

# **Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative**

(Revised February 18, 2011)

## **PROCEDURES**

The purpose of the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative (KTEI) is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our Ministry by fostering compliance with program policies defined in the current Torch Program Manual. In recent strategic planning discussions, Kairos Prison Ministry leaders identified formulating a method of determining compliance by Advisory Councils as the #1 priority. We believe that the best way to accomplish this is to:

- Ensure that every volunteer knows what is expected of them using the current Torch Program Manual and Mentor's Guide;
- Assess (measure) our status and progress in complying with the Torch Program Manual and Mentor's Guide (you seldom improve what you do not measure);
- Develop feedback information through a designed system that provides a demonstrable basis for program revisions and improvements;
- Continually work on improvement plans to achieve excellence; and finally,
- Be accountable for the results to our fellow Torch team members, the appropriate State Chapter Committee and ultimately to KPMI, Inc.

We also believe that the Kairos Ministry wants to avoid the pitfalls that can make this a divisive instrument, as we want a constructive one that will allow us to successfully travel on our "**PATH to EXCELLENCE**". Therefore it is important for everyone to understand:

### **THE KAIROS TORCH EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE IS NOT A REPORT CARD!**

Every effort will be made so that Torch Weekend Leaders, Torch Advisory Councils and State Chapter Committees embrace this "**PATH to EXCELLENCE**".

### **OVERVIEW**

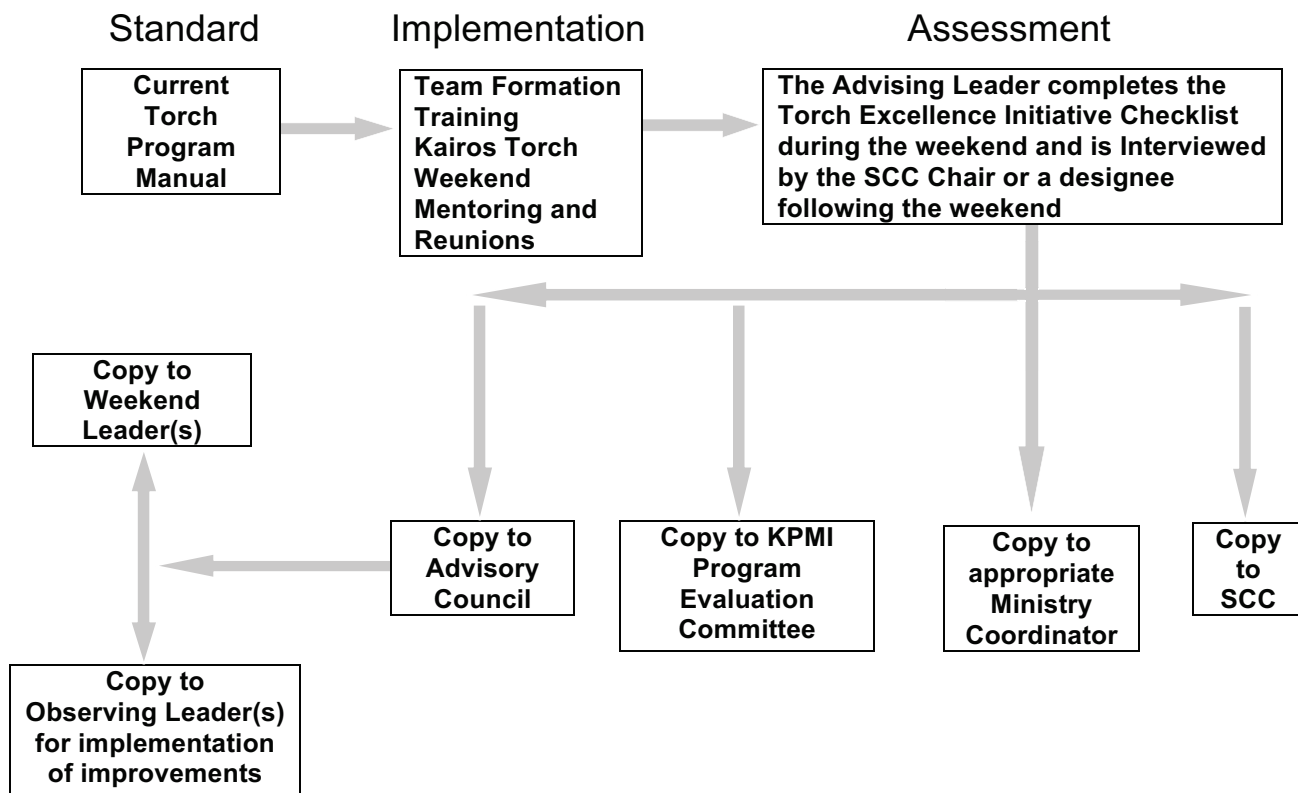
The Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative is designed to build a program that achieves these objectives by implementing our Christian beliefs.

