
Background

The *Safety Codes Act* (Act) allows for the accreditation of regional services commissions established under the *Municipal Government Act*. Under the Act and as delegated by Ministerial Order, the Administrator may, by Order, designate a regional services commission as an accredited regional services commission and authorize it to administer all or part of the Act with respect to any or all things, processes, or activities to which the Act applies that are within the boundaries of the regional services commission’s membership.

The Act provides that the Administrator may include terms and conditions and specify locations and facilities in an Order of Accreditation. The Act also provides that the Administrator may, by order, based on reasonable and probable grounds, suspend or cancel an Order of Accreditation.

The Safety Codes Council (Council) has established this policy in accordance with section 18 of the Act and Ministerial Order 11/94. The policy assists the Administrator in carrying out delegated authorities and duties under the Act, and preserving the integrity of the safety codes system through maintaining appropriately qualified accredited organizations.

Policy

Scope of Accreditation

1. Regional Services Commission accreditation shall be discipline specific. A regional services commission may be accredited in the building, fire, electrical, plumbing, or gas disciplines.

Eligibility for Accreditation

2. When applying for a new accreditation or making an amendment to the scope of an existing accreditation, a regional services commission shall submit:
 - a) a completed application form, signed by the chief executive officer of the regional services commission;
 - b) a proposed Quality Management Plan (QMP) or revisions to its current QMP in a form that is acceptable to the Administrator;

- c) a proposed QMP or revisions to the scope or service levels of a current QMP must include an approval from the regional services commission Board of Directors in support of the application¹, and be signed by the Board of Directors Chair of the regional services commission;
 - d) a transition plan for locations where deemed applicable;
 - e) the application fee; and
 - f) any other information required by the Administrator.
3. A proposed QMP shall meet the requirements established in the Accreditation General Policy.
 4. A transition plan for a new accreditation or amendment to the scope of an existing accreditation, shall establish how the transfer of safety codes administration to an accredited regional services commission or the provincial government will occur and include the following:
 - a) a mutually agreed upon date(s) for transfer of jurisdictional responsibilities and services, failing which a reasonable date for the same shall be set by the Administrator;
 - b) a communication plan to advise potentially affected parties;
 - c) how active and outstanding permits, inspections, non-compliances, and orders will be addressed during the transition;
 - d) the transfer of records, files and data; and
 - e) any other considerations identified by the Administrator.

Consideration of Accreditation Application

5. In considering an application for a new accreditation or an amendment to an existing accreditation, the Administrator may consider any information deemed relevant to the application, including but not limited to:
 - a) information provided by the regional services commission as part of its application;
 - b) the regional services commissions' capacity to provide effective, efficient, professional, and ethical administration of the safety codes system;

1. Revised quality management plans submitted to support an Accreditation Update application do not need to be supported by a resolution from a board of directors for a regional services commission.

- c) current and past safety performance of the regional services commission, including any previous performance as an accredited regional services commission;
 - d) written submission forwarded by affected organizations within the jurisdictional boundaries of its members;
 - e) information identified during a meeting between the Administrator, regional services commission, and affected organizations within the jurisdictional boundaries of its membership; and
 - f) submission of an acceptable transition plan for locations where deemed applicable.
6. The Administrator, upon receipt of a completed application for new accreditation or an amendment to the scope of an existing accreditation, shall direct that a notice of that application be provided to affected organizations within the jurisdictional boundaries of the membership for the regional services commission.
 7. The Administrator may, at time of directing the provision of notice under section 6, set terms and conditions respecting the written submissions or how information will be collected from affected organizations within the jurisdictional boundaries of the membership for the regional services commission.
 8. Affected organizations may make written submission about a notice received under section 6 to the Administrator with a copy to the applicant. Any information obtained by the Administrator may be provided to the applicant, who may make written representations on that material to the Administrator.
 9. The Administrator may accredit a regional services commission provided that the regional services commission has successfully satisfied the requirements as described in section 2, and that any written submission provided by affected organizations within its jurisdictional boundaries of the membership for the regional services commission have been considered.
 10. The Administrator shall provide a copy of the completed transition plan to the affected party(s) as identified in Section 4, once the new accreditation or amendment to the scope to an existing accreditation has been approved and a reasonable effective date established.

