the absence of an annual improvement plan, goals and metrics, the appropriate Assessment response is to mark Standard AO-810 as "noncompliant" and to request that the camp develop a corrective action plan within two weeks that at least achieves part of Standard AO-810. The corrective action plan may not always be practical (e.g., camp may only last two to three weeks), so Assessment teams should use discretion on whether to require a corrective action plan during this camping season or require submittal of the annual camp improvement plan prior to the next camping season. The absence of the CCIP should be called to the attention of the council president and Scout Executive in the council president's letter.
- **No metrics.** If a camp has developed goals, but hasn't developed metrics, or isn't collecting them, the appropriate Assessment response is to make Standard AO-810 as "noncompliant," require a corrective action plan (if appropriate), and to note the needed improvements in the letter to the council president and Scout Executive.
- **Partial implementation.** Partial implementation occurs when some, but not all, of the annual camp improvement plan goals are set; or some, but not all, of the measurements are being taken. In this case, the appropriate Assessment response would be to write up the program as a "deviation" and counsel the camp on fully implementing Standard AO-810.
- **Failure to achieve goals.** Unlike the prior issues, a camp's failure to achieve its annual camp improvement goals is not a matter for which Assessment would score the program as either noncompliant or a deviation. Instead, Assessment should note this issue in the program narrative. A camp's failure to achieve goals, or failure to set meaningful goals, will be reviewed in the Authorization phase.

Assessment teams play a critical role in the CCIP. Assessment teams identify when CCIP is not being used and strive to bring about implementation by counseling and, where necessary, requiring a corrective action plan. Assessment teams also document in the Assessment report how the camp did during the prior year. However, while CCIP is critical to NCAP, in no situation would a camp's failure to participate in NCAP be grounds for closure of a camp or program activity, although it may be grounds for a conditional accreditation if the failure to implement the CCIP process warrants a "noncompliant" finding.

Assessment monitoring of the camp strategic improvement plan implementation. If the council's authorization to operate has a camp strategic improvement plan attached, the camp assessment team should review the camp strategic improvement plan and note whether the called for improvements were made on schedule. If the camp is not on schedule, this should be noted together with any explanation from camp management. A camp's progress on its strategic implementation plan is not a basis for a noncompliant or deviation finding or for conditional accreditation.

Elevation of persistent noncompliance with Standard AO-810

If a camp persistently fails to comply with Standard AO-810, then on the second (if egregious), or third (if less egregious), occurrence in a row, the situation should be referred to the regional camp accreditation committee for investigation, counseling and any needed action. If this

GUIDE TO THE CONTINUOUS CAMP IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

occurs, the camp assessment team should mark the “Authorization review requested” box on the assessment form and, in addition to sending the form to NCAP@scoutin.org, also email a copy to the regional camp accreditation chair (or NCAP chair).

PART FOUR

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR CCIP SUCCESS

Part Four provides guidance and examples on how to develop a successful continuous camp improvement program consisting of a camp strategic improvement plan and an annual camp improvement program. This Part is voluntary and is intended to assist councils and camps with implementing a successful CCIP program by providing examples of how the CCIP process and be structured and work in a local council setting.

4.1 CCIP Overview

CCIP Is Quality Improvement in the Camping Environment

CCIP follows the tried and true process of “plan, do, check, act” derived from quality management in the business world. These steps may be summarized as follows:

1. Plan: determine what needs to be done, when, how, and by whom;
2. Do: carry out the plan;
3. Check: analyze the results of carrying out the plan; and
4. Act: take appropriate steps to close the gap between planned and actual results. Then, repeat, starting at Step 1.

The following sections of this Guide will help you through the CCIP process in the context of Standard AO-810 and its Specific Requirements.

CCIP Process Overview

Developing the CCIP camp strategic plan consists of the following broad steps:

- Create a CCIP team
- Identify stakeholders
- Identify areas of strength and areas of improvement with stakeholders
- Set goals and classify them as *strategic* (multi-year) or *tactical* (camping season)
- Develop metrics and measureable success criteria for each goal
- Prepare the camp strategic improvement plan

Implementing the CCIP then consists of:

- Camp team develops the annual improvement program
- Camp staff follows the annual improvement program, updating as needed to achieve best possible participant experience
- Monitoring progress against the success criteria
- Revising the annual improvement program as needed to achieve success
- Reporting success or failure

Documentation includes:

- Records of camp strategic improvement plan measure implementation and success;
- Records of the measures, metrics, and success/failure of items in the annual improvement program; and
- Preparing reports for:
 - declaration of readiness (annually);
 - interim report (third year of authorization); and

- application (last year of authorization).

