

**Proposed changes to application, certifying and
designation processes of International Safe
Communities**

**Overview, to be shared with current Network
members
12 May 2008**

This report is prepared by Diana Stark Ekman, MPH, PhD, at the request of Leif Svanström, BA, MD, PhD, who oversees the network through the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion, housed at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden. This report is based on a document that was circulated and reviewed by multiple representatives of SC Certifying Centres and Affiliate Support Centres throughout late winter and spring, 2008.

The Collaborating Centre gratefully acknowledges the efforts provided by the following, who contributed substantially to the development of these revised guidelines:

Certifying Centres

Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand

Center for Injury Prevention and Community Safety Promotion, Korea

Swedish Association for Safe Communities (Svensk Förening för Safe Communities)

Safe Communities Canada

Australian Safe Communities Foundation

Centre for Peace Action, South Africa

Universidad del Valle, Instituto CISALVA, Bogota, Colombia

Affiliate Safe Community Centres

Safe Communities America

Royal Children's Hospital, Australia

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Dear members of the International Network of Safe Communities,

As you know, the Network has been growing at a rapid rate in the past few years. As of May, 2008, we are now at 136 members, with many more to come this year. With the addition of each new community to our Network, the science behind community safety promotion grows, and so does our shared knowledge on the elements that comprise a successful SC programme.

The successes that are enjoyed by communities that have developed effective SC programmes have led to increased interest in network membership throughout the world. This interest has resulted in many organisational changes in the network. In Bergen, Norway, in 2005, we established a network of Certifying Centres, to share the responsibilities of working with applicant communities, and welcoming them into the network. The number of Affiliate Support Centres has also expanded, to provide expertise and support to community networks. Now the time has come to look at the organisational model upon which our work is based, and to revise processes, with an aim to not only to strengthening our network, and to increase the capacity of members to promote safer communities.

The document here that you are reading is the result of many months of discussion with representatives from around the world, where significant changes to the SC organisational model are described. Meetings were held in Bangkok and Stockholm in 2007 and in Mexico in 2008 to work out the details of new processes. You are now being asked to comment on these proposed changes, as a representative of a community or centre that is a member of the International Network. While the majority of changes will affect applicants to the network, there are some specific changes that impact current members, particularly in a new requirement for annual reports, and revised redesignation requirements.

Local programmes form the heart of the Safe Communities movement. Your suggestions and ideas about the proposed changes to the model are kindly requested- please send all comments to Moa Sundström, no later than 31 August 2008. A number of new documents, describing the new requirements and changes to the model will be in place beginning January 1, 2009, after we take into account your feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Leif Svanström, MD, BA, PhD
WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion
Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden
May, 2008

1. Proposed changes to International Safe Communities network membership and organisation

Applying for membership in the SC network

- Application to become a member of the International Network of Safe Communities is a rigorous process. Communities must already have experience in conducting SPIP activities before they are eligible for application, and must show evidence of ongoing cooperation and sustainability.
- Communities that are interested in the joining SC network arrive at the decision to apply for membership through a number of different methods. Some communities decide to work with already designated communities or Affiliate Safe Community Support Centres, which provide staff to support the applicants up until the time that the application is formally submitted. Other communities work more independently, or in contact with a Certifying Centre.
- Once a community has completed its application, however, it submits the required documents to a Certifying Centre of its choice, which will work with the applicant from that point on, through a document review and a site visit, until the community is designated as a member of the SC network.
- Fees for the designation process are set by the Certifying Centres.

Safe Communities Indicators

The SC model is based upon a set of six indicators. These indicators ensure that SC activities are effective in promoting a better quality of life in the community. The indicators have been in use in the current form since 2001, when they replaced an earlier set of twelve indicators. The use of indicators as road-maps helps make sure that, internationally, SC organisations share common goals and activities.

New guidelines on meeting indicators

Beginning January, 2009 applicants to the SC network must demonstrate their capacity to meet a minimal set of activities for each indicator. The following section of this document will describe how SC applicants can meet each indicator.

