2010 Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling National Standards

These standards apply to council and district climbing/rappelling and Project COPE activities. *Climb On Safely,* No. 430-099, applies to unit activities. *Topping Out,* No. 32007, is the BSA's manual of recommended climbing practices. The *Project COPE* manual, No. 34371, is the BSA's guide for all high-course and low-course COPE activities. Current-year standards supersede any statements made in those resources.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

These standards are designed to ensure a high degree of health and safety for participants and staff members engaged in Project COPE and climbing/rappelling programs operated by the Boy Scouts of America. A COPE course is defined as any activity listed in the high-course events or low-course activities portions of the *Project COPE* manual, No. 34371. Qualified personnel should supervise all low-course and high-course activities listed in the guidebook. Climbing/rappelling programs include natural rock sites, boulders, climbing/rappelling towers, vertical walls, horizontal walls, portable facilities, and related programs. These standards apply to all local council and district climbing/rappelling activities where multiple units engage in the activity.

Equipment, facilities, staff qualifications, and training, as well as operation of the program, should be reviewed during the annual visitation, which must be conducted by an authorized COPE/climbing visitation specialist. The regional visitation specialist is empowered to inspect both climbing/rappelling and Project COPE facilities. The climbing/rappelling site is also inspected semiannually (before and after peak season usage) by a climbing director and members of the council COPE/climbing committee. Climbing/rappelling program sites or facilities on council property that are not part of a summer camp operation must also be reviewed at least once a year by a regional COPE/climbing visitation specialist. Only programs that operate one week or more are required to be visited by a regional visitation team.

All mandatory (**M**) standards must be met to operate Project COPE course elements or a climbing/rappelling program. Any event or activity that does not meet one or more mandatory standards must be closed until compliance is achieved. If one or more Project COPE elements do not meet the standards, it may be possible—without closing the entire course—to close those elements until they can meet the standards and be reopened by the council COPE/climbing committee.

The following items should be available to the visitation team.

	No.	Type of Records or Documentation	Standard(s)
☐	1	Results of the last inspection of the course and corrective action taken.	
☐	2	Log of the history of each rope used in the climbing/rappelling program.	
☐	3	Equipment records and inventory, helmets, rope, webbing, and harnesses.	
☐	4	Maintenance checklist of facilities and equipment, including new installation and reconfiguration.	
☐	5	Reports of injuries and close calls involving participants in the climbing/rappelling program. These records should be kept for at least 15 years.	
☐	6	Proof of training of each climbing director and instructor and each Project COPE director and instructor.	
☐	7	Climbing/rappelling and Project COPE staff training plans.	
☐	8	Proof of first-aid training and CPR training of at least one climbing/rappelling and Project COPE staff member.	
☐	9	Written checklist for climbing/rappelling and Project COPE sites and written safety orientation.	
☐	10	Rules and safety procedures for each Project COPE event.	
☐	11	Procedures for opening and concluding a COPE program session.	
☐	12	Inspection report on new facilities.	
☐	13	Written policy to protect the climbing/rappelling and Project COPE sites from degradation.	
☐	14	Copies of use agreements, hold-harmless agreements, and certificates of liability for outside organization use.	
☐	15	Document verifying that trees used for COPE elements have been inspected by a certified arborist or professional forester.	
☐	16	Documentation of pole inspection.	
☐	17	Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) standards available on the COPE site.	
☐	18	Documentation of the most recent professional challenge course builder inspection.	
☐	19	Written approval from Outdoor Programs of any new element not in the **Project COPE** manual.	
☐	20	Emergency plan procedures.	

Classes of Project COPE Practices and Procedures

Several levels of practices and procedures may apply in specific situations:

Required
The *Project COPE National Standards* are required for all council and district challenge course activities.

Recommended
The *Project COPE* manual, No. 34371C, contains recommended practices and procedures for council/district challenge course activities. These have been determined to have a high degree of safety and are commonly used.

Prohibited
A few challenge course practices and procedures are prohibited because they have been determined not to be safe; they are described in the *Project COPE National Standards* and the *Project COPE* manual.