If all of these processes are executed well, the council should see measurable improvement in participant satisfaction. Happy, satisfied participants and leaders will speak positively about the camp, which will encourage others to attend, improving attendance and the bottom line.

4.2 CCIP Preparatory Work

While the CCIP is a powerful tool for improving camp, it requires collaboration between the council, camp and stakeholders who represent potential participants to work successfully.

Step 1. Creating a CCIP Team

The first step should be to assemble the CCIP “team” for the council. Members of the council team are responsible for looking at the council’s camping program as a whole and how each camp fits into the program as a whole. This team should include some individuals intimately familiar with each camp property and each camp and its programs.

Who should participate on the team? It should include both Scouting professionals and volunteers. If the council has a director of camping or camping director, he or she should participate. The council program director, if available, may also be a good addition to provide continuity with the balance of the council’s programs. On the volunteer side, the council NCAP chair, camping chair, vice president for program, and vice president for properties are potential candidates. Several seasonal staff members, including a camp director or program director and several seasoned staff would be good.

For the camp strategic improvement plan, the council volunteers and staff should likely take the lead, supported by the others; for the annual camp improvement program, the camp director(s), seasonal staff and unit leaders should take the lead, supported by the others.

Now that the core CCIP team is selected and ready to go, it is time for step 2.

Step 2. Identifying Stakeholders

Standard AO-810, Specific Requirement A requires that “The council has performed an analysis to identify its stakeholders and involved them in gathering information on areas of possible improvement and areas of strength.” A good team should also include representatives of the camp’s customers – both existing unit leaders who attend camp and possibly individuals who do not attend camp, so that the reasons for non-attendance can be identified and addressed. If a camp property has significant non-Scouting use or use possibilities, representatives of the potential other use may be a good addition, as well. Other potential stakeholders might include:

- Older Scouts or Venturers
- Parents
- Unit leaders
- Council committees (outdoor programs, properties, training, etc.)
- Council executive board
- Council and seasonal staff (e.g., director of camping, camp director, ranger, seasonal camp staff)
- Training staff (if camp property is also used for training purposes)

- Senior youth leadership (Venturing or Explorer Officer Association if they use or could use the camp; Order of the Arrow leadership)
- Community groups that use or are affected by the camp

The group of stakeholders should be sufficiently broad that feedback from these groups will cover staff, program, program equipment, facilities, finances and sustainability, communication and marketing, and attendees and participation.

The council may wish to break down its stakeholders into several groups: a council level group, which would look at the camping program as a whole, and a camp or camp property level group, which would be more focused on the camp property and its associated camp(s).

It is recommended that the stakeholder group be about 15 to 30. Fewer than 15 and the group risks being an “echo chamber” for what is already done. Too many more and the group becomes too unwieldy to work effectively. Solicitation can be made of a broader group of stakeholders (see Step 3), but the working group should be smaller.

Step 3. Identifying Areas of Strength and Areas of Improvement with Stakeholders

Once stakeholders are identified, there are several ways to get their input as to what the camp does well and where it could improve. Potential methods include soliciting feedback at meetings (particularly effective for standing groups like council committees or the executive board), having special sessions at camp or program events (e.g., an optional adult breakout session at a merit badge university, a “camp feedback” cracker barrel at a district camporee, a session at a university of Scouting), calling individuals (a sampling method—such as calling one out of every ten unit leaders in camp—is acceptable), or distributing and reviewing surveys (either paper or electronic; this is particularly effective if combined with the customer survey required in Standard AO-809). Methods to gather input are limited only by your creativity and imagination! The key to gathering input is to understand what people think the camp does very well and where they think it could most improve.

In surveying the stakeholders, it is helpful to also ask them for specific ideas that build on areas of strength or would make an area of improvement better. These are the start of goals that the CCIP team will develop.

Example questions that could be asked include:

- Name the strengths of the camp [name] program?
- How could we make the camp [name] program or facilities better?
- Do you have any specific recommendations or suggestions on how to improve [camp name] or the programs it offers?
- Of the strengths and improvements that you have identified, list the top three or four strengths and the top three or four improvements in order of importance to you.

With smaller groups, you could ask the participants to list “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats” and measures that would build in the strengths, address weaknesses, and respond to opportunities and threats. It may also be helpful to obtain thoughts on stakeholder priorities among these various options to assist in the later evaluation and prioritization process.

