

Fall 2014

# THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



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## Integrating People, Process, and Technology to Improve Unit Service

Everyone involved in unit service has been dealing with change this year; this newsletter is full of information about that. Change breeds questions, and it's not surprising that there have been many of them about Commissioner Tools and the Unit Service Plan.

Simply stated, one of our goals is to integrate **people** (commissioners, unit leaders, and district operating committee members), **process** (the Unit Service Plan), and **technology** (Commissioner Tools) to help our units better serve more youth through Scouting.

The Unit Visit Tracking System provided valuable experience with applying technology to unit service. It became apparent, however, that UVTS wasn't capable of efficiently providing commissioners with actionable information, through either access to data collected elsewhere by the BSA or analysis of data input following unit contacts. It is being replaced by Commissioner Tools, but the primary objective of that change isn't simply to replace UVTS. Rather, Commissioner Tools has been developed to provide commissioners with access to information needed to do their work better and easier and to enable them to work **collaboratively** with unit leaders and district operating committee members.

The *Unit Service Plan* is a new process, and it's a better way to provide unit service. It supports all four elements of excellent unit service:

1. Supporting unit growth through the Journey to Excellence
2. Contacting units and capturing their strengths and needs in Commissioner Tools
3. Linking unit needs to district operating committee resources
4. Supporting timely charter renewal

The Unit Service Plan also supports our approach to starting and sustaining high-performing units (detailed in the *Unit Performance Guide*). The Unit Service Plan **replaces** all other service plans, including the "annual service plan," traditionally referenced in unit service manuals and training materials. It was also a key component of the design of Commissioner Tools.



Larry Chase  
National Commissioner Service  
Recruitment and Retention Chair  
[lhc@chasehome.net](mailto:lhc@chasehome.net)



The first of the four steps in the Unit Service Plan process is completion of a unit assessment. This assessment **replaces** all other types of assessments, including the "unit self-assessment" referenced in unit service manuals and training materials. This unit assessment is intended to be **collaborative**; it is to be completed jointly by a unit commissioner and the unit Key 3 (and other key unit leaders who may have valuable input).



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*Commissioner Tools* supports the collaborative development of a unit assessment. Its design includes an electronic detailed assessment that can be used to easily identify a unit's strengths and needs in areas that are excellent indicators of unit health. After introducing the concept to unit leaders, a unit commissioner can send an electronic assessment form to them by email that can be completed quickly and easily online, and the results of their assessments will be captured by Commissioner Tools and be available for review there. Unit assessments will be most effective when the unit commissioner facilitates a meeting with unit leaders to review their initial input and finalize an assessment of the unit's strengths, needs, and greatest opportunities to improve the quality of the program it provides to the youth it serves. And, again, all of that can be captured in Commissioner Tools, where it will remain available for easy reference by the unit commissioner and other members of the district's unit service team.

The unit assessment is just one example of how we're integrating people, process, and technology to increase the impact of the good work commissioners do, which can best be measured by unit retention. In future issues, we'll look at how Commissioner Tools has been designed to support other steps in the Unit Service Plan process. In combination, they really do provide an easier way for you to help units better serve more youth through Scouting!



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