Acceptable
Because there is such a variety of challenge course practices and procedures, some are simply acceptable—not required, recommended, or prohibited. Just because a practice is not described in *Project COPE* does not necessarily mean that it is not acceptable. The council's Project COPE committee chairman should be consulted regarding challenge course practices and procedures that may be questionable.

COPE/Climbing Staff Member Qualifications and Training (Standard M12A)

Staff Member	Primary Training	Min Age	Annual Emergency Training
Committee chair	National Camping School—COPE or Climbing (retraining every five years)	21	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
COPE director	National Camping School (retraining every five years)	21	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
Low COPE director	National Camping School (retraining every five years)	21	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures
COPE instructor	Council COPE Instructor Training (retraining every two years)	18	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
COPE instructor in training	Council COPE Instructor Training (retraining every two years)	16	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
Climbing director	National Camping School (retraining every five years)	21	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
Climbing lead instructor	Council Climbing Instructor Training (retraining every two years)	21	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
Climbing instructor	Council Climbing Instructor Training (retraining every two years)	18	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution
Bouldering facilitator	Council Bouldering Facilitator Training (retraining every two years)	18	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures
Climbing instructor in training	Council Climbing Instructor Training (retraining every two years)	16	Site-Specific Emergency Procedures and Incident Resolution

COPE/Climbing Program Staffing and Participant Requirements (Standard M12B)

Program	Staff Requirements	Min Staff	Ratio	CPR and First Aid	Participant Minimum Age
Low COPE	COPE director*, Low COPE director*, COPE instructor, COPE instructor in training	2	12:1	Recommend ***	Generally age 13 or older. Younger participants may take part in events that match their maturity level as determined by the director.
High COPE	COPE director*, COPE instructor, COPE instructor in training	2	6:1	Recommend ***	Generally age 13 or older. Younger participants may take part in events that match their maturity level as determined by the director.
Artificial Vertical Climbing Structure****	Climbing director**, climbing lead instructor**, climbing instructor, climbing instructor in training, COPE director	2	6:1	Recommend ***	Maturity evaluated by the director
Bouldering	Climbing director, climbing lead instructor, climbing instructor, bouldering facilitator, climbing instructor in training	2	Determined by director	Recommend ***	Maturity evaluated by the director
Natural rock	Climbing director**, climbing lead instructor**, climbing instructor, climbing instructor in training	2	6:1	Recommend ***	Maturity evaluated by the director

*The director must be present during program operation.
**The director or lead instructor must be present during program operation. COPE directors may operate climbing towers only as a part of a COPE program; they are not trained to provide climbing programs.
***See standard M39 for CPR/first aid requirements during program operation.
****Artificial vertical climbing surfaces are constructed climbing facilities such as climbing towers and artificial climbing walls (both indoor and outdoor).

