

JOINT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

# PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AND FIELD REVIEW BY SUPPORTING REGISTERED PROFESSIONALS

VERSION 1.0 APRIL 27, 2020



**ARCHITECTURAL  
INSTITUTE OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA**



**ENGINEERS &  
GEOSCIENTISTS**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC) is an independent, professional self-governing body established in 1920 by provincial statute (the *Architects Act*) with the mandate to regulate the profession of architecture on behalf of the public.

[aibc.ca](http://aibc.ca)

## ENGINEERS AND GEOSCIENTISTS BRITISH COLUMBIA

Engineers and Geoscientists British Columbia is the regulatory and licensing body for the practice of engineering and geoscience in the province of British Columbia. With over 34,000 members, Engineers and Geoscientists BC regulates and governs these professions under the authority of the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act* and is charged with protecting the public interest.

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# 1. Foreword

These *Professional Practice Guidelines: Professional Design and Field Review by Supporting Registered Professionals* were jointly prepared by Engineers and Geoscientists British Columbia (BC) and the Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC). These guidelines replace the document previously known as *Practice Note 16: Professional Design and Field Review by Supporting Registered Professionals*.

These guidelines apply to architects and professional engineers providing professional services in a supporting role on a building project. Included are two intraprofessional forms to help appropriately record professional responsibility and assurance.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 DEFINED TERMS

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#### **Architect**

Individuals who are registered or licensed by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia under the *Architects Act* to practice the profession of architecture and provide architectural services in British Columbia.

#### **Authority Having Jurisdiction**

The governmental body responsible for the enforcement of any part of the Code or the official or agency designated by that body to exercise such a function.

#### **Code**

The *British Columbia Building Code (BCBC)* or the Vancouver Building By-law (VBBL).

#### **Letters of Assurance**

Uniform, mandatory documents that are intended to clearly identify the responsibilities of key individuals in a building project, and which are executed in accordance with Subsection 2.2.7. in Part 2 of Division C of the Code, otherwise known as Schedules A, B, C-A, and C-B.

#### **Engineering Professional**

Professional engineers and licensees who are registered or licensed by Engineers and Geoscientists BC and entitled under the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act* to engage in the practice of professional engineering in British Columbia.

### **Registered Professional**

Defined in the *BCBC* as:

- a) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as an architect under the *Architects Act*,  
or
- b) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as a professional engineer under the  
*Engineers and Geoscientists Act*.

For the purposes of the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act*, this can include professional engineers and licensees having the appropriate scope of practice, all of whom must be qualified by training or experience to provide designs for building projects

### **Registered Professional of Record**

Defined in the Code as a Registered Professional retained to undertake design work and field review in accordance with Subsection 2.2.7. of Division C.

### **Supporting Registered Professional**

A Registered Professional providing supplementary supporting design and/or field review services for building components, or subcomponents, within a discipline, to the Registered Professional of Record for that discipline.

This could include an Engineering Professional providing specialty engineering services of the type discussed in one of the various discipline-based Engineers and Geoscientists BC guidelines; for example, *Engineers and Geoscientists BC Professional Practice Guidelines: Electrical Engineering Services for Building Projects*.

## **2.2 ABBREVIATIONS**

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AIBC: Architectural Institute of British Columbia

ASHRAE: American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

BC: British Columbia

*BCBC: BC Building Code*

*NECB: National Energy Code for Buildings*

RPR: Registered Professional of Record

SRP: Supporting Registered Professional

VBL: Vancouver Building By-law

## 3. Overview

### 3.1 PURPOSE

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These guidelines are a guide to the recommended use of two intraprofessional forms:

- Model Schedule S-B: Assurance of Professional Design and Commitment for Field Review by Supporting Registered Professional

and

- Model Schedule S-C: Assurance of Professional Field Review and Compliance by Supporting Registered Professional

Schedules S-B and S-C are not to be confused with the Code-mandated Letters of Assurance and are not intended to be submitted to the Authority Having Jurisdiction. There may be reasons for them to be called for by a project's Registered Professionals of Record; however, this is at the discretion of each Registered Professional of Record.

### 3.2 SCOPE

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These guidelines pertain to the professional practice of architecture and engineering when this practice is undertaken in a supporting role on a building project.

### 3.3 PARALLEL CONSIDERATIONS

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These guidelines provide advice on the recommended use of Schedules S-B and S-C, but readers should also consult the Province of BC's *Guide to the Letters of Assurance in the BC Building Code* (Province of BC 2010).