Step 4. Evaluating Stakeholder Input

Once the stakeholder input is received, designated member(s) of the council or camp CCIP team sort the feedback into the overall categories of staff, program, program equipment, facilities, finances and sustainability, communication and marketing, or attendees and participation. Some pieces of feedback may fall into multiple categories. An example of how feedback might be sorted is as follows:

| <u>Stakeholder Feedback About</u> | <u>CCIP Category</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Campfire program | Program |
| Precamp communication w/leaders | Communication; Attendees |
| Camp leaders' guide | Communication; Program |
| Shooting sports congestion | Staff; Program Equipment; Facilities |
| Campsite water pressure | Facilities |
| Senior staff retention | Staff |
| Honor troop establishment | Program |
| Food and refuse disposal | Facilities |
| Preventive maintenance | Facilities, Program equipment |
| Better first-year camper program | Program; Attendees |
| Food service | Program |
| Water carnival | Program; Equipment; |
| Add moving water program | Program; Equipment; Facilities |
| In-council camp attendance | Attendees |
| Improve net income | Finance |
| Community service projects | Program; Communication |
| Modern toilet facilities | Facilities |
| Decrease utility expense | Finance |

It is also helpful to indicate whether the input suggests an area of strength (something good that should be maintained or built upon) or an area of weakness (something that should be improved or culled). The list of areas is virtually infinite! Some ideas may fall into more than one area and that is fine. This does not have to be a very formal process. Putting the ideas on sticky notes and moving them around is fine!

Review Council Strategic Plan and any camp long-range plans. The CCIP team should also review the council's strategic plan and any camp long-range or master development plans. These documents may have valuable thoughts that need to be captured in the CCIP process to achieve the council's program goals.

Ensure Standard AO-810 coverage. After all of the areas of strength and areas of improvement are grouped into their respective categories, step back. Are there at least some areas for each CCIP category? If not, have the CCIP team think about what could be done to

build or maintain a strength or improve or remove an area of weakness in the missing category or categories.

4.3 Camp Strategic Improvement Plan Development

Step 1. Setting Strategic and Tactical Goals

Starting with this step, you may need to go back and forth a bit until you find the mix of goals, plans, metrics and success criteria that is best for your council. In general, the CCIP team will need to develop goals and metrics; classify them into strategic or tactical, and then prioritize them. This is not meant to be an overly formal process and a CCIP team can likely do so informally, by moving input around on sticky notes or other simple methods.

It may also be helpful to repeat this step: The first time focuses on the council camping program strategic goals and the second time focuses on each camp and how to implement the council's strategic and tactical goals for that camp. In this way, the council can help ensure alignment between its council priorities and the work being done at each camp property and camp.

Remind CCIP team of council goals. If the council strategic plan or camp long-term plan (if any) addresses goals that are important to the council's camping program or a particular camp, call these to the attention of the team at the beginning of the goal setting process. This will help ensure that the council's planning processes work in harmony.

Goal setting. Each area of strength and area of improvement should have a preliminary goal statement – what the council or camp wants to achieve by maintaining the area of strength or building up the area of weakness. These don't need to be elaborate or tied to a metric yet. Just enough to give the team an idea of what is intended. If there is a consensus that some suggested topics aren't relevant or feasible at this time, take them out of the mix and place them in a folder for the next authorization cycle for strategic goals or the next camping season for tactical goals.

Determining whether goals are “strategic” or “annual”. After the areas of strength and areas of improvement have been grouped and a rough “goal” attached so it is clear what it is trying to accomplish, the next step is to split the goals into those that are **strategic**—likely to take several years to accomplish, and those that are **tactical**—items that can be tackled during a camping season. Some items may fit into both areas and that is fine.

- **Strategic goals** – those that will take a while or which will require commitment of resources beyond those currently available to the camp and camp staff, should be considered for inclusion in the council's *camp strategic improvement plan*.
- **Tactical goals** – those that can be addressed by resources that can be made readily available to the camp and camp staff, should be considered for inclusion in the camp's *annual camp improvement program*. Goals that are more tactical in nature should be collected for later use in developing the camp annual improvement program.

Initial prioritization of goals. In this step, the CCIP team will choose those goals that seem most appropriate for the council over the next 4-7 years, and which will be included in the camp strategic improvement plan. It is important to pick enough goals that you can meet the requirements of Standard AO-810, Specific Requirement B, which requires that five of the CCIP categories be addressed over the course of the strategic plan. A couple of extra goals may be worthwhile in case some fall out during the next step. On the other hand, the CCIP team may not want to have too many goals, as that makes the burden of the subsequent step much greater. You can always come back and pick up additional goals if you need them!