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
	PROGRAM SITES						
M1	**Program sites on council property are located where access is controlled or monitored when the site is not in use. High-course or climbing structures are disabled to a height of at least 12 feet. Warning signs are posted at the program sites.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M2	**Activity sites are free of distractions from other program areas and from potential hazards such as power lines, vehicular traffic, and exposed ridges. These sites are also free of other identifiable hazards, such as dead limbs and snags, that could endanger participants, staff members, or onlookers.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M3	**A written policy is followed to protect the program site from environmental degradation. A well-planned, well-constructed, and well-maintained trail system is used. Staff members are knowledgeable in the principles of Leave No Trace where they are applicable to Project COPE and/or climbing activities.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	PROGRAM FACILITIES						
M4	**Constructed facilities must meet applicable Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) installation standards or Climbing Wall Association (CWA) design and engineering standards as well as any state and local laws. All constructed facilities are inspected by a qualified professional challenge course builder* (or structural engineer for constructed climbing facilities to verify compliance with design standards) before initial use; after any significant stress, such as lightning, high winds, falling objects, etc.; and at least once every two years. Closed elements must be inspected and approved by the council COPE/climbing committee and must conform to ACCT standards (or CWA standards for towers and climbing walls) before being reopened for use. A copy of the current ACCT standards is available at the program site. Bouldering walls may be inspected by the local council. Written documentation of inspections is available for review.** ***Note: A challenge course builder is considered to be a qualified professional if they are accredited by a professional organization (e.g., ACCT PVM). For inspectors without such accreditation, councils should obtain documentation that 50 percent of the organization's staff time is spent providing challenge course installation and/or inspection services. This documentation should be available for review at the annual BSA visitation.*** **Date of last professional inspection _____** **Professional challenge course builder_____** **Date of bouldering wall inspection _____** **Bouldering wall inspector _____**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M5	**Trees used to anchor COPE element cables are at least 8 inches in diameter at the point of attachment of cable terminations. Trees used as anchor points in a climbing anchor system must be well-rooted, healthy and at least 6 inches in diameter at the point of attachment, and protected from damage.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION						
M6	**If programs are conducted for groups with special needs, adult leaders familiar with the conditions and abilities of the group are included in an appropriate ratio for the group size.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
M7	**A currently trained Project COPE director or climbing director chairs the council COPE/climbing committee. A National Camping School–trained counterpart (COPE or climbing director) also serves on the committee if both programs are offered. At least one member of the council COPE/climbing committee is a member of the ACCT. Councils may elect to have separate COPE and climbing committees, which must be chaired by the appropriate National Camping School-trained director.** **A climbing director must chair the climbing committee, and a COPE director must chair the COPE committee; however, a single committee may administer both programs. Combined committees must have both a climbing and COPE director as members with one of them serving as chair.** **COPE director** _____ ☐ **Committee chair** ☐ **Committee member** **Climbing director** _____ ☐ **Committee chair** ☐ **Committee member** **At least one committee member must be a member of ACCT. Name of member**_____	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M8	**A site-specific written maintenance checklist of facilities and equipment is used for the council COPE/climbing committee inspection and is available to the regional BSA COPE/climbing visitation team. A record of these inspections should be kept with the COPE and climbing records, the ranger's records, and the council's records. The COPE course and/or climbing area (natural and/or constructed) is inspected before and after peak season usage by a trained Project COPE director (COPE) and/or climbing director (climbing) and members of the council COPE/climbing committee that submits written recommendations to the council, and once by a BSA regional COPE/climbing visitation team. The council schedules, completes, and documents facility additions, repairs, and maintenance based on these recommendations. Council inspection dates:** **1. COPE** _____ **Climbing** _____ **2. COPE** _____ **Climbing** _____	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M9	**Near misses (incidents that do not result in injury but that reveal a potential safety problem), accidents, or injuries that occur during Project COPE or climbing activities must be documented by staff members and periodically reviewed by the COPE/climbing director, program director, camp director, Project COPE/climbing committee, and council health and safety and/or risk management committees. These records must be maintained according to the council's retention policy. A written action plan is developed with steps to be taken to reduce the potential for recurrence. Records of near misses and injuries should be available to the regional COPE/climbing visitation team.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M10	**Other organizations or groups are permitted to use the council's COPE and climbing facilities only with a hold-harmless agreement, facility-use agreement, and certificate of liability insurance in the amount of $2 million. When the council operates the climbing program, camp climbing equipment or approved personal equipment must be used. When an outside organization operates the climbing program, it must provide its own equipment and instructors. Other organizations or groups are permitted to use the COPE course and equipment only while under the supervision of a project COPE director (or low-course director for low-course elements only).**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING						
M11	**A written staff training plan has been implemented for the council's Project COPE and/or climbing program.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
M12A	**All Project COPE and climbing staff are registered members of the BSA, have evidence of continued active participation within the past 12 months, and have appropriate qualifications and training as shown on the chart on page 4.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M12B	**All COPE and climbing programs are operated according to the guidelines contained in the chart on page 4. All staff members listed may be considered as part of the staff to maintain the required ratio of staff to participants; however, instructors in training must be directly supervised by an adult staff member.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M13	**All specialized equipment (carabiners, helmets, belay and rappel devices, webbing, ropes, etc.) needed for conducting a safe Project COPE and/or climbing program must be available to participants and staff members. Personal climbing helmets, harnesses, and shoes may be used if inspected and approved by the on-site director/instructor and if they meet ACCT and/or BSA equipment standards. Personal climbing/rappelling ropes, hardware, and webbing are not allowed.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M14	**An appropriate, commercially produced belay device attached with a locking carabiner is used for belaying. An appropriate commercially produced rappel device attached with a locking carabiner is used for rappelling. Brake bars on carabiners are prohibited. If a rappel or brake rack, Münter hitch, or Just-Right descender is used, the director and instructors must have the knowledge and experience to use them safely.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M15	**Each participant and staff member in the fall zone of a climbing/rappelling site or Project COPE high-course site must wear a UIAA- or CE-approved rock-climbing helmet. All climbing helmets must be retired according to the manufacturer's recommendations, or sooner if conditions warrant.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M16	**A properly sized commercially produced climbing harness or a tied-seat harness made from tubular webbing at least 1 inch wide is required on all belayed activities. In addition, a chest or full-body harness must be used for events where the participant might become inverted. Harnesses must be carefully inspected before each use and retired when damaged or excessively worn. All climbing harnesses must be used and retired according to the manufacturer's recommendations but no more than seven years from the date of purchase, or sooner if conditions warrant.