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# Voluntary Peer Review Guide

May 2011

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**Guide**

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## Introduction

This Voluntary Peer Review Guide, published by the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) outlines the voluntary peer review process of the ABC FP's continuing competency program. This guide leads members through the process of performing a voluntary peer review (VPR) and outlines the requirements in each section of the VPR forms. This guide also provides information, ideas and tools to help members complete the VPR and answer some of the questions that may come up during the review.

The VPR's main objective is to elevate a member's level of practice through the mentorship and confidential advice offered by a trusted colleague.

A voluntary peer review is:

- a dialogue between two members about professional responsibilities;
- a review of professionalism;
- an exchange of knowledge, information and ideas;
- an effective process to resolve local professional issues;
- a time efficient exercise that will take a half day to a day;
- a tool that evaluates member performance against professional standards and obligations; and
- a tool that links to the self-assessment professional development plan.

A voluntary peer review is not:

- a practice, technical or work review;
- an audit of prescriptions or professional decisions;
- a method of critiquing another member;
- about forcing all forest professionals to think alike; or
- about reviewing a member's files looking for something wrong.

## Voluntary Participation

This element of the continuing competency program is strictly voluntary. All members are encouraged to participate in the peer review element of the continuing competency program. Unlike the self-assessment element of the continuing competency program in which all registered, special permit and associate members must participate, the peer review program is voluntary for everyone. Members decide whether they want to participate in this element as either a reviewer or the participant.

### Incentives for Registered Members to Participate

There are four main incentives to participate in a peer review.

#### 1. Maintaining Professionalism

First and foremost, it comes from the desire to increase and/or maintain professionalism. It is every member's professional obligation to maintain his/her competence and it is the ABCFP's obligation to demonstrate that their members are fulfilling this obligation. Participating in a VPR demonstrates a high level of member competence. While this is a voluntary element it is hoped members view this as part of being a professional. Both the participant and the reviewer benefit from the VPR process.

#### 2. How the VPR Influences Being Randomly Chosen for a Practice Review

Special permit holders and registered members who have been reviewed in a VPR will be exempt from being chosen for a Practice Review for a period of five years.

#### 3. Participation in a VPR Counts as Credit towards a Voluntary Certificate of Professional Development

Members will be able to claim category 1 credits for being involved in a VPR as a reviewer or the participant when applying for a voluntary certificate of professional development ([http://www.abcfp.ca/practice\\_development/continuing\\_education/professional\\_development.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_education/professional_development.asp)).

#### 4. ABCFP Annual Forestry Conference Attendance

Members who have participated in a VPR, as the reviewer or the participant, will have their name entered once into a draw for one full ABCFP Annual Forestry Conference registration package (excluding transportation and accommodation). One registration package will be drawn for every 25 VPR participants to a maximum of 25 packages. These packages are non-transferable.

## Choosing a Reviewer

A member can choose his/her own reviewer as long as the reviewer meets with the following criteria:

- The reviewer must be an ABCFP member in the registered, special permit holder or associate class of membership. An RFT or an associate member can be a reviewer as long as the content of the review falls within his/her authorized scope of practice.
- The reviewer should be impartial with no conflict or perceived conflict of interest with the participant. Conflicts of interest include members who are close relatives (spouse, brother, sister) of the participant. Business partners, supervisors and someone who works closely with the participant can be chosen as reviewers. In these relationships, it would be beneficial for each person to carry out a review on each other. Some people have questioned the objectivity of this arrangement, but a trusted colleague will care about your professionalism, offer constructive advice and provide an objective review.
- The reviewer will be competent in all areas of review.

Members may also want to consider bringing in more than one reviewer. Having multiple reviewers increases the exchange of ideas. One of the reviewers will be required to be the primary reviewer and sign off on the review.

## Effective Time Frame of a VPR

A VPR can be done at any time, but should not be done more often than once a year. It is a good idea to arrange for a VPR a couple of months after you have a significant job change.

## Format of the VPR

Reviews should be face-to-face, but the review can be performed over the phone and by e-mail if necessary. Time requirements for a face-to-face review can be minimized by sharing information and dialogue prior to the meeting.