Step 2. Developing Strategic Metrics, Schedules and Setting Measurable Success Criteria

For each goal identified in Step 1, the CCIP team determines a quantitative way to measure progress toward the goal, sets a proposed schedule for implementing the goal, and then establishes a quantitative metric and success criterion using the goal's measurement method. There are countless ways to measure progress toward your goals. Some (such as customer satisfaction with a given program) can be measured on a scale (e.g., on a scale of 1 to 5). Others, such as timeliness of developing the camp leaders' guide, can be true/false (e.g., on a specific date, was the current camp leaders' guide available on the council website or is the council's practice in compliance with local ordinance?). Others can be direct measurement (how long is the wait for free shoot? What is the water pressure in campsite 9?) Two examples of camp strategic improvement goals are provided in Table 1. The key is to have quantifiable, objective measures—there should be no doubt as to whether the camp achieved its goals. Outcome metrics are preferable to process metrics where possible. An outcome measurement looks to the desired outcome (more participant satisfaction, more participation, better revenue or less cost) as opposed to a process outcome (training completed, tables added).

Table 1. Example Camp Strategic Improvement Goals

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Goal | Improve quality of instruction in core merit badge programs by developing course syllabus that includes required content, activities and minimum program equipment. |
| Schedule | Complete swimming, rowing, pioneering by year 2, lifesaving, canoeing, camping by year 3, and rowing, orienteering and environmental science by year 4. |
| Metric(s) | 1 – Syllabi completed 2 – Instructors following syllabus based on area director review of teaching 3 – Customer satisfaction survey |
| Success | 1 – Syllabi completed on time 2 – 80% of instructors following syllabi 3 – Decrease in complaints/increase in compliments about syllabi class instruction on customer survey |
| Goal | Improve access for participants with disabilities to dining hall, pool, campfire ring and two camp sites. |
| Schedule | Year 1 – meet with disability advocates and volunteer engineer to evaluate both physical and operational changes to enhance access Year 2 – implement operational changes to enhance access; fund raise for physical changes Year 3 – continue fund raising; assess success of operational changes Year 4 – install new thresholds in dining hall and pool lift to facilitate access |
| Metric(s) | 1 – Operational changes implemented in years 2-5 and physical in year 4 |

| | |
|---------|--|
| | 2 – Percent of disabled participants using dining hall, pool, campfire ring and camp sites |
| Success | Plan developed and operational/physical changes increasing percent of disabled participants using dining hall, pool, campfire ring and camp sites. |

If you find that you cannot write a series of concrete steps to achieve a goal, the goal may not be appropriate for inclusion at this time. Don't be afraid to set aside a goal into the next authorization or planning period. At that time, the way to achieve the goal may be clearer!

Step 3. Developing the Camp Strategic Improvement Plan

Once the CCIP team has established goals, metrics, success criteria and action plan for each goal, it is time to set up the camp strategic improvement plan.

Developing the plan. The camp strategic improvement plan consists of those goals and their associated metrics and plans that will take several years to accomplish. The selected goals should be assembled and a target year assigned to each goal for initiation, implementation and completion, together with the associated metrics and success criteria. Remember that the camp strategic improvement plan must address at least five categories over the four to seven year life of the plan!

Form of plan. The plan should include the following elements:

1. a narrative statement of the goal,
2. the CCIP categories it addresses,
3. whether it is an area of strength or improvement,
4. implementation schedule and a brief synopsis of the plan to achieve the goal
5. the metric(s),
6. when the goal will be achieved.

Not all goals need to be achieved in the authorization period, but there should be at least one area of strength, one area of weakness/improvement and five CCIP categories covered during the authorization period.

An example camp strategic improvement plan is included in Appendix A. Other forms of the plan could also be used. Don't get hung up on the formatting. The critical question is whether the council has a written plan for the camp that addresses how to achieve some significant improvements in five categories over the next four to seven years!

Starting the Camp Strategic Improvement Plan. When your council develops a camp strategic improvement plan, you should borrow freely from existing documents such as council strategic plans and long range plans. You should plan for your first camp strategic plan to cover the period from its completion until approximately one year after your next application date.

Renewing and revising the camp strategic improvement plan. The best time for reviewing and renewing the camp strategic improvement plan is likely to be:

- The year before the council's application for authorization is required, so that the plan can be submitted with the application; or
- The year prior to the interim report, so that the plan progress and any revisions can be submitted as part of the interim report; or

- Whenever the council revises its council strategic plan, to ensure that the council's overall strategic plan and its strategic plan for the camps remain "in sync."

However, NCAP encourages councils to treat the camp strategic improvement plan as a "living document" and revise it as needed. The camp strategic improvement plan can be revised at any time by submitting the revised plan to NCAP@scouting.org with a written explanation of the changes and reasons for them. If NCAP approves, you will receive written confirmation. The revised plan and NCAP approval should then be attached to the Authorization to Operate copy for the camp property or camp.