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M17	**All cordage used for climbing (climbing ropes, accessory cord, and webbing) must be designed for climbing and used according to the manufacturer's recommendations. All dynamic ropes must be UIAA- or CE-approved. All static ropes must have a tensile strength (breaking strength) rating of at least 22.2 kiloNewtons (5,000 pounds) when new. A diameter of 7/16 inch or 11 millimeters is recommended for static rappelling ropes; every climbing rope must have a minimum diameter of 10.5 millimeters. All ropes and nylon webbing must be new when procured. Use of three-strand rope (gold line) for climbing or rappelling is prohibited. Three-strand (multi-line) rope 1/2 inch or larger in diameter may be used for lobster claws and hand lines. Webbing must be designed for climbing and must have a minimum breaking strength of 17.5 kiloNewtons (4,000 pounds) when new.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M18	**A written log of the history of each rope used in the program must be kept, indicating (1) the date the rope was purchased, (2) the date the rope was placed in service, and (3) any environmental, severe, or unusual stresses that were placed on the rope. Each rope must be uniquely marked and permanently identified. All webbing must be marked with the date of purchase. All cordage (climbing ropes, accessory cord, and webbing) must be retired according to the manufacturer's recommendations but no more than five years from the first date of service or 10 years from the date of purchase, or sooner if conditions warrant.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
M19	**Written equipment records are kept that include a complete and current inventory.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M20	**Staff members inspect all program equipment before and after each use and are taught how to inspect equipment for defects that render equipment unsafe for usage. Disposal of retired equipment is done in such a way that it cannot be retrieved.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M21	**When not being used, equipment must be kept in locked, protected storage, away from exposure to sunlight, heat, excessive moisture, chemicals, or destruction or contamination by animals.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M22	**When in contact with steel cable, only locking steel carabiners, pulleys with steel sheaves, or steel rapid links suitable for climbing are used.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS						
M23	**All participants who are members of the Boy Scouts of America must use the Annual Health and Medical Record (No. 34605) and follow the camp's established medical screening procedures. For non-Scout groups, a medical health history/informed consent form (Challenge Course and Climbing/Rappelling Health History and Consent Form) is required for all participants. Participants should be asked to relate any recent injuries or illnesses to the COPE/climbing director/instructor before participating. The COPE/climbing director/instructor will accommodate needs based on the medical or physical situation. All supervision, discipline, and protections should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. For significant health concerns, an examination by a physician and consultation with parent/guardian is appropriate.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	PROGRAM SAFETY						
M24	**An instructor or director conducts a site and safety orientation for participants before the program activity. A written checklist is used to ensure that all points are covered during the orientation.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M25	**No participant is ever coerced or pressured into attempting any activity. A participant may be encouraged to take the next small step, but the final choice of participation and performance is left entirely up to the individual.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M26	**Several warm-up activities are conducted at the beginning of each program session.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M27	**The technique of safe spotting is explained, demonstrated, and practiced before participants are permitted to engage in any activity requiring that skill.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M28	**The techniques of proper belaying and use of signals and equipment are explained, demonstrated, and practiced under safe conditions before participants are permitted to engage in any activity requiring those skills.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M29	**Participants are thoroughly trained in the proper use of specialized equipment such as a commercial or tied-seat harness, carabiners, belay and rappel devices, and climbing ropes before using them.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M30	**The Project COPE or climbing/rappelling program site supervisor determines if a participant's safety might be compromised by course conditions, staffing, weather, or any other factor, and is empowered to open and close the COPE or climbing/rappelling program. Staff members are trained to monitor environmental conditions and their effect on participants during challenging activities.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
M31	**The program staff knows and uses written site-specific rules for opening and closing the program site and safety procedures used for each event or activity. This includes detailed information for disabling or dismantling towers or high-course events when not in use.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M32	**All participants are top-roped when climbing. Participants on high-course traversing elements may be self-belayed on overhead belay lines. All rappelling participants are belayed. All participants rappelling on a single rope are belayed with an independent line. Releasable rappel lines are recommended.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M33	**Only trained Project COPE/climbing staff may climb using lobster claws (or similar tether system) to self-belay above the anchor, such as during a staple climb, rope grab, or cable grab. A load-limiting or fall-arresting device must be used in situations where there is little or no energy absorption inherent in the belay system. Webbing or lanyards used for self-protection must have a breaking strength of at least 22.2 kiloNewtons (5,000 pounds) when new.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M34	**The director and/or instructor, using a written checklist, must make a daily visual check of the facilities and equipment, including hardware, rope, and anchor points. Hazards identified during this inspection must be corrected before the activity is undertaken.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M35	**Participants must be belayed or anchored when climbing higher than their shoulder height above the ground (except for two low-course elements: The Wall and The Beam) or in an elevated area where a fall could occur. Any time a belay is changed, procedures are in effect to ensure that a new belay or safety line is secured to the participant before a previous one is removed. Each participant must be spotted when bouldering or participating in low-course events and up to a height of 6 feet for high-course events and climbing sites.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M36	**Participant and staff knots, carabiners, and harnesses are double-checked before each use.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
	FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES						
M37	**Written, site-specific plans identifying possible emergencies, including rescues, and procedures for resolving them are reviewed with program staff members. Written, site-specific plans for emergency evacuations from program sites are developed, and procedures are rehearsed annually by program staff members.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M38	**A reliable means of electronic emergency communications is available during program activities. In addition, a reliable backup emergency communications system is in place. This could be a runner if the distance to help is reasonable or other more reliable method of communication is unavailable.**	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M39	**At least one staff member at the program site must be currently trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and physically present whenever the program is in operation. Program sites located on BSA property must allow emergency evacuation in a reasonable length of time. If emergency evacuation is more than 30 minutes by ground transportation, then a staff member trained to a minimum level of wilderness first aid (16 hours) must be present on the program site.** **CPR-trained staff member:** _____ **Date of training:** _____ **First aid–trained staff member:** _____ ☐ **FA** ☐ **WFA** **Date of training:** _____	☐	☐		☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