## Non-Practising Members<sup>1</sup>

When conducting a peer review on a member, you should determine if the member is practising or non-practising as provided in the definition of the practice of professional forestry in Section 1 of the *Foresters Act*. Non-practising members can have a peer review but the VPR process is designed for practising rather than non-practising members.

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<sup>1</sup> A non-practising member does not practise professional forestry at all and he or she has answered “no” to all questions in the professional practice questionnaire as part of the annual self-assessment. A non-practising member is exempt from completing an annual self-assessment.

## Submitting Your Peer Review

### **Don't Send Your VPR to the ABCFP.**

VPR Forms 1 to 4 are confidential and are not intended to be submitted to the ABCFP.

### **The Participant Must Maintain a Copy of the VPR for Six Years**

Members are expected to retain VPR records for a period of time that is reasonable and relevant to the content of the review. The Continuing Competence Committee suggests that six years is reasonable in many circumstances. Since VPRs are confidential, the member who conducted the review must keep the results of the review confidential.

### **The Reviewer Must Submit Form 5**

The reviewer must submit a completed Form 5: Peer Review Declaration of Completion to the ABCFP.

## Voluntary Peer Review Participant Checklists

These checklists are a tool to guide participants through the voluntary peer review process.

### **Checklist for the Participant**

1. Complete a VPR no more than once a year or when there is a significant change in your job.
2. Become familiar with the VPR incentives, process, questions, guide and forms at [http://www.abcfp.ca/practice\\_development/continuing\\_competency/peer\\_review.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_competency/peer_review.asp).
3. Review the questions/discussion items on Form 1 and determine which other types of non-confidential reviews, audits or assessments may be combined with the VPR.
4. Choose a reviewer (or reviewers) who meets the criteria under the Choosing a Reviewer heading in this VPR guide.
5. Contact the reviewer to arrange a suitable time and a quiet place for the VPR and to determine any other requirements.

6. Provide the appropriate information (in confidence) to the reviewer or have it ready for the review. Examples (not a complete list) are:

- results of other types of non-confidential reviews, audits or assessments which can be combined with the VPR;
- your job description;
- professional development records;
- your self-assessment and professional development plan from the past three years;
- an example of a work product from each aspect of practice as described in question 10 e, form 1; and
- examples of professional forestry work that is signed and sealed/stamped.

7. Review the questions/discussion items in Form 1 and the Guide to Form 1 to determine if there is anything else you would like to show to the reviewer. You do not have to provide documentation for many of the questions asked. A discussion will usually suffice for answering questions.

8. Review the questions in Form 1 to determine how you will answer them.

9. Think about providing examples to the reviewer to support your answers to the questions in Form 1.

10. Review a draft of Forms 1 to 4, supplied by the reviewer within a week (a guide, not a requirement) of the interview and provide the reviewer with comments, errors or omissions.

11. When the reviewer has provided you with the final results, Keep VPR records (Forms 1 to 5) for at least six years in a secure filing system with proper backup. You do not have to send anything to the ABCFP. The reviewer will send Form 5 to the ABCFP.

12. When the review is completed (if appropriate or desired) you can switch roles and carry out a VPR on your reviewer.

## Checklist for the Peer Reviewer

1. If you are asked to carry out a VPR on another member you must meet the criteria outlined in Choosing a Reviewer section of this VPR guide before proceeding.
2. If you cannot or will not carry out a review, suggest an alternate or alternates.
3. If you choose to carry out a review on another member, become familiar with the areas of practice of the participant (if applicable), VPR incentives, process, questions, forms and this guide and arrange for a suitable time and quiet place for the interview.
4. Review information supplied by the participant.
5. If other types of non-confidential reviews, audits or assessments are to be combined with the VPR, study the question and discussion items on Form 1 and determine how they can be combined with the VPR using Form 2.
6. Is the participant practising (full or part time) as defined under the *Foresters Act*? If so, then all, or most, of the Form 1 questions apply. If not, only some Form 1 questions apply.
7. Do not impose personal agendas or opinion upon the participant. Use positive, rather than negative responses.
8. Use the VPR guide for Form 1 to interpret and record the responses of the participant to Form 1 questions.
9. If applicable, use the VPR guide to complete Form 2 (Combining a Peer Review with Another Review).
10. Use the VPR guide to Complete Form 3 (verifies that the participant has completed self-assessments and assesses their self-assessment professional development plan).
11. Use the VPR guide to complete Form 4 (VPR Professional Development Plan).
12. If there are matters of concern that are not serious enough to be referred to the complaint resolution process, try to resolve the matter within the context of the VPR process.