1. An infrastructure based on partnership and collaborations, governed by a cross-sectional group that is responsible for safety promotion in their community

Minimal criteria for indicator 1

Reference Groups

Applicants to the SC network are required to demonstrate that they have representation from a number of different community sectors within the SC programme. The applicant's reference group (also referred to as the board, governing body, steering committee, leadership group or community partners) must ensure that the SC programme is sustainable, and that the organisation will have a positive effect

on local safety promotion and injury prevention activities, organisations, and policies. We recognise that in some organisations, the driving force behind the work is not from elected officials or local governments per se. Still, government representation is necessary where it is available, to ensure that there is policy support for community safety promotion projects.

Reference groups should contain representatives from the following community sectors:

1. The political unit responsible for local government- for example, in many countries, this is the mayor.
2. The government organization responsible for public safety within the community. (In most countries, this will be the local police unit. In other countries a national (or international) police force will have a local presence, and a representative should be recruited from this group.)
3. The local health care system where injury issues are addressed- specifically, there must be at least one representative from a hospital or public health unit that serves the local community. (In many locations, there will be more than one hospital that serves the area- applicants must provide evidence that they have partnered with the majority of the hospitals in the area in safety activities.)
4. The local emergency response services and-or fire service.
5. The local government organization responsible for traffic safety.

Other sectors that may be represented on reference groups include

1. Sport and Recreational Associations
2. Public and Private schools and other educational partners (valuable delivery partners)
3. Seniors Associations
4. Red Cross or equivalent
5. Community based intentional injury prevention partners (women's shelters, neighbourhood watch etc)

Task Force Groups

The second most important organisational trait of a Safe Community program is the existence of task force groups doing the actual work in the community. Task force groups, also known as working groups, are based on intersectoral co-operation. Task force groups work on specific SPIP areas.

A minimum of **six** such task force groups is a reasonable demand in order to be able to apply.

Examples of the most common areas for task force groups:

1. Traffic safety
2. Home safety
3. Work safety
4. Sports safety
5. School safety
6. Safety in public places

7. Safety for children
8. Safety for elderly
9. Violence prevention
10. Suicide prevention
11. Injury surveillance

2. Long-term, sustainable programs covering both genders and all ages, environments, and situations

Minimal criteria for indicator 2

Applicants to the SC network will meet criteria two through activities that address issues of safety for men and women, through activities that address safety for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults. Applicants must, at a minimum, have conducted activities that target the following SPIP areas:

1. Transport Safety.
2. Home and Leisure Safety. At least one activity should target fall prevention for at-risk groups, in particular, for older adults.
3. Children's Safety.
4. Elderly Safety
5. Occupational Safety

Safe Community organisations should address multiple safety promotion and injury prevention activities.

What are the programme parameters for SPIP activities that are sponsored by the local SC network?

As of January 2009, ICECI (WHO) is the number one system to classify the external causes of injuries (see <http://www.rivm.nl/who-fic/ICECIeng.htm>). Many still use the WHO International Classification of Diseases, Revision 10, Chapters 19 and 20, as guidelines for SC programmes and activities. The ICD 10 can be found at <http://www.who.int/classifications/apps/icd/icd10online/>.

SC applicants are encouraged to develop, and participate in, community-based activities that target the injury diagnoses and external causes of injuries outlined in these systems.

3. Programs that target high-risk groups and environments, and programs that promote safety for vulnerable groups

Minimal criteria for indicator 3

Safe Communities organisations plan and implement activities that promote safety and prevent injuries to the most vulnerable groups in their communities. In particular, the organisations aim to provide services to groups with higher-than-average injury rates, compared to the community average. Such groups can include

- Indigenous peoples;
- Low-income groups;
- Minority groups within the community, including workplaces;
- Those at risk for intentional injuries, including young adults;
- Older people;

- Children;
- Women;
- People with mental illnesses, developmental delays or other major disabilities;
- Sports and Recreation;
- Homeless populations;
- Natural disasters; and,
- High risk environments (for example, a particular road or intersection, a water hazard, etc.)

Safe Communities applicants are asked to document the particular at-risk groups in their community, through analysis of existing injury surveillance data.

4. Programs that document the frequency and causes of injuries

Minimal criteria for indicator 4

SC applicants are not expected to have a dedicated data analysis section operating on a full time basis. However, applicants are required, at a minimum, to:

- Review, on a regular basis, local injury surveillance data. If injury surveillance data is not available on an annual basis, please note in your application, and describe how often you will be able to review data. If sufficient information is not achieved household surveys are often used to complement other information.
- Use data to prioritize the development and delivery of activities addressing the most frequent injuries in the community

While it is not required, we urge applicants to maintain an ongoing partnership with an individual or organisation that can provide epidemiological analysis of injury patterns to the SC applicant if possible.