4.4 Annual Camp Improvement Program

Step 1. Gathering Information

The annual camp improvement program is a fluid, responsive process aimed at allowing a camp to be as successful as possible. This means that information gathering is critical. NCAP recommends that councils and camps gather information for the annual improvement program in the following ways as appropriate to the individual camp:

- ***Prior camp staff end-of-season reports.*** At the end of each camping season, the camp staff should be invited to provide recommendations for improvement. As the group closest to the camp, they will often have numerous ideas. These may be a fertile ground for finding goals and implementation ideas.
- ***Prior year customer surveys.*** Most camps conduct a customer satisfaction survey during or after camp. The results of these surveys should be reviewed for possible goals and implementation measures. These comments come from the consumer and provide an insight into the customer's thoughts, needs and desires.
- ***Current year leaders' gatherings and surveys.*** Leaders will often provide suggestions on improvements to the camp. These should be collected and periodically reviewed during the camp to see if improvements can be made. One signal of a strong camping program is if issues can be addressed before the end of the camp.
- ***Current year staff recommendations.*** Often current staff will have good ideas. These should be reviewed and implemented when appropriate.
- ***Complaints.*** Complaints are a form of feedback and should be evaluated for possible areas of improvement.

Step 2. Setting Goals

In general, the camp CCIP team should meet before camp starts to review past year's goals and successes and develop this year's goals, implementation measures, metrics. This is not meant to be an overly formal process and a camp CCIP team can likely do so informally, by moving input around on sticky notes or other simple methods.

It is usually best to complete the camp annual camp improvement program after the council has completed its camp strategic improvement plan for the camp.

Remind CCIP team of council goals. The starting point for the annual camp improvement program is the council's camp strategic improvement plan. In addition, if the council strategic plan or camp long-term plan (if any) addresses goals that are important to the council's camping program or a particular camp, call these to the attention of the team at the beginning of the goal setting process. This will help ensure that the council's planning processes work in harmony.

Goal setting. Each area of strength and area of improvement should have a preliminary goal statement – what the council or camp wants to achieve by maintaining the area of strength or building up the area of weakness. For an annual camp improvement program, the focus should be on *tactical* goals – those that can be addressed by the resources available to the camp and camp staff during the camping season. If you find a great long term goal, write it down and save it for the next camp strategic improvement plan review.

Goals don't need to be elaborate or tied to a metric yet. Just enough to give the team an idea of what is intended. If there is a consensus that some suggested topics aren't relevant or feasible at this time, take them out of the mix and place them in a folder for the next camping season goals.

Initial prioritization of goals. In this step, the CCIP team will choose those goals that seem most appropriate for the camp. It is important to pick enough goals that you can meet the requirements of Standard AO-810, Specific Requirement C, which requires that four of the CCIP categories be addressed during the season by the annual camp improvement plan. A couple of extra goals may be worthwhile in case some fall out during the next step. On the other hand, the CCIP team may not want to have too many goals, as that makes the burden of the subsequent step much greater. You can always come back and pick up additional goals if you need them!

Step 2. Developing Tactical Metrics, Implementation Schedule, and Setting Measurable Success Criteria

For each goal identified in Step 1, the CCIP team determines an implementation plan, quantitative way to measure progress toward the goal and a quantitative success criterion using the goal's measurement method.

Implementation. As you develop each goal, you should concurrently develop implementation measures that ensure you will meet the goal. For example, if one of your areas for improvement is the campfire program, you will likely want to hold several meetings with selected camp staff members prior to staff week to plan the campfire and rehearse the campfire during staff week to ensure an exciting, well-planned campfire experience. Simply setting success criteria will not ensure success—an action plan must be developed and implemented for each goal.

Metrics. There are countless ways to measure progress toward your goals. Some (such as customer satisfaction with a given program) can be measured on a scale (e.g., on a scale of 1 to 5). Others, such as timeliness of developing the camp leaders' guide, can be true/false (e.g., on a specific date, was the current camp leaders' guide available on the council website or is the council's practice in compliance with local ordinance?). Others can be direct measurement (how long is the wait for free shoot? What is the water pressure in campsite 9?)

It is critical that the method of measurement chosen be easily implemented in the camp environment (be aware of any additional effort that will be required to use the measurement system). Several examples are provided in Table 2. The key is to have quantifiable, objective measures—there should be no doubt as to how the camp is performing in these areas.