13. If serious instances of conduct or gross incompetence are encountered (examples are provided in the next section of this guide), refer the matters to the ABCFP.
14. Within one week of completing the interview (a guideline, not a requirement) provide a draft of Forms 1 to 4 to the participant so he or she can review them for errors or omissions or provide comments.
15. After receiving errors/omissions/comments from the participant, prepare final versions of Forms 1 to 4.
16. Complete Form 5 (VPR Declaration) and mail it to the ABCFP office, subject: Voluntary Peer Review or scan it and e-mail it to [info@abcfp.ca](mailto:info@abcfp.ca).
17. Remember that all information from the review is confidential and must not be discussed with anyone but the participant.
18. When the review is completed you can switch roles (if appropriate or desired) and have the participant carry out a review on you.

## **Form 1 Guide: Voluntary Peer Review Form Interpreting the Responses**

For each question/discussion item, evaluate the response of the participant or document evidence they present. Using professional judgment, record whether it is superior, adequate/competent, needs improvement or is not applicable.s

A superior evaluation means that the member is practising to higher than expected standards. An adequate/competent evaluation means that the member is practicing to standards expected from a member. If the member needs improvement on any particular question or discussion item, record it as an item requiring improvement on Form 4: Peer Review Professional Development Plan and record action(s) needed and an anticipated completion date. Check “not applicable” if the question or discussion item does not apply to the job or professional practice of the participant.

### **Guide for the Reviewer**

#### **Resolving Unprofessional Conduct**

The peer review process is separate from and unrelated to the complaint resolution process but it can be an adjudication vehicle or a negotiated settlement for a discipline matter. In the unlikely event a peer review reveals a matter of unprofessional conduct (*Foresters Act*, Section 1: Conduct Unbecoming a Member; ABCFP Bylaw 11.4.3), the reviewer can resolve the matter within the context of

the peer review process, if the matter is of a minor nature. Matters which are inappropriate to resolve within the peer review process must be reported to the registrar of the association. These types of matters are the more serious instances of conduct unbecoming a member or gross incompetence which negatively impact the broader public interest. They include such things as:

- Safety concerns;
- Potential for slope instability or landslide;
- Significant damage to other resource values (e.g. First Nation's values, fisheries, private land or downstream resources);
- Examples of continuous errors or a history of poor quality work;
- The subject member has previously been disciplined for similar actions;
- Reason to believe that the alleged action was intentional and serious;
- Reason to believe that the subject member was motivated by personal gain or received a benefit from the alleged action;
- The alleged action is of a nature such that a failure to deal with the matter in a formal, transparent and public manner would tend to bring the profession and its discipline process into disrepute; or
- Any other circumstance where you as a member believe another member is not complying with the bylaws or code of ethics<sup>2</sup>.

If the matter is not serious enough to warrant a discipline complaint and you can't resolve it during the VPR process, contact Brian Robinson, RPF, manager of professional development and member relations at [brobinson@abcfp.ca](mailto:brobinson@abcfp.ca) who may be able to help improve the participant's competence using non-discipline accountability options.

### **Form 1 Guide: Questions/Discussion Items**

The following sections provide a guide for the member conducting the peer review. Each number below correlates with the questions/discussion items in Form 1.

#### **Discussion Item #1: Professional Forestry Job Duties**

List the member's main job duties and indicate the duties which are part of the practice of professional forestry. Your discussion should concentrate on these professional forestry duties during the peer review. For RPFs, refer to the definition

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<sup>2</sup> These bullets are from an article in the March, April 2009 issue of the BC Forest Professional entitled: "What is the Duty to Report" written by Randy Trerise, RPF, the ABCFP registrar.

of the practise of professional forestry in Section 1 of the *Foresters Act* ([http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/LOC/freeside/--%20F%20--/Foresters%20Act%20SBC%202003%20c.%2019/00\\_03019\\_01.xml](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/LOC/freeside/--%20F%20--/Foresters%20Act%20SBC%202003%20c.%2019/00_03019_01.xml)).

