

HIGH PERFORMANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2012/13

Executive Summary

What is new for 2012/13?

- Improved alignment with Own the Podium (“OTP”) goals
- increased attention to the detail required to convert almost-podium results to more World Cup podium finishes
- Improved focus on interpersonal and leadership aspects of NST success
- Improved resources to support NST leadership
- More tailored training and coaching support to address the performance needs of women on the WC team
- A new coach mentor program (in partnership with NDCs and CAD staff)
- Increased resources for NorAm events to draw competition

What are we continuing in 2012/13?

- Programming will continue to be guided by established philosophy and HP Campaign Strategy for 2014
- Continue to address opportunities identified in HP system review, including improving (with cooperation and support of National Development Centers “NDCs”):
 - o System Capacity,
 - o Communication and unity within the System,
 - o Continued support for CCC's Training Centre Plan,
 - o Female athlete initiatives,
 - o Coach development, and
 - o International orientation and attitude.
- Providing opportunities for convergence group athletes to gain experience with NST and or international competition
- Maintaining the integrity of the IST and technical support teams, which remain crucial to international success



Alex Harvey leads the men's field on a descent during the Men's 30km Classic Mass Start race in NoveMesto, CZ. – Nordic Focus

Program Philosophy

The High Performance System (“HPS”) will be founded on a comprehensive commitment to achieving international excellence.

HP Campaign Strategy for 2014

<http://www.cccski.com/National-Ski-Team/HP-System-Strategic-Operational-Plans.aspx>

The specific campaign strategy for evolving CCC's HP system to enable it to achieve specified strategic outcomes beyond 2010 is entitled “**Reinforce Success**”. This strategy recognizes that, although Canada's best cross-country skiers are presently competing at a level that can deliver world-class performances, there are insufficient athletes of this quality to generate, on a continuing basis, the collective results that will produce “success” as defined in selected benchmarks. There are also question marks surrounding the sustainability of current international performance, due to the relatively small size of the athlete pool in the HP system (i.e.: L2C and above). Therefore there are two elements to the “**Reinforce Success**” strategy:

- a. The first is to continue to deliver a HP program that – through disproportionate allocation of resources – gives *every legitimate (i.e.: legal and ethical) advantage* to athletes in the T2W stage who have demonstrated the ability to compete for World Cup podium and top-12 results. The principles and practices that have been refined and implemented in the lead-up to the 2011 World Championships will be the baseline for this program, with additional improvements being sought whenever feasible.
- b. The second is to enhance the HP system, correcting the most significant systemic deficiencies and creating the capacity to develop and support sufficient athletes to achieve and sustain desired HP long-term outcomes. Many of the changes in the HP system since 2005 had a short and mid-term focus due to the importance of achieving the OTP goal at the 2010 OWGs. Drawing on the experience of the past six years and the guidance provided by LTAD concepts, a more strategic approach can be taken for enhancing the system to meet long-term goals in the post-2010 era.

In order to establish a sustainable program that avoids or minimizes performance fluctuations, the NST will operate on a multi-year plan covering the short, mid (next Olympics) and long term (several Olympics).

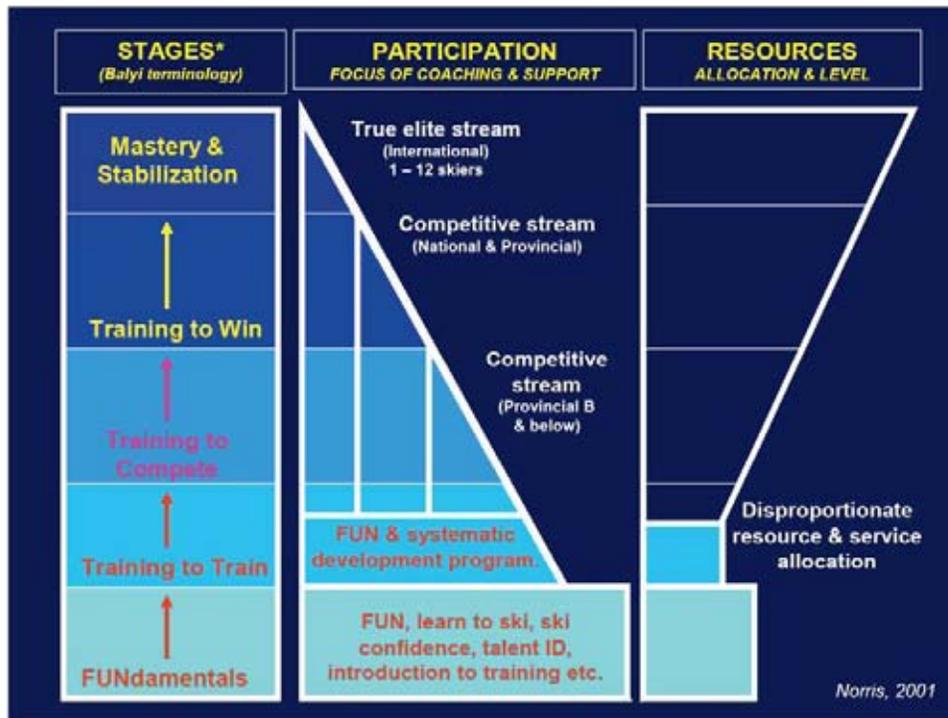
This concept of planning and resource allocation is illustrated graphically below, requires strategic investment, disciplined planning and careful selection/talent identification.