		COPE			Climbing		
	Standard	Yes	No	Comments	Yes	No	Comments
M40	Medical supplies appropriate for likely injuries must be available at the program site. Medical supplies must be accessible to staff members when the program is in operation.	☐	☐		☐	☐	
M41	Rescue equipment appropriate for likely course emergencies is accessible at the program site when the program is in operation. When used to belay two persons, a rescue rope must be rated for a two-person load.	☐	☐		☐	☐	

CLIMBING/RAPPELLING STANDARDS (C/R = climbing and rappelling)				
	Standard	Yes	No	Comments
	PROGRAM SITES			
MC/R1	Climbing or rappelling at natural sites is done on stable rock that is suitable for climbing and rappelling. The climbing area has a designated place for onlookers that is outside the fall zone.	☐	☐	
	PROGRAM FACILITIES			
MC/R2	If mobile climbing walls are used, the following items have been documented: compliance with state and local regulations, replacement frequency for auto-belay cables and equipment, and proper anchoring for wind resistance. The manufacturer's recommendations and applicable climbing standards are followed, and the facility is inspected before and after each use.	☐	☐	
MC/R3	The climbing/rappelling site or facility has climbing routes that vary in difficulty to accommodate participants with different skill levels.	☐	☐	
C/R4	If private or public property is used for council climbing/rappelling programs, written permission from the landowner/manager for climbing/rappelling activities is available for review.	☐	☐	
	PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION			
MC/R5	Climbing staff are defined as director (age 21 or older), lead instructor (age 21 or older), instructor (age 18 or older), and instructor-in-training (age 16 or older). A minimum of two climbing staff members, one of whom must be a director or lead instructor must supervise any climbing program site. Staff members may supervise only those climbing activities that are within the scope of their training. Each staff member supervises no more than six participants, including adult leaders, in climbing or rappelling. Instructors-in-training must be directly supervised by a director or instructor.	☐	☐	
MC/R6	A bouldering wall or horizontal wall may be supervised and run by a climbing director, lead instructor, or adult bouldering facilitator. An adult bouldering facilitator is at least 18 years of age and has been trained by a climbing director. The type and length of training and the number of supervising staff will be determined by the climbing director. Participants' feet must never be higher above ground than their shoulder height, and participants must not be allowed to climb over the top of the bouldering facility. Name: _____ Date of certificate of training: _____	☐	☐	
	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING			
MC/R7	The climbing/rappelling site operates under the supervision of a National Camping School–trained climbing director who is at least 21 years of age and has successfully completed the Climbing section of a BSA National Camping School within the last five camping seasons or is a BSA-trained climbing lead instructor. Documentation of active participation as a climbing/rappelling/bouldering instructor at least once in the past year is available to the regional visitation specialist. Director: _____ Date of certificate of training:_____ Lead instructor: _____ Date of certificate of training:_____	☐	☐	
	ANCHORS			
MC/R8	All anchors must be fail-proof or backed up and the load distributed. Anchors are placed to provide the most effective protection for both the climber and the belayer. For all locations, the belayer's position allows for no slack between the belayer and the anchor point and is kept in direct line with a potential fall.	☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