The current Torch Program Manual and Mentor's Guide provide the basic understanding of what is expected to implement the program. Each member of Kairos Torch is responsible for knowing the applicable contents of the Torch Program Manual and Mentor's Guide that are required to carry out their responsibilities. The Manual is reinforced by Advanced Kairos Training - Torch (AKT-T) for all Torch leaders, Advisory Council Training for the local community leaders, Torch 101 for new teams in new states, and by training at team formation meetings.

To supplement the program guidance, an easy-to-use evaluation Checklist is provided to help assess the degree of compliance during implementation of the Torch Weekend program and that a Torch Mentoring program has been established following the Torch Weekend. The Advising Leader for the Torch Weekend will complete the Checklist. After the conclusion of the Kairos Torch Weekend, the State Chapter Committee (SCC) Chair or

his/her Program Evaluation Committee designee will call or meet with the Weekend Advising Leader to interview him/her, following these Procedures, and using the Checklist as a guideline. (The Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative Checklist is attached.)

### THE PATH to EXCELLENCE



(Information will be used to improve future training to correct any common problems.)

The expectation of KPMI is that everyone will strive to fully comply with the Torch Program Manual. The related presumption is the fundamental honesty of everyone involved.

### THE EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE – ACHIEVING OUR “GOLD STANDARD”

The Torch Program Manual and Mentor’s Guide represent the time-tested experience of the Ministry over many years. However, our experience shows that not every Torch Weekend team will be in full compliance. In some instances, local prison rules prohibit some elements of the program. In other cases, emergencies require decisions for deviations to be completed by wise leaders. Even with these understandings, these manuals are still the

“gold standard of excellence” -- and we have faith and trust that all Kairos members will diligently seek to meet the standard of excellence as set forth in these manuals. The key to achieving excellence is being able to measure where you are and if you are making progress. As stated earlier in this document, “you seldom improve what you do not measure.”

### **THE EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

The Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative Checklist provides the means to objectively measure where we are in terms of compliance, and shows us whether we are improving, stagnant or moving away from the Kairos Method. The next element in achieving program excellence is assessments of compliance. The Evaluation Checklist will be provided for the Weekend Leader and Advising Leader prior to the beginning of the team formation process. The Advising Leader will complete the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative Checklist during the Torch Weekend. The current State Chairperson, or his/her SCC Program Evaluation Committee designee, will call on the Weekend Advising Leader following the weekend and interview him/her using the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative Checklist as the standard for determining compliance by the team.

### **INTERVIEWING THE WEEKEND ADVISING LEADER**

As the interview progresses, the State Chair will take note of whether each question on the Excellence Initiative Checklist was satisfactorily completed: “Yes” or “No”. Every element of the Weekend and the Continuing Ministry are important. Remarks, comments, and explanatory information that serve to expand appropriate information for any area can also be recorded at the conclusion of the interview, if necessary.

The State Chapter Committee (SCC) Chair then will compile the results into an overall assessment, review shortfalls, and identify potential improvements for the next Torch Weekend. The results are to be sent to those designated to receive this report: The State Chapter Committee Chair, who distributes the results to SCC members involved with Program Evaluation; the Advisory Council Chair, who distributes the results to the Weekend Leader and the Weekend Observing Leader; the Program Evaluation Committee Chair, who distributes the results to the Torch Subcommittee; and the KPMI Executive Director, who provides the results for the Kairos Youth Ministry Coordinator. This process is required to be completed not later than two weeks following the Torch Weekend. The Kairos Youth Ministry Coordinator will have the authority to use the results to improve training methods, as well as initiate improvements for the Torch Program Manual, under supervision of the KPMI Executive Director and, if necessary, the related committees with Kairos Torch oversight authority.