5. Evaluation measures to assess their programs, processes and the effects of change

Minimal criteria for indicator 5

SC organisations need measurable organisational goals to help guide their activities. Activities should also have specific goals, which should be measurable. Organisations can obtain pre- activity and post-activity information about behaviour change, for example. Organisations should measure how many people attend or benefit from specific activities, and organisations should be able to measure their organisation's impact on overall community safety status.

Minimal criteria for SC applicants for this criterion include

- Development and ongoing use of programme goals to reduce injuries and promote safety within the community.
- Development and ongoing use of activity goals for specific SPIP actions, which accurately measure the impacts of these activities.

A partnership with an individual or organisation that can provide evaluation support to the organisation is highly recommended- many times local universities or colleges are involved.

6. Ongoing participation in national and international Safe Communities networks.

Minimal criteria for indicator 6

At a minimum, applicants to the SC network are expected to have participated in at least one national or regional SC-related event before they are eligible to join the network. For this document, a regional event is an event that features participation by countries within the applicant's continent, as defined by WHO and the United Nations ([link to regions here](#)). Applicable events include

- Local or regional SC-related conferences, and
- Local or regional SC-related training events.

Before or during the designation event international participation must be a feature of the applicant programme. Applicants must also commit to sending representatives to attend at least one international function within three years of being accepted into the network. This function must involve at least one event where parties have crossed their national boundaries to participate. In addition, at least once every ten years, SC members must commit to attending a SC conference, held outside their national borders. SC conferences are held on an annual basis.

All SC network members are encouraged to apply to host an international conference or a seminar. Applicants may also consider hosting a travelling seminar, attached to another conference or large event; Bids for each conference are solicited annually, by announcement in the Safe Communities newsletter.

Eligibility criteria for applying to membership to the International Network of Safe Communities

Communities that are considering membership in the SC network must meet some qualifications, before they submit a membership application.

- The organisation must normally have been active in two years prior to application.
- The organisation's reference group, or governing group, contains members from:
 1. The local political unit responsible for community government. (In many countries, this is the mayor. In other countries, the political assembly will have a representative assigned to a particular community and a representative should be recruited from this group.)
 2. The government organization responsible for public safety within the community. (In most countries, this will be the local police unit. In other countries a national (or international) police force will have a local presence, and a representative should be recruited from this group.)
 3. The local health care system- specifically, there must be at least one representative from a hospital that serves the local community. (In many locations, there will be more than one hospital that serves the area- applicants must provide evidence that they have partnered with the majority of the hospitals in the area in safety activities.)
 4. The local emergency response services and-or fire service.
 5. The local government organization responsible for traffic safety.

- The applicant organisation has multiple Task Force groups, addressing specific injury prevention and-or safety promotion issues in the community. Examples of Task Force groups include:
 1. Traffic safety
 2. Home safety
 3. Work safety
 4. Sports safety
 5. School safety
 6. Safety in public places
 7. Safety for children
 8. Safety for elderly
 9. Violence prevention
 10. Suicide prevention
 11. Injury surveillance
 12. Food Safety
 13. Disaster Response
 14. Poisonings

A brief overview of the proposed process for joining the network

1. Find the right partner, and then submit a letter of interest

Community organisations that decide to pursue membership will approach an SC partner organisation, either a CC or an ASC, and submit a letter asking for assistance in joining the network.

2. CCCSP is notified

Once a letter with the mayor's endorsement, is received by the partner organisation, the applicant community's application is considered pending. The CCCSP is notified, and the community is listed as a potential member in CCCSP files and on the Safe Communities website.

3. Clock starts ticking!

With the receipt of the letter of intent from the community to its organisational partner, a clock starts ticking for the applicant community. The community normally has 12 months from that point, to complete the application process, and states in its letter that it agrees to these terms.

4. The Paper Review Process

The CC will acknowledge that it has received the applicant's documents. A Peer-review process to review the application will then begin. The CC has six weeks to review documents, in partnership with its peer reviewers. By the deadline, applicants will receive a written report from the CC's peer reviewers, which will state if the community is ready for a site visit, or if more information is needed in order to finish reviewing the documents.