Concept of Operations – 2012/13

For 2011/12, the major emphasis of the High Performance (“HP”) Operational Plan was on aligning NST commitment and resources to Own the Podium (“OTP”) goals and increased attentiveness to the detail required to convert almost podium results to more World Cup podium finishes. The secondary but equally important focus was sustaining high performance over the long term as is outlined in CCC's 2010 mid-term objectives; improving the effectiveness, coherence and reach of CCC's high performance system and athlete development base in order to ensure a sustainable high performance system within CCC.

In order to continue to implement the “Campaign Strategy for 2014” in alignment with commitment to Own the Podium goals, the NST programs must dedicate the necessary human and financial resources to the identified critical success factors for the successful management and technical direction of identified podium athletes. In 2012/13 this “core” team of athletes (athletes targeted by CCC as medal potential athletes at the 2012/13 World Cups/ 2013 World Championships and supported financially by OTP) will be provided with *every advantage* and will be given preferential support. This support will be a sustained commitment to these athletes. Support will be expanded, as is financially feasible, for other athletes who demonstrate that they can reach benchmarks leading to podium success at the 2014 and 2018 OWG.

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Credit to Stephen R. Norris, PhD

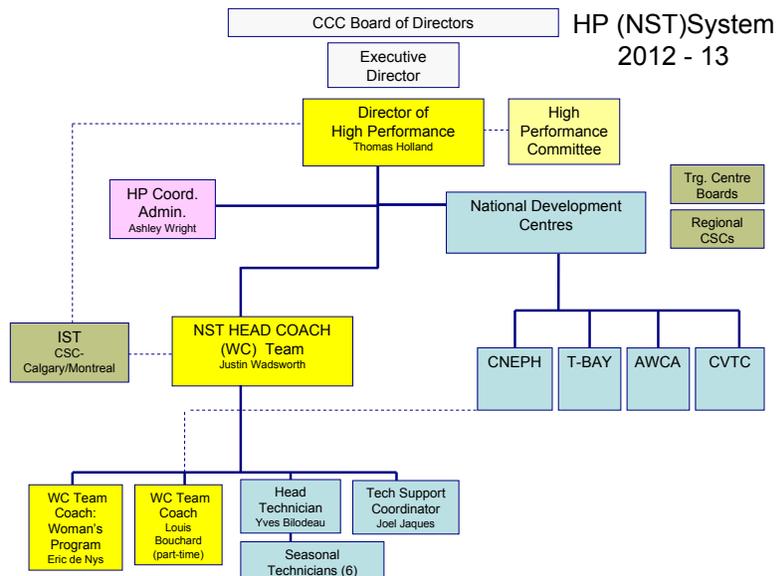
These athletes will have reached relevant intermediate benchmarks at the 2011/12 FIS World Cups, U23 World Championships and other FIS races based on the performance benchmarks in the 2012/13 CCC operational plan. This focus requires the continuous refinement of both technical and financial plans in order to adapt to individual athlete needs and the changing financial landscape.

