

CHAPTER 7

Evaluation of Recreation Program and Facilities

7.1 Purpose. This chapter establishes the policy for the evaluation of facilities and services in Corps-operated recreation areas.

7.2 Policy. It is the policy of the Corps of Engineers that an evaluation program shall be established and implemented at each project. This program's activities shall be designed to accomplish the following goals:

7.2.1 Ensure Appropriate Customer Service Levels. Consistent application of the program should help maintain and improve customer service levels at Corps-managed recreation areas throughout the Nation.

7.2.2 Conduct Management Review of Operational Performance. The program will establish a mechanism for management review of the recreation program's operational performance.

7.2.3 Establish Funding Priorities. The program shall establish a mechanism to assist management in prioritizing and funding corrective action items necessary for efficient park operations.

7.3 Evaluation Program. The evaluation program consists of three components:

7.3.1 Routine Evaluations. Routine daily reporting of project conditions shall be performed at the project level to ensure that high levels of customer service are maintained. Corps personnel, contractors, volunteers, or a combination thereof may accomplish this. Reporting methods normally used include a log or work order program. The routine evaluations shall facilitate timely identification and correction of safety problems, cleanup of areas and facilities, and accomplishment of minor maintenance and repairs.

7.3.2 Annual Evaluations. An in-house annual evaluation shall be conducted to verify the safety and functional operation of all recreation facilities. A project level team consisting of managers, rangers, and maintenance and contract personnel should perform annual evaluations. Use of peers from other areas is encouraged. Evaluations shall include review of

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facilities, structures, roads, ramps, equipment, and utilities. Safety-related deficiencies shall be corrected prior to opening the recreation area or facility for public use.

7.3.3 PDT Periodic Evaluations. Every 5 years, a PDT consisting of division, district, and onsite personnel shall conduct an overall evaluation of each project's recreation program operational efficiency. Care should be taken to form a PDT that is interdisciplinary in nature, including elements such as Environmental, Planning, Design and Safety. The evaluations shall examine the design and condition of facilities, structures, roads, ramps, equipment, signs, and utilities for their adequacy to meet current and future customer needs. Policy compliance will also be reviewed. Prior to the evaluation, the PDT shall be provided a synopsis of customer feedback (comment card results, congressional inquiries, etc.) received about the adequacy and functionality of area facilities.

7.3.3.1 Periodic Evaluation Scope. Operations Division at the district level will develop a systematic plan for the evaluation. If a system of condition indices is developed, it should be accomplished at this time. At a minimum the systematic evaluation shall examine the condition/adequacy and safety of the following:

- Roadways and parking areas
- Launch ramps, walkways and floor surfaces
- Overall park appearance
- Overall environmental conditions, e.g., health and vigor of vegetation, erosion
- Sites and amenities
- Stability and integrity of structures
- Water delivery and sanitation systems
- Electrical systems, wiring, piping, plumbing, telephone and communications
- Docks and other water-related facilities
- Compliance with UA requirements
- Security features
- Carrying capacity and use patterns
- Management issues or problems
- Compliance with basic policies, i.e., visitor assistance, security of use fees collections, etc.
- Customer services, looking at future trends and projected customer needs

- Markets being served, and how well market needs are being met
- Operational efficiency

7.3.3.2 Evaluation Report Contents. The periodic evaluation report shall present the results of each evaluation. Major elements of this report should be:

- Executive Summary. An executive summary of the major items found in the evaluation shall include a statement about the project's ability to continue acceptable and safe recreation program operations.
- Evaluation of Recreation Areas. The report shall include a brief evaluation of each recreation area regarding its ability to serve customer needs and future requirements.
- Photos. Color digital photographs shall support the narrative, and include appropriate descriptive captions.
- Proposed Corrective Actions. A brief discussion of improvements needed shall include proposed corrective actions, related maintenance concerns, and designation of the action office. A cost estimate should also be provided to assist in development of the OMP annual and 5-year work plans and for development of the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget.
- Items Needing Further Evaluation. The report shall note any conditions that need more in-depth evaluation to determine the cause or extent of a problem. The report shall also indicate proposed methods and time frames for followup examinations.
- Reference to Prior Reports. Subsequent reports should reference the previous periodic reports to ensure that all previously noted corrective actions were adequately addressed.

7.3.3.3 Exit Briefing. The PDT shall conduct an exit briefing with the Operations Manager/Lake Manager before leaving the site. The briefing will include an overview of the findings, and identify items requiring immediate attention. The responsible party for accomplishing each corrective action will be identified at the exit briefing.

7.3.3.4 Distribution and Use of Evaluation Reports. Within 60 days after the evaluation is completed, the Project Manager shall provide a written report of the major findings to the Lake/Operations Manager for comment prior to forwarding to the Chief of Operations for review and approval. The report

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should be permanently retained in appropriate files at the project office and be available to evaluation teams conducting subsequent evaluations. The report should be referenced when justifying and prioritizing line item funding in future funding cycles.

7.4 Budget Requests. Based on results of annual and periodic evaluations, the Operations Manager/Lake Manager should insure that major findings are scheduled and included in the next O&M budget request.