Table 2. Annual Improvement Program CCIP Categories and Metrics

| Area | Measurement |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Campfire program | 5.0 scale of satisfaction on end-of-week survey |
| Precamp unit leader contact | Percentage of unit leaders receiving a phone call from camp leadership a certain period prior to arrival at camp |
| Camp leaders' guide | Date camp leaders' guide is posted |
| Shooting sports congestion | Period of time a Scout waits before being able to shoot |
| Campsite water pressure | Number of complaints received, as measured on the end-of-week survey |
| Senior staff retention | Percentage of senior staff from previous summer returning |
| Honor troop | Percentage of units in camp receiving award |
| Food refuse | Weight of refuse generated per camper per day |
| Preventive maintenance | Amount of money spent as a proportion of aggregate facility value |
| First-year camper program | 5.0 scale of satisfaction on end-of-week survey |
| Food service | 5.0 scale of satisfaction on end-of-week survey |
| Water carnival | Attendance as a proportion of Scouts (or units) in camp |
| In-council camp attendance | Percentage of council units attending camp |
| Net income | Net income as a percentage of annual camp revenue |
| Community service projects | Percentage of units attending camp that participate in a community service project while at camp |

Once the form of measurement is determined, a success criterion within that measurement system can be determined. Success criteria should reflect what the camp could achieve if it stretches itself. Table 3 presents an example of potential success criteria for a given goal.

Table 3. Annual Improvement Program Success Criteria

| Area | Success Criteria |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Campfire program | 4.0 rating out of a possible 5.0 in the end-of-week survey |
| Precamp unit leader contact | 100% of unit leaders receive a phone call from camp leadership at least two weeks prior to arriving at camp. |
| Camp leaders' guide | Guide posted on website by Nov. 1 |
| Shooting sports congestion | No Scout waits more than 10 minutes before being able to shoot. |
| Campsite water pressure | No complaints about water pressure in the upper campsites, as measured on the end-of-week survey |
| Senior staff retention | 80% of senior staff from previous summer return. |
| Honor troop | 90% of units at camp earn the honor troop award. |
| Food refuse | Garbage generated by the dining hall does not exceed two pounds/camper/day. |
| Preventive maintenance | Funds spent on preventive maintenance are at least 10% of the as-built value of the facilities. |
| Family camping | 350 families attend family camping programs. |
| First-year camper program | 4.7 rating out of a possible 5.0 on the end-of-week survey |
| Food service | 4.8 rating out of a possible 5.0 on the end-of-week survey |
| Water carnival | 50% of camp attends water carnival. |
| In-council camp attendance | 60% of council troops attend summer camp. |
| Net income | Net income is equal to or greater than 20% of revenues. |
| Community service projects | 75% of units attending camp participate in a community service project while at camp. |

If you find that you cannot write a series of concrete steps to achieve a goal, the goal may not be appropriate for inclusion at this time. Don't be afraid to set aside a goal into the next authorization or planning period. At that time, the way to achieve the goal may be clearer!

Step 3. Developing the annual camp improvement program

Once the camp CCIP team has established goals, implementation measures, metrics, and success criteria for each goal, it is time to set up the annual camp improvement program.

The camp annual improvement program consists of those goals and their associated implementation measures and metrics that camp will undertake in the current camping season. Some of these goals may come from the camp strategic improvement plan; others will come from feedback from camp participants during the prior camping season or even earlier during the camping season. Remember that the camp annual improvement plan must address at least four of the CCIP categories!

Form of program. Unlike the camp strategic improvement plan, which is a formal plan, the annual camp improvement program is meant to be more fluid, responding to the needs of the camp during the season as well as the planning process at the start of the season. For this reason, it is recommended that the form of the annual improvement program be a series of pages (in print or electronic) that can be added or subtracted during the course of the summer.

For each goal, there should be:

1. A statement of the goal,
2. the CCIP categories it addresses,
3. whether the goal is for an area of strength or area of improvement,
4. implementation measures and who is responsible for them
5. the metric and how it will be done during the camp;
6. the success criteria; and
7. A brief synopsis of progress during camp based on the metrics

An example annual camp improvement program is included in Appendix B. Other forms of the plan could also be used. As with the camp strategic improvement plan, don't get hung up on the formatting. Penciled in notes of metrics are fine as are scratch outs and revisions on the fly. The critical element is to respond to opportunities for improvement! The only real documentation requirement is that the camp has some written materials showing how it sought to achieve significant improvements in four categories over the camping season!

Renewing and revising the annual camp improvement program. The annual camp improvement program is a living document and should be revised as needed by the camp director and program director (or other designees) to achieve the goals set forth. Changes should be documented in the plan so that assessment team members can see the plans evolution over the camping season. CCIP generally, and the annual camp improvement program in particular, is set up using quality management principles. That means:

1. Plan: determine what needs to be done, when, how, and by whom. This is done at the start of the season initially.
2. Do: carry out the implementation measures;
3. Check: analyze the metrics resulting from carrying out the measures; and

4. Act: take appropriate steps to close the gap between planned and actual results. Then, repeat, starting at Step 1.

Using this simple approach, camp directors and program directors can use the annual camp improvement program to work substantial improvements at camp!