The secondary but equally important focus of enhancing the high performance system within CCC will require continued concentration on addressing priorities and specific action plans identified for the six principal strategic initiatives identified in the HP review – HP System Capacity, Communication and Unity Within the HP System, Operation of CCC’s Training Centre Plan, Female Athlete Initiatives, Coach Development, International Orientation and Attitude. The updated training centre model, outlined in the Campaign Plan for 2014, will continue to be the focal point for the integration of specific initiatives and plans to address these six strategic priorities. Ongoing collaboration amongst NST/NDC coaches, the DHP, the DCAD and the Canadian Sport Centres will improve their ability to execute both outreach and inreach, thus enhancing the full HP system down to and including club level. The ability of the Training Centers (“TCs”) to leverage local/regional support (e.g.: funding from provincial governments) is an important advantage of this strategy.

The high performance system will continue to be engaged in collaboration with the Coach and Athlete Development Committee (“CAD”) in supporting and enhancing the coaching framework at the division and club levels.

Program Structure and Athlete Pathway

The NST Programs will be structured so as to provide a continuum of graduated support, which will enable selected athletes to steadily develop and improve along or above the critical path specified in CCC’s Athlete Development Model. The Programs will ensure that thoroughly prepared, experienced and internationally competitive teams are generated for each successive Winter Olympics. For 2012/13, these Programs are described below:



CCC's HP program will be based on a structure of TCs – with only minor exceptions (see Junior Team description) – that is capable of expansion to meet the needs of the evolving athlete pool.

- **Training Centres.** TCs are entities operating on a nationally or regionally–centralized basis that provide HP services and infrastructure to establish an appropriate environment for selected athletes in the L2C and above stages of LTAD to prepare and/or develop optimally. The updated Training Centre Plan complements and assists with the delivery of the NST program. The mission of CCC's Training Centre Plan is to produce successful skiers at the World Cup level. The Training Centre Plan will evolve to meet the requirements, resource constraints and overall direction of the NST Program. TCs will be assigned different mandates. “Mandate” refers to the specific orientation of a particular TC within the general functioning of the Training Centre Plan. TC mandates will specify the type of training group or groups at each TC. A TC can have either a single or dual orientation.

- **Roles of CCC and CCC–Affiliated Training Centres.**

- to deliver CCC's NST Program to selected athletes (i.e.: the Senior WC Team and the Senior Development Team);
- to facilitate the optimal development of other selected athletes to the Senior NST level; and
- to assist in the development of future generations of HP athletes and coaches by supporting division and club HP development programs through specific outreach initiatives and other types of collaboration.

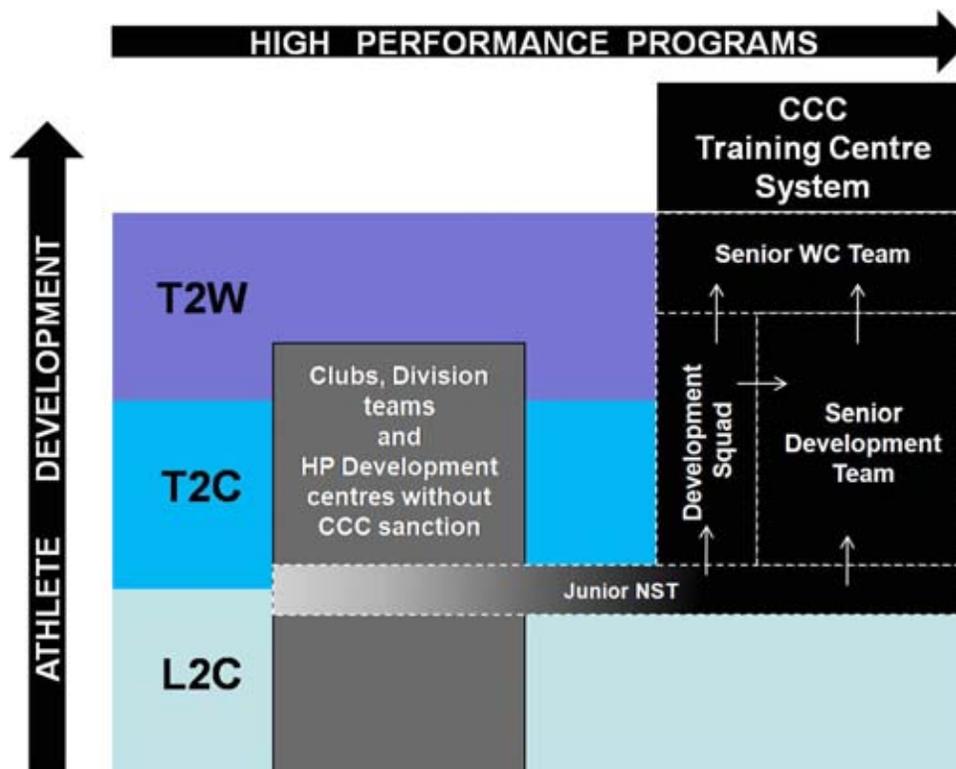
- **Training Centre Orientations.** “Orientation” refers to a specific level of athlete development that characterizes the majority of athletes that form a “training group”. Since athletes eligible for TC nomination will vary considerably in their levels of development and ability, nomination of athletes to particular TCs will be made with a view to producing homogeneous training groups – as well as to addressing such other factors as athlete preference, regional needs and gender mix:

- Training Groups.** Athletes selected for TCs may range from Junior Team level athletes at the L2C stage to Senior Team members at the T2W stage. Considering this range, two types of training groups will be established:
 - 1) **“A” Group (T2C–T2W).** This group will consist of Senior NST Senior Development Team athletes and Development Squad athletes.

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- 2) **“B” Group (L2C–T2C).** This group will consist of the balance of Development Squad athletes, essentially those in the L2C and T2C stages of development.
 - b. **Orientation Categories.** TC orientations will specify the type of training group or groups at each TC. A TC can have either a single or dual orientation. For simplicity, orientations will be categorized as follows:
 - 1) **“A” Orientation.** The centre supports an A training group.
 - 2) **“B” Orientation.** The centre supports a B training group.
 - 3) **“AB” Orientation.** The centre supports both A and B training groups
- **For 2012/13, CCC's Training Centre Plan will consist of five entities:**
- a. **The National Training Centre (“NTC”).** The CCC–operated NTC is located at the Canmore Nordic Centre in Canmore, AB; and
 - b. **Four National Development Centres (“NDCs”).** Preliminary memoranda of understanding have been signed with four entities, with regional orientation as noted:
 - 1) Pierre Harvey Training Centre (“PHTC”) – Quebec City, QC;
 - 2) Thunder Bay Training Centre (“TBTC”) – Thunder Bay, ON;
 - 3) Alberta World Cup Academy (“AWCA”) – Calgary/Canmore, AB;
 - 4) Callaghan Valley Training Centre (“CVTC”) – Whistler, BC.

This training centre concept is depicted in below:



- **Senior World Cup Team.** The Senior WC Team consists of athletes in the T2W stage of LTAD who have demonstrated the ability or immediate potential to be competitive for podium and other top-12 results in WC, WSC and Olympic competitions. This is a centralized team that uses the National Training Centre in Canmore as its base of operations. CCC makes a strong commitment to include WC participation for this team designed to permit Red Group rankings to be established and maintained.
- **Senior Development Team.** The Senior Development Team consists of athletes in the T2W and T2C stages of LTAD who have not yet met the criteria for the Senior WC Team but who have demonstrated the clear potential to achieve that level of performance and whose results are generally improving from year to year. The 2012/13 target for this team will be the 2012 Canada WC events, the 2013 WSC, WC opportunities as allowed by the FIS COC regional quota on the World Cup and the 2013 U23 World Championships. Athletes selected to this team will be nominated to a CCC TC based on factors that include the size of the team, the composition of the team (e.g.: stage of development, regional derivation) and the budget allocated to support the team. Depending on the prevailing circumstances, the team may be: centralized at the NTC; decentralized to one or more national development centres; or located at both the NTC and one or more NDCs.
- **Junior Team.** The orientation of the Junior Team is towards talent identification and the optimization of development during the L2C stage of LTAD and the transition to the T2C stage. The Junior Team consists of the best junior-age athletes in the country at the L2C level and above. The performance target is top-20 distance/top-12 sprint results at the WJC.
- **Development Squad.** The Development Squad consists of the best L2C, T2C and T2W athletes who have met NDC selection criteria but have not been selected for the Senior NST programs. CCC selects the Development Squad by ranking all eligible athletes (meeting eligibility standards) by comparing their NST selection list points specified benchmarks and offering them TC billets once Senior NST-selected athletes have been assigned.