For RFTs or associate members refer to the appropriate guideline for their scope of practice ([http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating\\_the\\_profession/guidelines.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/regulating_the_profession/guidelines.asp)).

#### **Question #2: Practising within Authorized Scope of Practice**

Based on the information from discussion item #1, determine if the participant is practising within his/ her authorized scope of practice as enabled by the *Foresters Act* or scope of practice guideline (council resolution). If the participant is carrying out duties which are outside his or her authorized scope of practice, he or she must be carrying out these duties under the supervision of an appropriate registered member who has both the authority and competence to complete these duties. (Refer to Sections 2 and 20 of the *Foresters Act*.)

#### **Question #3: Self-Assessment Form on File**

Registered members and special permit holders must produce their completed self-assessments. If they are unable to produce their completed self-assessment forms for the past three years, this must be reported to the ABCFP . Use Form 3 to evaluate the self-assessment of the participant.

#### **Question #4: Self-Assessment Professional Development Plans**

As a follow up to each self-assessment declaration, members must complete a professional development plan that identifies areas requiring improvement from their self-assessment. The professional development plan does not need to be completed using the ABCFP form. It can be a part of the member's employee development plan or performance assessment.

Registered members and special permit holders must produce their completed professional development plans, if improvement was needed for any items in the self-assessment, for the past three years to demonstrate that this aspect of their self-assessment has been completed. If they are unable to produce their completed professional development plan, this must be reported to the ABCFP<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Question #5: Professional Development Plan Review**

Use Form 3 to evaluate the professional development plan of the participant.

#### **Question #6: Certificate of Registration**

Bylaw 8.2 states that registered members must prominently display their Certificate of Registration at their offices or other places of business.

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<sup>3</sup> Report to Brian Robinson, manager of professional development and member relations at [brobinson@abcfp.ca](mailto:brobinson@abcfp.ca)

A general reference to help answer the rest of the questions is the ABCFP workshop: Professional Ethics and Obligations. This workshop is offered online at [http://www.abcfp.ca/practice\\_development/continuing\\_education/workshops.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_education/workshops.asp).

#### **Question #7: Advocacy**

a) and b) Stewardship advocacy and knowledge extension can be demonstrated in many forms such as: participation in Networks of Forest Professionals, internal communication, making enquiries, writing articles and letters, public speaking or giving presentations, community or committee involvement and bringing matters to the attention of the appropriate parties. **References:** Bylaws 11.3.1 and 11.3.6.

#### **Question # 8: Professional Independence**

References: Bylaws 11.3.2 and 12.3.1, and Professional Independence and the ABCFP Member guidance paper.

a) Does the participant feel that he/she could resolve this type of conflict without assistance by raising and discussing the matter with his or her employer or client, or consulting with a peer or supervisor? Would the member need advice or help from the ABCFP or advice from the ABCFP Practice Advisory Service? More extreme measures could involve advocating for change, withdrawing services, or refusing to endorse or facilitate the situation.

b) Is the participant (if he or she has management responsibilities) confident that he or she can exercise management prerogative without being in conflict to professional principles? Industry or consultant managers have management prerogative to make decisions supporting the well being of their company. Members, clients and employers must understand that while forest professionals have certain obligations as employees or consultants, they are independent from their employer or client. This is the cornerstone of professionalism. Reconciling professional and employer/client conflicts may be even more difficult when a member's relationship with his/her employer or client extends to a management level. In any event, mutually agreeable resolution mechanisms should be explored and if not successful, the matter may be resolved through alternate dispute resolution or referred to appropriate regulatory bodies for resolution.

c) To demonstrate independence, participants should have provided truthful and accurate statements and not suppressed information or misrepresented the facts to bolster his or her opinion. They should have declared the interest for who they represent, avoided discrediting other people, stated the negative and positive aspects or outcomes and demonstrated having adequate experience and knowledge to provide the opinion. This question is related to the professional integrity questions and there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaws 11.3.6, 11.3.8, 11.3.9, 11.4.4 and 11.4.7; Standards of Professional Practice

(Bylaw 12) ; pages 3 and 4 of the *Professional Independence and the ABCFP Member* document.

d) In addition to independence from a client or employer, members must also demonstrate independence from special interest groups, majority groups and self-interest or bias. As well, members must give 'independent consideration' while exercising professional judgment to make decisions. This question is related to the first stewardship question and there may be some overlap.

