

Bulletin 3: Quality Assurance

Quality Control or Quality Assurance?

You have likely heard of “quality control” but may be unsure how it relates to quality assurance and what it means when BC Hydro talks about contractors needing to develop and implement a Quality Management Plan. First of all, let’s look at what these two approaches to quality compliance:

- **Quality Control (QC)** emphasizes the testing of final products to ensure they meet the quality requirements before being released
- **Quality Assurance (QA)** requires developing standardized reporting and metrics to improve and stabilize production and associated processes so you can avoid or minimize issues that led to defect(s)

In its broadest form, quality assurance includes quality control as one of its elements. Implementing a Quality Management Plan will help ensure that you have consistent and efficient processes to provide the required visibility into, and the management of, the quality of your work.

What are BC Hydro’s expectations of Contractors?

- BC Hydro will expect you to develop, implement, adhere to and report on your **Quality Management Plan**, which includes both your QC and QA processes. You must be able to provide the results of your QC and QA processes and ensure they are communicated clearly to BC Hydro. Examples of the documentation includes: completed QC forms; photos; reports containing the data and issues identified by your inspectors.

Contractors will be expected to perform QC on every job issued and submit QC documentation, including marked up As Built drawings, in their work completion package documents.

As a contractor you are also accountable for the performance of your subcontractors. This expectation extends to all aspects of the contract, for quality you must ensure your QC inspections are performed and documented and that your subcontractors comply with the quality expectations of the contract.

What is BC Hydro’s role in Quality?

BC Hydro has implemented a **Quality Assurance Program**. A set of Work orders are chosen for inspection from a bundle of completed work. The results of these inspections are collected and analysed to identify patterns that flag defect trends. By working together we can help improve our processes to ensure a good quality product is delivered which increases asset longevity and overall safety for you, all our contractors, BC Hydro employees and our customers.

Where can you find more information?

The monthly bulletins and related FAQs can be found on the **Civil Underground Construction Page**

For questions about the Contract Management process, please email: cucinfo@bchydro.com

For more information about Quality Assurance, go to:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/certificate-recognition/quality-assurance>