Program Operating Principles

As a minimum standard, the basis of selection to and retention in the NST programs is:

- consistent progression in ranking,
- demonstrated physiological performance,
- commitment to the specified NST program, and
- the ability to work within the Team structure.

Specific team and trip criteria will be developed and distributed annually.

For any athlete qualifying for the FIS red group, a program will be implemented to enable ongoing World Cup participation and provide appropriate support.

Athletes who meet specified standards and criteria will be sent to represent Canada at the FIS the FIS World Cup, World Senior Championships, World Junior and Under-23 Championships,

Budget permitting, athletes who meet specified standards and criteria will also be sent to gain international experience at selected events on the FIS World Cup circuit, and other selected international events. As a general standard, athletes should have a reasonable probability of finishing in the top half of the field at those events. Other criteria will be promulgated annually.

Budget permitting, other athletes meeting established criteria may be given competitive opportunities in appropriate domestic races (including races in the USA).

Carding opportunities will be prioritized to the best senior and junior athletes within the NST program (i.e.: those who have signed an Athlete Agreement) based on their ranking and continued international improvement for A, B and C cards and based on ranking and continued international improvement for D Cards.

Canadian personnel will be used for both coach and waxing technician support where feasible and when performance standards can be met.

Athletes within the NST Program are required to attend all programmed camps, etc. Athletes are expected to reside at a TC for other periods required for testing, recovery and physiological reasons as outlined in the annual team program

Major Initiatives for 2012/13

Initiative #1 – Prepare the NST to achieve success at the 2012/13 World Cups and 2013 World Championships.

A program will be designed and executed to permit medal potential athletes to prepare optimally for these events. This initiative will focus on identified, targeted athletes and their benchmarks for 2014 as identified in the HP Campaign Plan to 2014, and recognizes that results at the 2012/13 World Cups and 2013 World Championship events are crucial steps towards CCC's medal expectations at the 2014 Games in Sochi, Russia.

Initiative #2 – Improve HP System Capacity. Plans will address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in the current HP system that will permit CCC to close gaps between current performance and international performance goals established for 2014.

NST Program Objectives and Tasks

The Objectives listed below have been selected to lead to the achievement of CCC's Mid-Term Objectives 2014. Tasks specified within each Objective will be resourced and implemented in 2012/13 or in a multi-year plan.

Objective #1. Performance:

Prepare the NST to meet clearly defined objectives for the 2012/13 World Cups, 2013 Senior World Championships and the 2013 U23/Junior World Championships.

Task 1 – Design and deliver a program that will provide optimal preparation of athletes for the 2012/13 World Cups and 2013 World Championships that can deliver the following operational objectives:

• **National Ski Team (World Cup Team):**

- 1) Twelve World Cup podiums;
- 2) Two podiums at the 2013 World Championships;
- 3) An overall podium TDS;
- 4) Minimum of 2 top 12 WC results by each WC Team athlete;
- 5) Consistent scoring of World Cup points; multiple scoring of WC points by each individual WC Team athlete with a final WC Nations Cup ranking of 4th overall;
- 6) Two athletes in the top 10 overall WC results;
- 7) All WC team athletes in the red group at the end of the 2012/13 season;
- 8) Scoring of WC points by a minimum of 2 non-WC team athletes;
- 9) Increased WC quota by end of 2012/13 season: men 4 distance + 4 sprint; women 4 distance + 4 sprint;

- **U23 Championships**
 - Men and women in the top–8 in distance races; and
 - At least one athlete in the top–6 in sprint races.

- **World Junior Championships**
 - 1) 3 males and 3 females with top 20 results; and
 - 2) Top 8 results in relays for men and women.

Objective #2. HPD/Coaches (world leading direction):

Ensure a highly functional, compatible and interactive leadership team platform that will facilitate continual gains at the international level.

Task 1 – Review and adapt all NST staff roles (coaching, technical, IST and administration) to fill any gaps identified at the end of the 2011/12 season and adapt the program based on these principles:

- A clear sense of purpose to all program components;
- A positive, encouraging training environment;
- Consistent, well–articulated team preparation planning;
- Technical & tactical ability, training & competitive mindset, ski specific physiology, health, competition preparation, refinement of any equipment deficiencies, athlete input and responsibility;
- Performance and evidence based decisions;
- Sound logistical planning leading for all international events and training camps.