**Reference:** pages 3 and 4 of the *Professional Independence and the ABCFP Member* document.

#### **Question # 9: Professional Integrity**

a) Did the participant suggest: verifying the facts, consult with knowledgeable peers, resolve the matter with the offending member, utilize the ABCFP practice advisory service, contact the ABCFP about his or her concerns about the member in question or submit a complaint in writing to the ABCFP? This question is related to the second stewardship question so there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaw 11.4.3.

b) The participant must know that information received from a client or employer is confidential unless such information is in the public domain. Confidential or proprietary information can only be disclosed to others or used by the member with consent from the client, employer or appropriate party, if it is required by law, or it is necessary as a defense against assertions of unprofessional conduct brought by his/her regulatory body. However, technical knowledge gained by a member through work experience may be used in subsequent projects without consent from other parties. Is confidential information stored in a secure manner? **Reference:** Bylaw 11.5.2.

c) A conflict of interest exists when there is, or is a perception, that the duty or loyalty owed by a member to one party, is, or is likely to become, adverse to the duty and loyalty which the member owes to another party. Did the participant suggest declining the assignment or informing all appropriate parties of the conflict or potential conflict to resolve or avoid the issue? **Reference:** Bylaw 11.5.6.

d) The intent of the question to consulting members is to determine if charges for services rendered are calculated in a fair manner based on scope of work and level of service and experience. The participant does not need to supply detailed information, such as formulae, because this may be proprietary information. Refer to the *Code of Ethics: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (under Bylaw 11.5.7). **Reference:** Bylaw 11.5.7.

e) It is acceptable for you to provide your professional opinion concerning professional work for which another member is professionally accountable? It is unacceptable to impose this professional opinion, unless you are exercising management prerogative within the limits of professional principles? Peer reviewers must have respectful regard for other professional's education and experience. In order to carry out a reasonable assessment of work, a member should:

- practise due diligence when accepting or incorporating work of others;
- apply an amount of professional reliance based on risks, uncertainties and potential implications and the knowledge and experience of the professional being relied upon in providing judgments consistent with requirements. Is it reasonable to accept the person, the product or both?
- ensure the work is free of errors and omissions, complete, correct and clear and see if anybody else has reviewed the work;
- ensure the work is scientifically and technically sound;
- ensure the work meets required tests and/or objectives;
- ensure the work is good stewardship of forest land based on sound ecological principles as per ABCFP Code of Ethics, Standards of Professional Practice and Stewardship Principles guidance paper (soon to be released); and
- if the work is innovative (different from the norm or an alternative), check to see if: a rationale is provided, the innovative work is backed up by previous monitoring, there is a future monitoring plan to test credibility/validity and recommend improvement and there is an assessment of risk and a description of how higher risk activities will be managed. **Reference:** ABCFP workshop titled, *Professional Reliance: Is it Working? How it Should Work?*

f) To resolve differences of opinion, the member should try to understand and respect the other party's opinion; use professional integrity and independence to build their case or position; use respectful regard to ask questions about the other party's opinion and engage in amicable dialogue to ensure a mutual learning experience; use independent data sources to support their opinion; mutually agree on an independent third party to resolve the issue; be open-minded; work together and share information to find a solution; abstain from undignified public communication with another member and; avoid criticizing the work of other members or attempting to injure the professional reputation or business of another member. This question is related to the third professional independence question so there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaws 11.6.1, 11.6.2.

g) Refer to the ABCFP *Articling Policy*. **Other References:** Bylaws 6.3.1, 6.4.1, 11.6.3.

