

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure all technical requirements are included in the consultant's assessment process during the processing of building consents, and to describe the procedures for the acceptance, management and auditing of specialist technical consultants.

## Scope

The scope of this document is to develop audit processes to ensure quality of assessments of specialist technical sections by consultants are maintained and that all process requirements included are in accordance with policy and procedures.

## References

BLD-4.7-FORM, Building consent – processing sheet

BLD-6.2-PROC, Project events schedule

BLD-7.0-POL, Consultants assessment and auditing processes

BLD-7.2-PROC, Consultants assessment and auditing processes

## Roles and responsibilities

**Building control manager:** Ensures that technical consultant has the appropriate technical competence to assess and approve the building consent (BC) application.

**Quality manager:** Audits policies and procedures associated with consultants used for processing BCs.

**Building official:** Verifies that the consultant's appraisal complies with the provisions of the building code and that any applicable conditions are included in the building consent. The building official checks that the application, documents and plans have been amended (if required) before granting the consent, and ensures a written report summarising the approval be supplied in accordance with the policy in place.

**Consultant:** Processes the BC specifically on the section of the consent that the building consent Authority (BCA) does not have the expertise in-house.

**Administration:** Ensures that the BC documentation is attached to the relevant building consent application and tracking the BC when it is sent to a consultant for processing.

## Abbreviations and acronyms

BC Building consent

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Version	Draft 1	Date issued		Expiry date



## Procedure

Step #	Description	Responsibility
1.	<p><b>Contact consultant</b></p> <p>When there is a requirement for a consultant to assess the BC plans for compliance, the consultant is contacted before sending the plans for assessment. This ensures that the consultant is appropriate and is aware that the BC must be completed in 20 working days.</p> <p>A service level agreement should be entered into with the consultant</p>	<b>Building official</b>
2.	<p><b>Raise purchase order</b></p> <p>A purchase order is raised prior to the undertaking of the assessment. The form is generated is emailed to the purchasing officer in Finance.</p>	<b>Building official</b>
3.	<p><b>Plans sent to consultant and Workbench updated</b></p> <p>A full set of the building consent documents is forwarded by courier to the consultant for assessment to ensure that there are no items missed that could have an effect on compliance. Workbench is updated to reflect that the BC documents are with the consultant.</p>	<b>Building official</b>
4.	<p><b>Plans assessed by consultant</b></p> <p>The consultant assesses the BC documents for compliance with the NZ Building Code and any other relevant standards. The consultant prepares a report on the assessment and includes any additional information to be included.</p> <p>When the consultant requires additional information to be able to complete the assessment, a process of notifying the BCA needs to be initiated, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suspend the processing time until the information is received</li> <li>• notify the BCA to forward to the applicant any requests for additional information.</li> </ul>	<b>Consultant</b>
5.	<p><b>Plans returned from consultant</b></p> <p>When the consultant completes the assessment of the specialist section the BC documents are returned to the BCA, together with the consultants' invoice for the work done. This invoice is forwarded to Finance for actioning and making payment. A copy of the invoice is attached to BLD-4.7-FORM, so that when calculating the fees, the consultant's fee is added to any outstanding fees. This must be paid before releasing the BC.</p> <p>The BCA receives the information and updates Workbench recording that the information has been received. The suspension of the time for processing is removed.</p> <p>Refer to BLD-6.2-PROC.</p>	<b>Consultant</b>



<b>Step #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Advise applicant to amend plans</b></p> <p>When a consultant's report has been received, there may be aspects of the report that the consultant considers there is a need to change the proposed building work to enable it to comply with legislation or with standards. In cases like this, it is necessary to advise the applicant of the issues raised by the consultant with a view of amending the plans.</p> <p>Until the plans are amended and the consultant has re-assessed the amended details, the adoption of the consultant's report will not proceed. If there is no dispute with the consultant's report, then proceed to the next step.</p>	<b>Building official</b>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Add any conditions from the consultant's report</b></p> <p>The consultant's report may contain some recommendations for conditions to be imposed on the BC. Append any changes, amendments and additional documentation to the application. In these situations the processing officer reviews and includes the relevant conditions in the BC approval report.</p> <p>If the consultant's assessment states that the BC application is not granted, the report must list the reasons for the refusal and the applicant is advised in writing.</p>	<b>Building official</b>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Sign off input and update Workbench</b></p> <p>Before releasing the BC for further processing, it is necessary to sign off the input of the consultant on BLD-4.7-FORM and update Workbench.</p>	<b>Building official</b>



## Auditing consultants

Step	Description	Responsibility
1.	<p><b>Building consent authority approval process</b></p> <p>Provide a process with a checklist outlining specific requirements to be verified before approval to be included on the register.</p> <p>Require evidence of suitable professional liability insurance cover which building consent authorities would have to consider on a case by case basis.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Acceptance criteria and evaluation – professional</b></p> <p>Identify whether the consultant is a chartered professional.</p> <p>Identify the area of expertise offered by the consultant.</p> <p>Verify that membership of the chartered professional's organisation is current in the area of required expertise. Require copies of documentation from the chartered organisation as verification.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Acceptance criteria and evaluation – non-professional</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify whether the consultant has appropriate trade-based (or other) skills.</li> <li>2. Identify the area of expertise offered by the consultant.</li> <li>3. Verify any professional or affiliated trade is current in the area of required expertise.</li> <li>4. Require copies of documentation in support of application from the organisation or trade as verification.</li> </ol>	
4.	<p><b>Approval</b></p> <p>Develop and complete a checklist to verify that the above items have been completed. An approved specialist should sign the checklist.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Reviewing the consultant's work</b></p> <p>The BCA reviews the consultant's register at appropriate intervals dependant upon the level of risk associated with the specialist technical area being provided by the consultant, and/or the frequency of assessment requests (annually or other).</p> <p>Provide a review process with a checklist of requirements to be verified in order to remain on the register.</p> <p>The process should include an update of the consultant's technical experience and qualification. the result of audits and reviews are recorded on the register. any complaints or changes should be considered before approval or renewal is contemplated.</p>	



Step	Description	Responsibility
6.	<p><b>Peer review</b></p> <p>A peer review should be commissioned in order to assess and substantiate the quality and consistency of reports, calculations, observations and decisions that are critical to the outcome of the consent, inspection and code compliance certificate processes.</p> <p><b>Review of reports</b></p> <p>The audit review and peer review reports should be appraised to confirm that the required level of service is being provided.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Investigation</b></p> <p>If the specified level of service is not being provided, an inquiry should be commissioned to investigate reasons.</p> <p>Decide if remedial actions are required.</p> <p>If a decision to remove the consultant from the register is made, the consultant should be advised in writing including the reasons for this action.</p> <p>Remove from register.</p> <p><b>Inform client</b></p> <p>Send written notification to client advising outcome of investigation.</p> <p><b>Approval</b></p> <p>If decision is to accept or renew the consultant's application, the register is be amended accordingly.</p>	