Task 2 – Sochi OWG 2014 preparation, planning, services and processes to include:

- Finalisation of internal athlete nomination procedures;
- Strategies for accreditation shortfalls, at Games accommodation strategy, budget shortfalls;
- Finalize the staff support team;
- Strategies for at Games performance technology;
- Finalize pre–Games athlete preparation planning;
- Refine and finalize research and development projects

Task 3 – Using performance and evidence based factors, expand on the training and coaching support needs of women on the WC team. The goal of this initiative is to improve the performance of the WC team women and the international focus of women's skiing in Canada. The operational objective is still to have one WC team, male and female when competing internationally.

This will include the following initiatives:

- Assigning a separate primary coach for the World Cup women's team;
- Maintaining consistency in execution of training and preparation throughout the year with regular direct reinforcement of the training goals and priorities;
- Designing the YTP with specific camps that address the specific physiological needs of the women's team;
- Working in collaboration with other women's teams, at a similar level of performance such as the AWCA and the US Ski Team, to provide combined and collaborative female training opportunities when feasible;

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- From the coach–athlete interaction perspective, address female–specific needs that may differ from the men's team;
- Subject to available resources, host a women's retreat in the fall of 2012 that is open to all NST and NDC female athletes.

Objective #3. Athletes (dedicated and determined):

Ensure athlete commitment to program, personal responsibility and accountability.

Task 1 – Ensure athletes understand the rationale and advantages of programming directions by providing adequate documentation and engaging athletes in planning when possible.

Task 2 – Ensure athletes are committed to both personal and program goals and to achieving them via comprehensive commitment and participation in team programming and support developed for each targeted athlete. Comprehensive commitment must include:

- Committing to performance goals that are podium focused;
- Committing to programming developed by CCC's team of leading coaches and IST professionals without compromise or excuse;
- Cooperating in testing and review of information to ensure progress toward measurable outcomes. This includes commitment to collaborate with and accept the guidance of the WC team support systems – coaching, IST and technical support.

Task 3 – Continue to build respect for other athletes within the team, the NST program and support teams using the NST professionalism conduct code established by the team in 2010 as a standard to follow.

Objective #4. Integrated Support Teams (stopping at nothing)

Optimize health and performance through the integration of a multidisciplinary Integrated Support Team ("IST") into all components and planning of the WC team based on a wide range of variables necessary to engineer talent capable of winning at the international level. This requires comprehensive interaction between selected IST members and coaches with each specific athlete allowing an optimal support group to be focused on the key priorities for each targeted athlete.

Task 1 – Work to ensure continued alignment and positive relationships between IST and all other NST support groups and team members.

Task 2 – IST input will be carefully and thoughtfully integrated into all components of the NST plans including the yearly training plan and key IST members will regularly be accessible for consultation at training camps and international competitions to meet athlete performance needs.

Task 3 – Maintain positive physiological performance factors in the training and competition environments through assessment, treatment and evaluation of the athletes while adapting to new fitness levels at the end of each training cycle with the goal of achieving consistent and individually appropriate training for each athlete.

Task 4 – Create an integrated east–west IST model with a primary focus on integrating individual athlete objectives, program delivery and associated communication with program goals. For 2012–13 this collaborative effort will focus on para–medical, medical and strength components of the IST.

Task 5 – Further bridge the gap between therapy (medical practitioners) and strength training (strength trainer) and integrate these two components with the sport specific technical work and biomechanics. The goal is to apply the principles and biomechanical models of osteopathy and strength training more effectively and specifically to cross–country skiing.

Objective #5. Technical Support Team (world leading support)

Ensuring a performance driven support team that has clear and effective communication with the goal of providing the best international technical support based on effective planning, preparation and delivery of comprehensive wax and ski service support to the NST.

Task 1 – Work to ensure continued alignment and positive relationships between Technical Support Team and all other NST support groups and team members.

Task 2 – Refine technical team strategies including staffing, logistics and research & development, with a yearly plan for 2012–13 and extended plan leading to the 2014 Sochi Olympic Games. The plan will focus on innovation, a high level of expertise and an in–competition mindset.

Task 3 – Continued improvement in the areas of ski selection and preparation. This includes annual athlete ski selection, ski selection for specific snow conditions and closing any gaps athletes have in terms of their ski inventory.