	Standard	Yes	No	Comments
MC/R9	Bolts and hangers must be manufactured specifically for climbing purposes. The length of bolts is appropriate for the type of rock; 2 1/2 inches total length is the minimum, 3 inches for limestone. Pitons are never used in BSA climbing.	☐	☐	
MC/ R10	Installation of climbing bolts on BSA property must have council approval. A written record is available indicating that anchor bolts and hangers on council property have been installed by a qualified individual who has training and/or experience in installing climbing bolts and have been checked at least twice annually by the climbing director. Date of inspection: 1. _____ 2. _____	☐	☐	
	PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS			
MC/ R11	Climbing/rappelling equipment, instruction, and activities must be age-appropriate and geared to the skill level of the participants. See Age-Appropriate Guidelines, No. 18-260.	☐	☐	
PROJECT COPE STANDARDS (PC = Project COPE)				
	Standard	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
	PROGRAM SITES			
MPC1	A document is on file verifying that trees used on the Project COPE course have been inspected within the past two years by a certified arborist or professional forester. This inspection will verify or assure that all trees used on the COPE course are appropriate for their use, sound, and free from disease or other conditions that might weaken them. Trees that are determined to be unsuitable are not used. Date of last inspection _____ Arborist/forester_____	☐	☐	
	PROGRAM FACILITIES			
MPC2	Any low- or high-course element that is not listed in the most current versions of the Project COPE manual or Project COPE/Climbing standards must be approved by the COPE/Climbing Task Force prior to installation. Any high- or low-course element proposed should serve an objective not being met in the Project COPE manual and must be designed to provide spotting or belay access. A description of the event and a detailed sketch must have been filed with Outdoor Programs, S230 at the BSA national office, and a written record of approval received and available for review by Project COPE visitors. Note: New elements approved will be added to the list of approved elements in the standards each year.	☐	☐	
	PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION			
MPC3	Project COPE staff are defined as directors (age 21 or older), low-course directors (age 21 or older), instructors (age 18 or older), and instructors-in-training (age 16 or older). A currently trained Project COPE director must be present on the Project COPE program site during the operation of a high-course event. Either a currently trained National Camping School Project COPE director or low-course director must be present on the COPE program site during the operation of a low-course activity. A minimum of two Project COPE staff members must be present while the course is in operation. A participant-staff ratio of 12:1 (low course) or 6:1 (high course) is maintained. Instructors-in-training must be directly supervised by a director or instructor.	☐	☐	