Normally, the community will have six weeks to respond to a request for more information. If, after a second review, the applicant community and its CC partner do not agree on a community's readiness, CCCSP will referee. In the event that a community is asked to revise its application, new copies must be sent to the CC. If the community is not at that point, the community has an option to withdraw its application and re-apply later, or work with the CC to bring its organisation or application into compliance with SC standards.

5. The Site Visit

Visitors must meet the members of the reference group, and should be able to view activities in progress. Visitors will want to meet some of the members of the Task Force groups. Visitors should be given the opportunity to speak with community members who have participated in, or benefited from, organisation activities as well as to see demonstration activities on the field.

6. Feedback on site from Site Visit Team

The site visit team will meet with the applicant's representatives before they leave, and inform applicants that they will either recommend that the CC approve your membership application, or that they will recommend that the CC delay approval.

If a membership application is delayed, because of site visit concerns, the Site Visit team will describe these concerns before they leave. They will then submit a report, discussing the concerns in more detail, and outlining recommendations that the community should take before the application is recommended for approval. The site visit team will tell applicants if they can provide written proof of addressing shortfalls, or if another site visit is required. Normally, a deadline of six weeks is desirable, so that communities and site visitors do not lose momentum in this process.

CCCSP reserves the right to resolve disagreements.

7. Designation

The designation ceremony is normally held within six months of a site visit, given time to make program changes

Upon a community's designation, they will now receive communication from the CCCSP. A letter welcoming the community into the network will be sent from Dr. Leif Svanström, director of CCCSP. In addition, new members will be acknowledged in the monthly Safe Communities newsletter and will also be acknowledged at the next international Safe Communities conference.

2. Maintaining an Active Role in the Network-requirements for Safe Communities organisations

1. Annual Reports

Beginning 2009, communities will be required to submit simple, one to two page annual reports to the CCCSP website and a copy to the certifying centre that did the first review. Communities will also be required to update their existing web pages, housed on the CCCSP server at Karolinska Institutet.

2. After Five Years- the Redesignation process

Redesignation of Safe Communities is now streamlined. Safe Communities that make their annual reports are considered members in good standing. Five years from the date of a designation, or redesignation, SC organisations are asked to participate in a review process that will lead to their 'redesignation' status.

Paper review by CC

Communities are asked to select a Certifying Centre with which to conduct their five year review. The CC review team will conduct a paper review and a site visit- for those who didn't submit yearly reports a more extensive re-application is required.

The Certifying Centre will send recommendations to applicant within two months. A rededication date and ceremony will be selected in partnership between CC and member community. The organisation's rededication date and updated organizational report are posted on the web within three weeks of receipt. Rededications are acknowledged via SC News articles, via conferences, and via a letter from Dr. Svanström.

The process will take effect in January 2009. All communities currently needing redesignation will be required to meet new guidelines unless they obtain redesignation during 2008.

3. Additional proposed changes

Statement on business models- fee charging, etc.

CCCSP is not able to set organisational policies for the ASCs and CCs regarding business models- these organisations are partners to the CCCSP, but CCCSP assumes no financial responsibility for the partner organisations. Decisions about business models, fee charging, and day to day running of the ASCs and CCs lies with the individual organisations.

CCCSP reserves the right to charge for services associated with seeking ASC status.

Peer reviewers

The new SC membership processes rely on the judgement of peer reviewers, who work under the guidance of the appropriate CC (or CCCSP, in the matter of ASC and

CC applications). Peer reviewers who work with applicants that are seeking SC designations on the local-community level should meet the following criteria:

Before 2009

1. Have participated in at least two separate community SC designations, as a reference group member and-or ASC or CC volunteer.

After January 1, 2009

1. Have participated in at least two separate community SC designations, as a reference group member and-or CC volunteer, and
2. Have participated in a Certifier training, as outlined by CCCSP. Training is now organised by the Certifying Centres under the leadership of a representative from The WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion in Stockholm and will be probably also be available on line- via a series of workshops-through certified trainers by the end of 2008.

CCCSP reserves all rights

The WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotions reserves all rights associated with Affiliate Support Centres and Certifying Centres. That is, CCCSP reserves the right to work with individual communities and organisations that wish to the join the network as local or national organisations.