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Unit Level Quality Assurance

“A Practical Application from a Detachment and District Perspective”

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Commissioner's Standing Orders

(AM I.7) The RCMP will have an effective risk-based Management Review and Quality Assurance Program that monitors the internal quality of operational, administrative and financial responsibilities focusing on high-risk activities ultimately supporting accountability throughout the RCMP.



What is Unit Level Quality Assurance?

It is a continuous risk-based process performed by a unit commander/manager with respect to improve the degree of compliance with:

- Operational
- Financial
- Administrative and program responsibilities.



Treasury Board defines “**risk**” as:

Risk refers to the uncertainty that surround future events and outcomes. It is the expression of **likelihood** and **impact** of an event with the potential to influence the achievement of an organization’s objective



5 Phases of Quality Assurance Process

Annually:

- Identify activities performed by the unit.
- Prioritize activities in order of risk significance
- Conduct physical review and identify findings.
- Take corrective actions
- Follow up

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The remainder of this presentation will deal with how the ULQA process works at the Detachment and District Level in “F” Division.



Phase 1: Identification of activities

The Detachment Commander and his/her personnel are provided with a list of 11 mandatory ULQA items from the Division. They then identify an additional 4 ULQA items that are a risk to them in their individual detachment areas.

From this list they prioritize their list and select 3 to 4 items to include for their ULQA on the APP's.

As many employees of the unit as possible should be involved in identifying activities.

Activity: a specific function performed within a unit that has an impact on service delivery and which enables the unit to meet its mandate. (ie: Quality of Investigations, Exhibit Handling)



Phase 1:

In reality, this list is more often than not, completed by the Detachment Commander with little or no input from the other members of the Unit.



Phase II: Prioritization of activities in relation to the risk they pose

- Use **form 5185**, Annual Performance Plan, to perform a risk assessment of the 15 activities selected in Phase I and prioritize them.
- Internal Audit, Evaluation and Review encourages the unit manager to select 3 activities to start with and to select more activities depending on the unit capacity.
- Use a brief narrative explaining why you did or did not select to review the activity

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Phase II:

There are generally no issues with this phase and the prioritization of the review activities is done correctly and according to policy.

Often the Detachment Commander will select too many items or items which really don't have a requirement to be included as part of the ULAQ.



Phase III: Physical Review

Open a set of Admin files to record the work:

238 - 1 = policy file.

- **238 - 2 = General file.**
- **238 - 3 = Individual activity files.**
- **Samples of activity files:**

- ❖ **238-3-1 = Equipment and maintenance log**
- ❖ **238-3-2 = Mandatory training**
- ❖ **238-3-3 = Human sources**



Phase III: Physical Review

Each activity file includes:

- ✓ Reviewer's name
- ✓ Rationale for reviewing the activity
- ✓ Copy of form **5185** and **5202**
- ✓ Up-to-date national and divisional review guides
- ✓ Working papers generated by the review



Phase III: Physical Review

The reviewer's working paper includes:

- Total file population.**
- Sample size, according to the table if statistical.**
- Record of file numbers.**
- Record of findings. Formulate an action plan to correct the deficiencies (root cause not symptoms).**



Phase III:

It is at this stage where the process starts to encounter problems if there are going to be problems.

Good Detachment Commanders with a solid understanding of the ULQA process can overcome any hurdles and ensure that the process is done correctly and according to policy, however....



...there are a lot of detachment commanders who have made this into a paper exercise and the work is completed in short order upon a diary date within the APP's or an upcoming visit from the District Management Team

-One of the biggest issues here are junior Detachment Commanders with limited experience and a lack of time are resources from the District level to provide coaching and mentoring required



Phase IV: Corrective Action

Document your findings on form 5202 (deficiencies and best practices)

- Meet to discuss possible course of action.
- Make decision on course of action and document.
- Use **form 5202** to record corrective action for each activity file.
- Assign person (s) to implement plan.
- Assign diary date for completion.
- Remember to address the cause vs. symptoms



Phase IV: Corrective Action

Again, at this stage there are mixed results. In some cases, the corrective action is done according to policy and as required by the Detachment

In other cases, it is neglected or given only marginal attention with the results not contributing to an improvement to the specific activity.



Phase V: Follow up

To ensure the planned corrective action was implemented.

- To determine the results – did the corrective action work?
- Use **form 5202** to track follow up for each activity file
- As previously indicated, the follow-up will have varied results depending on the specific Unit.



What ULQA should be:

- **Meaningful:** Select activities which pose the highest residual risk to the unit.
- **Manageable:** The number of selected activities should be kept at a manageable level dependant on the size and capability of the unit. (Recommended limit of 3 activities.)
- **Flexible:** Can be re-evaluated at any time during the year.



Benefits of Quality Assurance Process:

- ✓ Help managers identify risks.
- ✓ Provide opportunity to mitigate risk.
- ✓ Training and development opportunities.
- ✓ Increases personal & public accountability.
- ✓ Improves service to client.



How does the District monitor the Detachment ULQA's?

- Through review of the APP's**
- Through Detachment visits reviewing the specific 238 files and most importantly the working papers and findings**
- Through discussions with Detachment members and the Unit Commander**



Is it a good system?

Yes, but it needs to be understood by all using it and it needs to be applied in the manner in which it was intended.

Proper coaching and guidance from the District Level is paramount in having the ULQA process work properly.

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Questions???