2010 National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards

	Standard	Yes	No	Comments
	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING			
MPC4	The Project COPE program operates under the supervision of a National Camping School–trained Project COPE director (or low-course director if only low-course elements are to be utilized). A Project COPE director may supervise a tower only when it is being used as a COPE high-course element. All other tower activities are considered part of a climbing program and must comply with National Standards for Climbing/Rappelling, No. 20-120 (current year). The Project COPE director (or low-course director) is at least 21 years of age and holds a current (within five camping seasons) National Camping School certificate of training as a BSA Project COPE director (or low-course director). ■ The Project COPE director has practiced the procedures for incident resolution for possible emergencies for the high-course events he or she will supervise. ■ The Project COPE low-course director may open and supervise any low-course COPE activity and is knowledgeable in all phases of Project COPE. Evidence of continuing active participation as a Project COPE facilitator at least once in the past year is available to the regional visitation specialist. Director _____ Level of training: ☐ Director ☐ Low-course director Date of training: _____ Age: _____	☐	☐	
	ANCHORS			
MPC5	Each belay anchor is placed to provide the most effective protection for the climber, as well as for the belayer. Movable belays are required for all traversing events. Where a ground belay anchor or belay cable is used, the belayer's position allows for no slack between the belayer and the anchor point and is kept in direct line with a potential fall. Anchor systems must have a strength of at least 22.2 kiloNewtons (5,000 pounds).	☐	☐	
	PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS			
MPC6	Based on their maturity and physical coordination, participants younger than 13 years of age may undertake a few low-course activities and high-course events at the discretion of the Project COPE director. Participants are allowed to engage in progressively more challenging activities, depending upon their successful completion of less challenging ones. Project COPE directors, low-course directors, and instructors should recognize that younger participants may not get the full value of the COPE experience. A high level of maturity is needed for Project COPE events that require spotting or belaying so that participants are able to understand the safety implications of the experience.	☐	☐	

2010 National Standards Rating Scoresheet for Council-Operated Climbing/Rappelling and Project COPE Sites

This scoresheet is for use in conjunction with the National Project COPE and Climbing/Rappelling Standards to record the results of the site visitation. Send the results to the appropriate regional service center within five days of completing the on-site visitation.

This inspection was conducted for the following climbing/rappelling and/or Project COPE programs:

☐ Climbing wall ☐ Climbing tower ☐ Portable climbing facility
☐ Natural climbing site ☐ Bouldering facility ☐ Indoor climbing wall

☐ Project COPE course with _____ (number of) low-course elements and _____ (number of) high-course elements.