#### **Question # 10: Professional Competence**

a) The participant should be able to describe actions and activities used to keep up to date with her/his field of practice, continually improving practices and share knowledge and experience with others. This question is related to various due diligence questions so there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaws 12.2.1, 11.3.5, 11.3.7, 11.3.9, 11.4.6; Certificate of Professional Development application; ABCFP Self-Assessment Form statements 1 to 7.

b) Refer to the *Code of Ethics: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (under Bylaw 11.3.5).

c) Refer to the *Code of Ethics: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (under Bylaw 11.6.5).

d) There are no requirements for how a member should keep a record of his or her professional development. For example, it can be recorded on a list/spreadsheet or be a file of registration receipts. It is important to check if the record of professional development is accurate and kept up to date. If the participant does not keep a record of professional development, the reviewer should make this recommendation in the peer review professional development plan. As an option, the participant can record his or her professional development activities using the ABCFP Voluntary Certificate of Professional Development application ([http://www.abcfp.ca/practice\\_development/continuing\\_education/professional\\_development.asp](http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_education/professional_development.asp)). **Reference:** ABCFP Self-Assessment Form and Guide statement 2.

- Refer to the *Standards of Professional Practice: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (under Bylaw 12.2.2).
- With regards to practicing outside his/her area of experience and expertise, some options for the participant are: a) decline the assignment, b) acquire the knowledge if it is possible to do so without undue delay or expense to the client or employer, or c) consult with appropriate specialists. **Reference:** Bylaws 12.2.1, 11.3.5, 11.3.7, 11.3.9, 11.4.6.
- Refer to the *Code of Ethics: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (Bylaw 11.6.3).

#### **Question # 11: Signing and Sealing**

Participants must sign and seal or stamp all professional documents prepared by them or prepared under their supervision as per Bylaw 10.1 to 10.5. Associate members do not have to sign and seal/stamp their work because they are not

authorized to independently practise professional forestry.

If some or all of the work is carried out by someone else, they must add the required certification statements as per Bylaws 10.6.1 and 10.6.2. Make sure the participant knows the difference between the two certification statements.

As per Bylaw 10.7, a signature and stamp or seal may be affixed to professional documents in electronic format only in accordance with policies and procedures developed by the association. Unfortunately there is no policy or procedure in place to provide direction for electronic signing and sealing/stamping. At a minimum, the participant must include his or her professional designation with his or her e-mail signature when submitting professional work.

#### **Question # 12: Due Diligence**

a) The participant should be personally familiar with all relevant characteristics of the work circumstance or area affected by the work if relying on someone else, or, it is acceptable to rely on someone else's expertise if the other person is qualified and competent to give that advice, acted in an independent manner, and the advice made sense based on the member's own personal knowledge. This question has overlap with question 9e. **References:** Bylaw 12.5.1; 11.5.4; Self-Assessment Form and Guide statement 20.

b) Refer to Bylaws 11.5.3 and 12.5.1 and the Self-Assessment Form statement 17.

c) Regarding assessing risk, the participant should use and document a methodology for assessing and managing risks (function of the severity of the hazard of an activity and the magnitude of potential consequences or impacts associated with that activity) for important job activities. **References:** Bylaws 11.5.1, 12.2.3.

d) Old diaries and phone logs should be appropriately stored for at least six years and a professional diary should include:

- daily dated notations;
- description, date and time of significant activities, findings or events;
- rationales to support important decisions or reference to where rationales can be found; and
- for consultants: a record of date, time and a description of consulting activities which will be charged to a client.

A phone log should record date, time and details of relevant phone conversations.

**Reference:** Bylaw 12.5.1 and Self-Assessment Form and Guide statement 16.

e) With regards to ensuring the desired outcome, the participant could use various tools such as checklists, policies, best management practices, forms/templates, environmental management systems, flow charts or standard operating procedures, through which it can be demonstrated that all appropriate procedures were followed to ensure no relevant steps or considerations were missed while implementing various activities. **Reference:** Bylaw 12.5.1.

f) Does the participant:

- have easy access to various files;
- have a system to track changes to documents over time;
- have a secure computer so he/she is the only one who can make changes to his/her professional work documents;
- have confidence that he/she would have access to documents if he or she no longer worked for her or his employer (this is in case the member would need to defend him or herself against a professional misconduct charge);
- have filed and cross-referenced ancillary documents such as e-mail, file notes, field maps, notes on ortho-photos, field notes or instructions;
- have backup files off site in case of fire or flood; and
- retain files for the length of time indicated in the Self-Assessment Guide statement 15. **Reference:** Bylaw 12.5.1 and Self-Assessment Form and Guide statement 15.