In addition, Engineering Professionals should refer to the Engineers and Geoscientists BC document titled *Bulletin K: Letters of Assurance and Due Diligence* (Engineers and Geoscientists BC 2010). Also, AIBC *Practice Guideline: "Qualified" Letters of Assurance* (AIBC 2019a) and AIBC *Practice Guideline: Letters of Assurance for Phased (or Partial) Occupancies* (AIBC 2019b) provide a broader discussion of the appropriate use of the Code-mandated Letters of Assurance.

Finally, AIBC *Bulletin 34: Building Envelope Services – Appropriate Professional Practice* (AIBC 2011), and the Engineers and Geoscientists BC *Professional Practice Guidelines: Building Enclosure Engineering Services* (Engineers and Geoscientists BC 2020) regarding the use of Model Schedules D are useful resources where Registered Professionals are providing building envelope services.

## 4. Professional Practice

### 4.1 BACKGROUND

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The Letters of Assurance in the Code provide a uniform standard across BC for providing professional assurance of design and field review of new construction. The roles and responsibilities of the owner, Registered Professionals, and Authorities Having Jurisdiction are clearly defined.

Letters of Assurance are uniform, mandatory documents intended to clearly identify the responsibilities of key individuals in a building project. They were added to the *BCBC* in its December 1992 edition. Letters of Assurance are required to be submitted at building permit application and prior to occupancy of buildings described in the Code under Division C, Part 2, Subsection 2.2.7. Professional Design and Review. A Registered Professional who signs and seals a Letter of Assurance is accepting responsibility for the assurances stated in that Letter of Assurance. For example, by signing and sealing a Schedule C-B, Assurance of Professional Field Review and Compliance, a Registered Professional is giving assurance, based on his or her field review, that the relevant aspects of the project for which he or she is responsible substantially complies, in all material respects, with the applicable requirements of the Code and the plans and supporting documents submitted in support of the application for the building permit (that is, the design documents).

There are seven principle disciplines requiring Letters of Assurance identified in the Code:

- Architectural
- Structural
- Mechanical
- Plumbing
- Fire Suppression
- Electrical
- Geotechnical (Temporary and Permanent)

Typically, only one Letter of Assurance is to be provided to the Authority Having Jurisdiction for each discipline identified in the Code, as applicable to the project. The Registered Professional providing the Letter of Assurance for each discipline is the Registered Professional of Record (RPR).

An RPR should only undertake design and field review for a discipline and items identified on the Letter of Assurance for which he or she has competency. As such, an RPR, or an owner, may require supplementary supporting engineering or architectural services for a particular component, or subcomponent, within a discipline. In instances where supporting engineering or architectural services are required, it is recommended that appropriate assurances be obtained by the relevant RPR from the Supporting Registered Professional (SRP) (who could be engaged by the RPR; the owner; or a contractor, subtrade, or supplier) providing the supporting design

service and/or field review service. Upon receipt of assurance from an SRP that a particular component or subcomponent substantially complies, in all material respects, with the applicable requirements of the Code, the RPR can complete and submit the Letter of Assurance for that discipline. This allows the integrity of the Code scheme for Letters of Assurance to be maintained (that is, one Letter of Assurance per discipline).

## 4.2 SCHEDULES S-B AND S-C

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Schedules S-B and S-C, as identified in **Appendix A** of these guidelines, are the recommended mechanism for an RPR to receive assurance from an SRP providing supporting engineering or architectural services, confirming that plans and supporting documents relating to the supporting engineering or architectural services for a particular component, or subcomponent, of a design substantially comply, in all material respects, with the applicable requirements of the Code.

The RPR must coordinate the work of the SRP providing supporting engineering or architectural services to assure that the work is compatible with, and integrated into, the overall design. Although the RPR may not have carried out the design and/or field review for a particular item under the Letter of Assurance, the RPR can sign the Letter of Assurance for that item based on the assurance provided by Schedules S-B and S-C received from the SRP who provided the supporting services for that discipline.

Typically, the SRP must liaise with the RPR for the purposes of the design and field review within the scope of work being provided. The necessity to liaise and the level of interaction between the SRP and the RPR depends on the service being provided, the specifications, and the roles of the design team members.

The Code does not require, and these guidelines do not contemplate, that the Schedules S-B and S-C be part of the Code-mandated Letters of Assurance system. It is not intended that Schedules S-B and S-C be requested by, or submitted to, Authorities Having Jurisdiction as part of building permit or occupancy procedures. The RPR should retain copies of all Schedules S-B and S-C for their project files.