Camp name _____ Region _____ Area _____ Date _____

Council name _____ No. _____

Regional visitation team led by

_____ Print name _____ Signature

Scout executive

_____ Print name _____ Signature

MANDATORY STANDARDS. Failure to comply with any of these standards is cause to close the program or a particular part of the program. Circle the items that do not comply.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12A	12B
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
39	40	41										

Mandatory Climbing/Rappelling Standards. C/R1 C/R2 C/R3 C/R5 C/R6 C/R7 C/R8 C/R9 C/R10 C/R11

Quality Climbing/Rappelling Standard. C4

Mandatory Project COPE Standards. PC1 PC2 PC3 PC4 PC5 PC6

Does the COPE course comply with all mandatory standards? _____Yes _____No
Does the climbing/rappelling program comply with all mandatory standards? _____Yes _____No

NATIONALLY ACCREDITED rating may be awarded if the answer to the mandatory standards is yes.
Project COPE ☐ does ☐ does not qualify ☐ N/A as a nationally accredited course for the 2010 season.
☐ This course was closed until significant deficiencies are corrected.
Climbing/rappelling program ☐ does ☐ does not qualify ☐ N/A as a nationally accredited climbing/rappelling program for the 2010 season.
☐ This program was closed until significant deficiencies are corrected.

_____ Visitation team chair _____ Area director or regional representative

Events Closed

Name of Activity	Reason for Closure	Corrective Action Needed

Have a photocopy of this form available for the resident camp visitation team.

Approved Project COPE Activities

Councils developing new Project COPE courses may use any of these events.

Initiative Games	Trust Activities	Low-Course Activities	High-Course Events
A-Frame Shuffle	Cookie Factory	Artesian Beams	Balance Beam
All Aboard	Human Spring	The Beam	Burma Bridge
Bird Talk	Trust Circle	Blind Maze	Cargo Net
Blind Height Alignment	Trust Duo	Cable Traverse	Caving Ladder
Blind Square	Trust Fall	Criss Cross	Centipede
Everybody Up	Trust Levitation	Drop Zone (Frog Jump)	Commando Rope Climb
Have You Ever . . . ?	Trust Trio	Islands	Confidence Pole
Hoops Around the Circle	Trustwave	Mohawk Walk	Flying Squirrel
Hug Tag		Nitro Crossing	Gap Step
Inventor's Machine		Porthole	Giant's Ladder
The Monster		Spider Web	Multivine Traverse
Moon Ball		Swinging Log	Mush Line
Punctured Drum		Tire on Pole	Pirate's Crossing
Stepping-Domes		Tire Traverse	Rappel Line
Tangle Knot		Track Walk	Rope Climb
Toss-a-Name		Triangle Traverse	Sky Walk
TP Shuffle		The Wall	Slack Line Traverse
Traffic Jam		Water Wheel (Meat Grinder)	Vertical Playground
Trolley		Whale Watcher	Zip Wire
Upchuck		Wild Woosey	

Discontinued Project COPE Activities

These Project COPE games and activities were discontinued as of the fall of 1996. They may still be used on existing COPE courses only, but should not be included in new facilities.

Initiative Games	Rationale
Body English	Not used much, serves little purpose
Carabiner Walk	Not used much, serves little purpose
Four Way Tug-o-War	Not used much, requires lot of rope
Frantic	Serves little purpose
Texas Big Foot	Can't spot effectively, serves little purpose
Ultimate Challenge	Difficult to spot

Low-Course Activities	Rationale
Cobweb	Not used much, serves little purpose
Fidget Ladder	Serves little purpose, difficult to spot
Mantle Post	Not used much, serves little purpose
Human Ladder	Serves little purpose
Incline Log	Not used much, serves little purpose, can't be disabled; could be used to access a high-course event
The Meuse	Boards may warp or crack, cinder blocks might not be stable

ACCT Professional Vendor Members

A Professional Vendor Member of ACCT is a company that has successfully completed the ACCT Professional Vendor Member application and review process to ensure it complies with ACCT Standards. Level 3 Professional Vendor Members provide challenge course installations, safety inspections, and/or facilitator training services. Level 4 Professional Vendor Members provide the same services, and have been Level 3 members for a minimum of three years.

Current lists of Level 3 and Level 4 Professional Vendor Members are available from ACCT.

Association for Challenge Course Technology
P. O. Box 47
Deerfield, IL 60015
Telephone: 847-325-5860
Fax: 847-325-5864
Web site: *http://www.acctinfo.org*

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, Texas 75015-2079
http://www.scouting.org

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