g) Does the participant have an adequate system to record and track issues that need to be resolved as they arise? Does the system allow issues to be recorded and tracked both in the office and in the field? Are tasks arising from these issues completed on time?

h) Self-explanatory. This question is related to previous due diligence questions so there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaw 12.5.1

### **Question # 13: Stewardship**

a) Refer to the *Standards of Professional Practice: Guidelines for Interpretation* document (under Bylaw 12.6.1) and the *ABCFP Stewardship Principles* guidance paper (soon to be released).

b) Following are steps a member should take if they become aware of any practices which are detrimental to good stewardship of forest land and are related to another member's practice. In sequence:

- verify facts;
- consult with knowledgeable peers;
- resolve the matter with the offending party; and
- use the ABCFP Practice Advisory Service, contact the ABCFP with concerns about the stewardship practice or submit a complaint in writing to the ABCFP. This question is related to the first professional integrity question so there may be some overlap. **Reference:** Bylaw 11.3.4.

c. With respect to how the member is keeping informed, assessing practices, developing options, monitoring, participating in, and advocating when managing species at risk, refer to the ABCFP publication, *Managing Species at Risk in British Columbia - Guidance for Resource Professionals*.

#### **Question # 14: Safety**

Refer to guidelines for interpretation for Bylaws 11.3.10 and 12.7.1; Self-assessment Form and Guide statement 19.

#### **Question # 15: Other Professional Issues**

This is an opportunity for both you and the participant to discuss and resolve any other issues.

## **Form 2 Guide: Combining a Peer Review with another Type of Previously Completed Review**

If a peer review is using information or results from another type of previously completed review (e.g. audits, internal assessments, performance reviews or operational plan reviews) the reviewer must complete the following on Form 2 before starting the review:

- a description of the other review;
- the date the other review was completed;
- the methodology of how the other review was combined with the peer review; and
- signed authorization, by an appropriate party, that information or results from another type of previously completed review can be used for the purpose of carrying out a peer review.

## Form 3 Guide: Peer Review Self-Assessment and Professional Development Plan Evaluation

This form is not applicable if the participant did not complete a self-assessment because he or she completed a non-practice declaration at the time of the last membership renewal.

If the participant completed a self-assessment, the peer reviewer must use Form 3 to:

a) Verify that the participant has completed self-assessments on an annual basis for the past three years or however long the participant was required to complete a self-assessment; and

b) If the participant had “improvement needed” items in his or her self-assessment, verify the participant as having implemented his/her self-assessment professional development plan for the past three years. For each item requiring action, check to see if appropriate action(s) was taken by the anticipated completion date and document the following on Form 3: Peer Review Self-Assessment and Professional Development Plan Evaluation.

- If action was taken towards professional development, record the documented evidence supporting that action. If an action is recorded as being completed on a certain date, discuss with the member exactly what was done and if there is documentation (such as receipt for attending a course).
- If actions were not taken by the anticipated completion date, look for documented reasons why that part of the professional development plan was not achieved. If there is no documented reason, record this finding and include it as an action item on Form 4: Peer Review Professional Development Plan.

## Form 4 Guide: Peer Review Professional Development Plan

The peer reviewer must complete the Peer Review Professional Development Plan in discussion with the participant. The following describes how to complete Form 4.

- List the items requiring improvement.
- Describe the action required to achieve improvement. Include what needs to be completed and how it will be completed, and, if appropriate, include who will help the participant achieve the required action. Consult the participant to ensure these recommendations are realistic.
- In consultation with the participant, record the anticipated completion date for each improvement item.
- Participants will record when each improvement item is completed and review this as part of their annual self-assessment.

## Form 5 Guide: Peer Review Declaration of Completion

After the peer review is completed, the peer reviewer's final task is to complete and submit Form 5, a signed and sealed/stamped declaration by both the participant and the peer reviewer that an independent peer review was completed to the approved standards of this guide without conflict of interest.

This declaration must then be mailed to the ABCFP office as evidence that the VPR has been completed.

Attention: Voluntary Peer Review  
330-321 Water Street  
Vancouver, BC V6B 1B8

It can also be scanned and e-mailed to [info@abcfp.ca](mailto:info@abcfp.ca).



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