Schedule S-B is intended to be used by the SRP to provide assurance that the design of a component, or subcomponent, substantially complies with the Code. If the SRP will also be providing field review services with respect to those supporting components, that commitment for field review is also indicated on the Schedule S-B. The need for an SRP is at the sole discretion of the relevant RPR who is signing and sealing the Code-mandated Letters of Assurance.

When an SRP carries out field review services, Schedule S-C is intended to provide assurance that field review of components or subcomponents identified in the previously submitted Schedule S-B have been completed, and that those works substantially comply with the Code. Alternatively, Schedule S-C may be used when an SRP has been retained solely to provide field review services with respect to supporting components, to provide assurance that the field review has been completed and the work substantially complies with the Code. Some supporting engineering or architectural services may impact more than one RPR. While the Coordinating Registered Professional is not required to collect the Schedules S-B or S-C, he or she may request copies from the RPR(s) in order to coordinate the work.

Following are examples of line items from Schedule B of the Code for which supporting architectural or engineering services may be required, and where the use of Schedules S-B and S-C would be appropriate.

The following items may require design and/or field review beyond the core competency of the RPR:

- 1.5 Performance and physical safety features (guardrails, handrails, etc.)
- 1.6 Structural capacity of architectural components, including anchorage and seismic restraint
- 1.7 Sound control
- 1.19 Wall cladding systems
- 1.21 Exterior glazing
- 3.6 Structural capacity of mechanical components, including anchorage and seismic restraint
- 4.7 Structural capacity of plumbing components, including anchorage and seismic restraint
- 5.9 Structural capacity of sprinkler components, including anchorage and seismic restraint
- 6.5 Structural capacity of electrical components, including anchorage and seismic restraint

Supporting structural engineering services may be required for design and/or field review of certain proprietary design components (e.g. trusses, steel frames) or factory prefabricated structures that fall under the following item:

- 2.1 Structural capacity of structural components of the building, including anchorage and seismic restraint

Supporting architectural or engineering services may be required for design and/or field review of roofing systems that fall under the following item:

- 1.18 Roofing and flashing

Supporting architectural or engineering services may be required for design and/or field review of the building envelope, energy modelling, and/or testing for compliance with Part 10 – Energy Efficiency as indicated in the following items. Refer to *Joint Professional Practice Guidelines – Whole Building Energy Modelling Services* (AIBC and Engineers and Geoscientists BC 2018).

- 1.24 Building envelope, Part 10 – ASHRAE, NECB or Energy Step Code requirements
- 3.8 Mechanical systems, Part 10 – ASHRAE, NECB or Energy Step Code requirements
- 4.9 Plumbing systems, Part 10 – ASHRAE, NECB or Energy Step Code requirements
- 6.9 Electrical systems, Part 10 – ASHRAE, NECB or Energy Step Code requirements

## **4.3 PART 9 BUILDINGS**

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Supporting engineering or architectural services may be required for specific aspects of a Part 9 Building when an RPR is required.



## 5. References

Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC). 2019a. Practice Guideline: “Qualified” Letters of Assurance. October 2019. Vancouver, BC: AIBC. [accessed: 2020 Mar 23].

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Province of BC. 2010. Guide to the Letters of Assurance in the BC Building Code 2006. Edition

5a (December 2010). Victoria, BC: Building & Safety Standards Branch, Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General. [accessed: 2020 Mar 5]. <http://www.bccodes.ca/2006GuideLoA.pdf>.

## DOCUMENT AMENDMENT HISTORY

| VERSION NUMBER | PUBLISHED DATE | DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.0            | April 27, 2020 | First issued as a joint guideline by the Architectural Institute of BC and Engineers and Geoscientists BC. Practice Note 16 withdrawn, revised and reformatted as <i>Joint Professional Practice Guidelines: Professional Design and Field Review by Supporting Registered Professionals</i> . |
| –              | February 2017  | Practice Note 16 revised to add reference to the Vancouver Building By-law, and to add a new graphic template and new numbering.                                                                                                                                                               |
| –              | September 2010 | First issued as <i>Practice Note 16 - Professional Design and Field Review by Supporting Registered Professionals</i> in response to changes to the <i>BC Building Code</i> in September 2010.                                                                                                 |

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## 6. Appendix A

- Model Schedule S-B: Assurance of Professional Design and Commitment for Field Review By Supporting Registered Professional
- Model Schedule S-C: Assurance of Professional Field Review and Compliance by Supporting Registered Professional

# MODEL SCHEDULE S-B

## ASSURANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AND COMMITMENT FOR FIELD REVIEW

### By Supporting Registered Professional

- Notes:
1. This letter is endorsed by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia.
  2. The applicable code is the British Columbia Building Code or the Vancouver Building By-law, hereinafter referred to as the Code.
  3. In this letter the words in *italics* have the same meaning as in the Code.