4.5 Implementing CCIP During the Year

This section discusses steps that councils and camps should take during each annual cycle to help ensure that the CCIP works well. For CCIP purposes, the year really starts at the end of the prior year.

End of Camp

The camp director and program director should collect any suggested improvements for next year's camp program (not just CCIP) from camp staff, collect any customer surveys and summarize them, and present their conclusions and recommendations as well as the raw data in an after-action report to the council. This report will serve as one of the principal tools for planning the subsequent season annual camp improvement program.

Hiring of Camp Director/Program Director

The CCIP and the important role played by the camp director and program director should be discussed with potential candidates during the hiring process. This helps ensure that camp leadership is "on board" for their role in improving camp before and during the camping season.

Post-camp/Pre-camp Inspection

The post-camp and/or pre-camp inspection sheet should be used as an opportunity to assess improvements in facility and program equipment. This information should be included in the packet of information given to the camp CCIP team.

Preparing the annual improvement plan and submitting the Declaration of Readiness

Before the declaration of readiness due date, the camp CCIP team should gather to review the camp strategic improvement plan, other relevant council documents, and the prior year's after-action reports and post-camp/pre-camp reports. Based on this information, the camp CCIP team will prepare the initial annual improvement program. This program should be written down for inclusion in the declaration of readiness and should include:

- Goal
- CCIP category and whether area of strength or area of weakness
- Synopsis of implementation
- Metric and success criteria

The final goals, metrics and success criteria for the current year, and the final report on the goals, metrics and whether they were achieved for the prior year are then included in the Declaration of Readiness and submitted.

Camp Staff CCIP Training

The camp CCIP team and/or the camp director and program director should ensure that camp staff understands the annual camp improvement program and their critical role in ensuring that each participant has the best possible experience.

Implementing the annual improvement program

At camp, the camp director and program director should ensure that camp staff, camp rangers and other engaged in implementing the annual camp improvement program understand the program, its goals, implementation measures, and metrics. The camp director and program director should then assign specific staff members responsibility for achieving the annual camp improvement goals and staff members responsibility for ensuring that the metrics are collected to assess progress toward the goal.

Monitoring progress toward the success criteria/revising the annual improvement program

At least weekly, the camp director and program director, possibly in consultation with the council professional responsible for CCIP implementation, should review the annual camp improvement program implementation. Completed measures are documented; metrics reviewed to ensure showing progress and, if progress is slower than anticipated or not being made, changes to the program or additional measures adopted to achieve the goal. Progress toward the goals should be communicated to the camp staff. Any changes to the program should be communicated to the responsible staff members.

Reporting progress at the end of the season

At the end of camp, the camp director and program director should prepare the annual improvement program close out report. The report should list:

- Each goal attempted, its CCIP category, whether an area of strength or weakness
- The metrics and success criteria
- A brief summary of what the metrics showed and whether the goal was achieved
- Any lessons learned.

Because the annual camp improvement program is a living thing, some of these goals may not have been on the list at the beginning of the season. That's not a problem – any added goals should also be reported. Celebrate your successes and efforts to achieve greatness!

Having the outgoing camp director and program director complete this report greatly reduces the burden on the council because they have implemented the program and are most familiar with it.

APPENDIX “A”

Example Camp Strategic Improvement Plan

James E. West Council

Camp Scout Strategic Improvement Plan

The James E. West Council has identified the following continuous camp improvement goals for implementation at Camp Scout over the next five years to improve the quality of the camping experience for Scouts and Scouters.

Narrative Listing of Goals

1. [Program/Facilities] Camp Scout will improve the campfire experience to make it memorable and inspiring. We will measure success by surveying leaders and Scouts and achieving an 8.5 out of 10 on our customer satisfaction survey. We will achieve our goal by:
 - a. Hiring at least three staff with superior guitar, banjo or fiddle skills to enhance the campfire program;
 - b. Replacing the existing sound system with a new wireless system to enhance broadcast capabilities;
 - c. Adding all-weather theatrical lighting for the central campfire stage area to facilitate skits and talks;
 - d. Replanting the area behind the stage to create a more appealing backdrop that also minimizes outside interference with events;
 - e. Expanding campfire seating to facilitate all attendees, including those with special needs, being able to sit and see;
 - f. We will monitor progress by conducting a weekly customer satisfaction survey.
2. [Staffing/Program/Equipment/Facilities] Camp Scout will seek to improve the shooting experience by reducing the delays that participants encounter at the rifle and shotgun range. We will measure success by monitoring the delay time for participants. We will achieve our goal by:
 - a. Adding a staff member to assess safety and skill knowledge in the line prior to joining the ready line. Scouts who have successfully completed shooting orientation can bypass the orientation step and move directly to the ready line.
 - b. Training staff to conduct a brief shooting safety and procedure orientation before Scouts seek to shoot using NRA and Scouting materials.
 - c. Adding equipment and facilities to allow orientation to occur before a participant joins the ready line.
 - d. We will monitor progress by handing out time marked cards to every tenth participant in the waiting line and tracking how long it takes them to shoot.