Accreditation Overlap

11. In the event that the Administrator is of the opinion that an overlap in the administration of safety codes system exists, the Administrator shall:
- a) advise the Minister of the overlapping accreditations, the nature of overlap, and request a resolution under Section 29 of the Act; and
 - b) provide to the affected accredited parties, copy of the information submitted to the Minister.

Maintenance of Accreditation

12. A regional services commission shall adhere to its Order of Accreditation and approved QMP.
13. An Order of Accreditation is not assignable or transferable.
14. The Administrator may direct an accredited regional services commission to review or amend its QMP.
15. Amendments to an Order of Accreditation or QMP require the approval of the Administrator.
16. An accredited regional services commission shall provide the Administrator with 60 days written notice of its intention to voluntarily relinquish its accreditation.
17. An accredited regional services commission shall provide the Administrator with a transition plan should the regional services commission choose to voluntarily relinquish its accreditation in one or more discipline or part of discipline.
18. An accredited regional services commission shall review the administration of its QMP and submit a report² to the Administrator summarizing the results of the review on an annual basis, including:
- a) organizational successes in administering the QMP;

2. The Annual Internal Review report does not need to be submitted to the Council in a year in which the Regional Services Commission is also subject to a Council audit.

- b) opportunities for improving QMP administration and a plan for implementing those improvements;
- c) status update on improvements to QMP administration that were identified during previous annual internal QMP reviews;
- d) any proposed amendments to its QMP; and
- e) any other information required by the Administrator.
19. An accredited regional services commission shall be subject to an external review program or audit established and conducted by the Council or an agent of the Council.
20. A regional services commission shall provide the Administrator with an update on the implementation of a transition plan described in section 5 upon request from the Administrator.
21. At written request of the affected accredited corporations within jurisdictional boundaries of its members in a regional services commission, the Administrator shall provide a copy of the regional services commissions' approved QMP and may charge a fee of the requesting party to do so.

Corrective Action

The Council is committed to working with accredited regional services commission(s) to resolve identified performance issues and deficiencies, but there are situations in which corrective action through suspension or cancellation of an Order of Accreditation may be warranted.

22. Grounds for corrective action may include but are not limited to:
- a) failing to meet requirements in legislation, an Order of Accreditation, QMP, or Council policy;
- b) not cooperating with or refusing to comply with directives from the Administrator;
- c) not cooperating with or refusing to address deficiencies or follow recommendations identified through a review or audit conducted by the Council or its agent;
- d) using unqualified staff or failing to have sufficient number of appropriate safety codes officers to respond to workload;
- e) bad practices, poor procedures, or poor quality work in administering the Act;

- f) unethical or unprofessional behaviour or practice in administering the Act;
- g) interfering with or attempting to interfere with the independence and impartiality of any safety codes officer(s);
- h) fraud, related criminal activity, or bad faith in administering the Act;
- i) failing to submit required Council fees or levies;
- j) keeping poor or improper records related to the administration of the Act;
- k) conflict of interest in administering the Act;
- l) bringing Alberta’s safety codes system into disrepute; or
- m) breach of confidentiality under the Act or the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
23. Corrective action may include but is not limited to any one or more of the following:
- a) letter of reprimand;
- b) short-term suspension of an Order of Accreditation (up to 30 days);
- c) long-term suspension of an Order of Accreditation (1-6 months); or
- d) cancellation of an Order of Accreditation.
24. Written notice shall be provided to an accredited regional services commission that is subject to corrective action. The notice will:
- a) identify the corrective action that will be taken and the timeframe within which the corrective action must be completed;
- b) provide the reasons for the corrective action;
- c) provide direction respecting the right of appeal should the affected parties wish to appeal the corrective action; and
- d) be signed by the Administrator.
25. If a regional services commission Order of Accreditation is suspended or cancelled, the Designation of Powers held by safety codes officers employed by that regional services commission are also suspended or cancelled.

Reinstatement of Accreditation

27. The Administrator may reinstate a regional services commission Order of Accreditation that has been suspended or cancelled if:

- a) the issue(s) that resulted in the suspension or cancelation are corrected to the satisfaction of the Administrator;
 - b) the regional services commission develops a plan, approved by the Administrator, to ensure that the issue(s) that resulted in the suspension or cancellation will not re-occur; and
 - c) the applicable reinstatement fee has been paid to the Council.
28. The Administrator may waive or shorten a previously imposed suspension of a regional services commission Order of Accreditation if the Administrator is satisfied the issue(s) giving rise to the suspension has been corrected and will not reoccur.