Objective #6. NST Convergence Team (post 2014 podium performance)

Align NST Senior Development Team goals with CCC's 2014 and 2018 performance goals. This will include identifying, selecting and establishing short and long–term benchmarks for these athletes. These benchmarks will include domestic and international events based on individual athlete age and current ability.

Task 1 – Identify the senior development athletes most likely to close the gap with the WC Team between 2012 and 2014.

Task 2 – Review the entire HP development budget allocation within the NST budget (including the WJC–U23) with the NST–NDC coaches and HPC in order to formulate the priorities given that there is a limited budget which is not always getting to the most deserving athletes relative to the overall HP objectives.

Task 3 – Take advantage of the Canada World Cups in 2012 as an international level development opportunity for Canadian skiers at the T2C level by supporting the National Group skiers in collaboration with their clubs and teams.

Task 4 – Provide international race opportunities for convergence athletes at the 2013 Senior World Championships and 2012–13 World Cups by supporting the FIS regional NorAm series leaders.

Task 5 – Where efficiencies can be created, take advantage of training with the World Cup Team and benefiting from the enhanced support dedicated to the World Cup Team through OTP. There will be two mandatory training camps for the Senior Development Team to train with the World Cup Team.

Task 6 – Coaches with senior development team athletes in NDCs will engage in collaborative customization of programs for these athletes. Coaches will define a flexible system while identifying common critical factors and best practices leading to 2014/2018 goals.

Objective #7. National Development Centres: (podium potential 2018 – 2022)

Pursuit of optimal development opportunities for selected athletes to the Senior NST level and development of future generations of HP athletes and coaches in alignment with a national development system.

Task 1 – Define and clarify outreach opportunities and expectations both in athlete and coach development.

Task 2 – NST and NDC coaches will meet to collaboratively debrief the past year's WJC/U23 and OPA trips and decide on the orientation and leadership of the U23/WJC trip 2013 and other international trip assignments as deemed appropriate and necessary.

Task 3 – Ensure regular communication and sharing of ideas/best practices between NDCs, and between NDC and NST coaches by maintaining a formal communication process and platform for ongoing interaction. This will require a minimum of three meetings in 2012/13.

Task 4 – NDC coaches will be given opportunities to participate, contribute and/or partner in NST camps and World Cup/World Championship trips as appropriate to long–term coach development, NDC coach mentoring and/or contribution to the NST program.

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Task 5 – With the goal of creating a credible, affordable and accessible HP coach education process, an apprentice coach program will be established in partnership with NST and NDC mentor coaches, including financial support that will help the apprentice employer (NDC) to be compensated for learning experiences outside of their area of employment (e.g.: participating in NCI courses or attending NST training camps or competitions).



Three of Canada's "Nordic Knights" (from left: Devon Kershaw, Alex Harvey, Ivan Babikov) control the front of the race during the 15km Classic at the FIS World Cup in Rogla, Slovenia - Nordic Focus

2012/13 High Performance Operating Budget

National Ski Team

Camp #1 - Spring Camp	15,500
Women summer camps; wm retreat	28,000
Camp New Zealand	35,000
Altitude Camp - Hawaii	46,500
Fall Altitude Camp	53,000
Early snow camp	8,000
Canmore Programming	10,000

Total National Ski Team 196,000

Competitions

World Cup #1	84,000
Canada WCs	35,000
Jan WCs + preparation	52,000
World Cup #3	55,000
U23/JWM	95,000
WSC (WC) + preparation including Davos WC	102,000
Sochi WC	53,000
Tour de Ski	53,000

Total Competitions 529,000

NST Other

Travel: Head Coach	4,000
Travel: DHP	5,000
Senior Team telephone/cell	15,000
HP Salaries and Benefits	368,000
Team 2018 Programming	25,000
Technical Support Contracts	250,000
Waxtech: Travel/Storage	25,500
Van Maintenance/Fees	12,000
Athlete Retention/Recruitment	5,000
IST Contracts (Integrated Service Team)	10,000
NST Professional Development	28,000
NST Medical Insurance	6,500
Equipment	35,000
Canmore: Team Room Rent	2,500
NST Administration	2,000
Research & Development	1,500
Soft Goods Customization	500
HP Committee Meeting	13,500
NDC subsidies	372,000
NDC Sponsorship allocations	40,000
Ski Lab /Snow Research	7,000

Total NST Other 1,228,000