Proposed Implementation Schedule

| Year 1 | Action |
|---------|---|
| G1f | Meet with engineering firm to evaluate whether access can be made from trail (first choice), service road (second choice) or remote AV connection (last) so Scouts can see, hear and participate remotely. If remote access possible, assess AV and lighting needs. |
| G1a | Begin advertising to staff and participants desire for staff with musical ability. |
| G2b | Shooting sports committee will review Standards and Shooting Sports Manual to develop required training course, facilities and equipment needs |
| G2d | Begin metric screening to understand current delays and whether this is a real problem |
| Year 2 | Action |
| G1 | Board members and possible donors will be asked to review plans and site to find potential capital funding sources |
| G1a | Hire staff with musical instrument experience and integrate into campfire program. |
| G1g | Begin customer satisfaction surveys of camp fire program |
| G2b | Additional staff member hired and staff trained to provide orientation course. |
| G2g | Begin metric screening to see if improvement occurs with training program |
| Year 3 | Action |
| G1 | If funding obtained, develop engineering plans and obtain required permits for fire ring improvements with plan to commence construction after camp |
| G1d | Begin landscaping behind fire ring, needed regardless of other improvements |
| G1f | Identify location and AV needs for remote participation if direct access for mobility impaired participants not possible |
| G2 | If metric review shows improvements being made, purchase additional program equipment and rearrange facilities to accommodate orientation area without interrupting traffic flows or disrupting existing classes. This is not expected to require construction of new facilities. |
| G2d | Continue monitoring improvements in shooting access times |
| Year 4 | Action |
| G1b & c | Implement improvements in lighting and AV equipment. |
| G1d | Implement remote access for mobility impaired Scouts (if direct access not possible) |

GUIDE TO THE CONTINUOUS CAMP IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

G1f Continue monitoring satisfaction with campfire program
G2d Monitoring improvements in shooting access times; if improvements persist, make new staffing and facilities configuration permanent

| Year 5 | Action |
|---------------|---|
| G1f | Continue monitoring satisfaction and evaluate if additional measures needed |

APPENDIX “B”

Example Annual Camp Improvement Plan

James E. West Council

Camp Scout Annual Camp Improvement Program

Camp Scout has adopted the following items for its annual camp improvement program.

| Category | Goal | Measure | PLAN | Timeline |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Program Equipment | Customer Satisfaction avg is 3.93 or higher | Survey results for Program equipment avg 3.93 on 5 pt scale Current average rating for all program areas is 3.52. | 1. Camp Directors monitor camper/leader surveys throughout the summer for opportunities to improve equipment in-season 2. Survey ratings and responses are reviewed by Camp Directors, Council Staff and Camping Committee to identify opportunities for improvement 3. CFET review with Council Staff, Reservation Staff and appropriate Board Committees to prioritize equipment purchases/ improvements. | Wkly Annually in fall Annually in January |
| Staff | Customer Satisfaction for Program Staff is at least 4.29 | Survey results for Program Staff satisfaction, measured on 5 pt scale. Current average rating for all program areas is 4.48. | 1. Camp Directors and Program Directors monitor camper/leader surveys throughout the summer for opportunities to improve staff in-season 2. Camp Directors and Camping Committee review staff ratings and comments and identify opportunities to improve staff | Weekly Annually in fall |
| Participation | Attendees would return & recommend to others | 90% surveyed would recommend to other scouts and would like to attend again Current scores: 94% recommend & 92% return | 1. Ensure evening and lunch programs are dynamic and physical 2. Ensure Trading Post is well stocked with treats and board games. Make sure staff are in this area to interact with scouts. 3. Monitor comments regarding class times and free time to make sure Scouts feel adequately engaged. 4. Continue to offer new and challenging experiences | Annual Review |
| Program | Increase the capacity for the Welding MB program | Purchase 4 more welders & develop 4 more welding bays | 1. Purchase 4 welding machines 2. Construct 4 more Welding bays. 3. Re-evaluate the syllabus for the course 4. Promote expansion in 2018 Guides | Spring 2018 2019 2020 |
| Sustainability | Increase Trading Posts sales each year | Sales growth from year-to-year | With TP Manager, review inventory at end of camp. Compile 80/20 report of sales, review report with Camping Committee. Review comments and suggestions from campers. Contact current & potential supplier in early inter to receive information on current trends and bids for best pricing, with orders placed in late winter/ early spring. | Annually |