To: The *Registered Professional of Record*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Re:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Project (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Project (Print)

This is to advise that the undersigned is the *Registered Professional* retained by \_\_\_\_\_  
to design engineering/architectural components for the captioned project in accordance with the Code.

The undersigned hereby gives assurance that the design and supporting documents prepared by this *Registered Professional* in  
support of the project for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert here the area of responsibility, e.g. seismic restraint, fire resistance, acoustic properties, structural capacity, building energy performance)

substantially comply with the Code and other applicable enactments respecting safety except for construction safety aspects.

These engineering/architectural components are addressed in the report/drawings prepared by me, or under my direct  
supervision, which bear my professional seal and signature.

(With respect to *field review*, initial or cross out the following statement as applicable.)

\_\_\_\_\_ The undersigned hereby undertakes to be responsible for *field review* of the above-referenced components during  
construction.

**MODEL SCHEDULE S-B: ASSURANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AND COMMITMENT FOR FIELD REVIEW BY  
SUPPORTING REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Address

I confirm I have liaised as required with the appropriate *Registered Professionals* for the purposes of my services.

I hereby give my assurance that I am a *registered professional* as defined in the Code.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

(PROFESSIONAL SEAL, SIGNATURE AND DATE)

(If the *Registered Professional* is a member of a firm, complete the following.)

I am a member of the firm \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of firm)

and I sign this letter on behalf of the firm.

Note: The above letter must be signed by a *Registered Professional*. The Code defines a *registered professional* to mean:

- (a) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as an architect under the *Architects Act*, or
- (b) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as a professional engineer under the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act*.

# MODEL SCHEDULE S-C

## ASSURANCE OF PROFESSIONAL FIELD REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

### By Supporting Registered Professional

- Notes:
1. This letter is endorsed by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia.
  2. The applicable code is the British Columbia Building Code or the Vancouver Building By-law, hereinafter referred to as the Code.
  3. In this letter the words in *italics* have the same meaning as in the Code.

To: The *Registered Professional of Record*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Print)

Re:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Project (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Project (Print)

(With respect to *field review*, the applicable statement (A or B) and cross out the following statement as applicable.)

#### DESIGN AND FIELD REVIEW

A. \_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give assurance that I have fulfilled my obligations for *field review* as outlined in the Code and in the previously submitted Schedule S-B, Assurance of Professional Design and Commitment for Field Review, and

that those components of the project identified in the Schedule S-B substantially comply in all material respects with the applicable requirements of the Code and other enactments respecting safety, not including construction safety aspects, and the plans and supporting documents prepared by the undersigned, respecting:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert here the area of responsibility, e.g. seismic restraint, fire resistance, acoustic properties, structural capacity, building energy performance)

#### FIELD REVIEW ONLY

B. \_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give assurance that I have fulfilled my obligations for *field review* as outlined in the Code and that those components of the project substantially comply in all material respects with the applicable requirements of the Code and other enactments respecting safety, not including construction safety aspects, and the plans and supporting documents, respecting:

**MODEL SCHEDULE S-C: ASSURANCE OF PROFESSIONAL FIELD REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE BY SUPPORTING REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert here the area of responsibility, e.g. seismic restraint, fire resistance, acoustic properties, structural capacity, building energy performance)

I confirm I have liaised as required with the appropriate *Registered Professionals* for the purposes of my services.

I hereby give my assurance that I am a *registered professional* as defined in the Code.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

(PROFESSIONAL SEAL, SIGNATURE AND DATE)

(If the *Registered Professional* is a member of a firm, complete the following.)

I am a member of the firm \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name of firm)

and I sign this letter on behalf of the firm.

Note: The above letter must be signed by a *Registered Professional*. The Code defines a *registered professional* to mean:

- (a) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as an architect under the *Architects Act*, or
- (b) a person who is registered or licensed to practice as a professional engineer under the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act*.