**This process should be seen as a method of identifying opportunities for improvement of the program.**

### **LISTEN, LISTEN, LOVE, LOVE**

If the Advising Leader and SCC Chair’s assessments are not objective or are not perceived by the team volunteers as being given in love and Christian charity, great harm can be done to the volunteers and the Ministry. While those volunteers performing the assessment

should never be afraid to identify shortcomings or potential improvements, it is also their responsibility to provide the feedback in the manner appropriate to the recipients and accomplish the overall objectives of the Ministry. Prayer, love of the Ministry, openness and honesty, and obedience are each important factors in the success of the feedback, even when delegating the task to a designee, but the State Chapter Chair bears the responsibility for the manner in which the feedback is provided. When providing feedback and assessments, the State Chapter Chair should be guided by the motto: *“Is it true? Is it necessary to say? Does it glorify God?”*

The State Chapter Chair’s feedback is to be used by Team leaders, the Advisory Council, and the State Chapter Committee to initiate plans and programs to move ever closer to 100% compliance. Continuous improvements in our implementation of the Ministry (as laid out in the Program Manual) will be the hallmark of excellence.

### **IDENTIFYING NEED FOR CHANGES**

In some cases, Advisory Councils may believe that an innovative solution to a problem should be pursued or a new approach to some element of the program should be considered. The leadership of Kairos is committed to always being open to program improvements; in fact, many vital features of the current program evolved in just such a way, over time. However, it is important that each Team and Advisory Council work to diligently carry out the current program while proposed changes are being studied and evaluated by KPMI staff, leadership and other responsible parties. Two mechanisms are in place to handle program changes:

- For innovations, the KPMI Executive Director may approve a pilot program. Over an established timeframe, the innovation can be tried and evaluated. The results and recommendations are reported to the International Council and the KPMI Board of Directors for adoption, if warranted.
- The other mechanism for change is the Committee Process. The KPMI bylaws establish various functional committees to review, assess, and make recommendations on proposed changes to Program Manuals.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Following each Kairos Torch Weekend, the State Chapter Committee Chair will provide the Advisory Council a written assessment of the Torch Weekend program (see the diagram on p. 2). The assessment should use the Checklist completed during the interview by the State Chapter Chair or his/her designee to provide an objective assessment of the weekend team’s compliance. The Checklist should be included as back-up information. Plans for improvement should be noted as well as progress over time. The State Chapter Committee Chair is required to submit an End-of-Year status report to the Executive Director annually. The report should include the State Chapter Chair’s assessment of each Advisory Council and their extent of compliance.

To further enhance accountability, the Board of Directors has established a KPMI Program Evaluation Committee that is chartered with assessing program compliance. The Program Evaluation Committee will use these Checklists to carry out evaluations nationwide. Completed Excellence Initiative Checklists from the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative will be

crucial for their analyses, which will serve as the demonstrable basis for revisions and improvements in the Ministry, and its related training and materials.

### **APPLICATION OF THE ASSESSMENT STANDARDS AND CRITERIA**

**Standard:** A “standard” is defined as something established by an authority as the rule for measuring quality. It also means a model or example. The standard for the Kairos Torch program is the current Torch Program Manual. It is the exemplary model for which we strive on each Torch Weekend, and through the Continuing Ministry, because our experience assures us that if we faithfully carry out the program as defined in the Torch Program Manual, the Holy Spirit will work wonders and a high-quality Ministry outcome will achieve our Christian mission.

**Metric:** A “metric” is a measurement used as the basis for comparison or evaluation. For the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative, the chosen metric is compliance with the Program Manual and the Mentor’s Guide. This metric becomes functional through the Torch Excellence Initiative Checklist below. This Checklist identifies a cross-section of the required actions for carrying out the Kairos Torch Program. **(OMIT)** *Torch does not use the term “Riverbanks” in any of their materials nor have a list of things that my or may not be appropriate.*

**Criteria:** A “criterion” is a standard on which an evaluation may be based. In our case, a simple “Yes” or “No” answer is sufficient, but may be further illustrated with appropriate and brief comments that support the answer.

The attachment is the KTEI Checklist for assessing program compliance. Each question should be answered objectively by a “Yes” or “No.” The Checklist is divided into areas such as “Advisory Council,” “Weekend Core Team,” and “Weekend”, etc. Elements of the Continuing Ministry are included. These areas cover all measurable and high priority requirements of the current Torch Program Manual. The Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative (KTEI) Checklist is to be completed through interactive discussion between the SCC Chair or his/her designee and the Torch Weekend Advising Leader. As indicated at the beginning of this document, **the Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative is not a report card.** The Kairos Torch Excellence Initiative is designed to build a program that achieves our objectives by implementing our beliefs through a Ministry that strives continually for consistency, quality, and opportunities for improvements.