



Department of
Building and Housing
Te Tari Kaupapa Whare

BCA Accreditation Regulation 17 Quality Assurance System Guidance

October 2008



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Disclaimer

This Guide is published by the Department of Building and Housing as guidance information only.

Organisations are not bound to follow any of the Department's suggested guidance. The Guide is intended as a resource for organisations to consider when they prepare for their accreditation assessment as building consent authorities under the Building Act 2004.

For clarity, parts of this Guide reference requirements in the Building Act 2004 and regulations made under this Act. While this is clearly referenced, readers should always use the source legislation.

Introduction

Regulation 17 of the Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006 sets out the quality assurance requirements that building consent authorities must have implemented and be successfully accredited against before 1 December 2010. As well as meeting the requirements of regulation 17, building consent authorities need to continue to demonstrate ongoing compliance with regulations 5–16 of the regulations.

The quality assurance system required by regulation 17 should help a building consent authority show ongoing compliance and establish a practice and culture of continuous improvement, as it provides the management framework and a number of the disciplines required.

Purpose of the guidance material

The Department has worked closely with International Accreditation New Zealand to develop the following interpretation of regulation 17. This material represents the shared understanding between International Accreditation New Zealand and the Department of Building and Housing of the requirements of regulation 17 of the Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006.

Before assessment, building consent authorities' quality assurance system must be documented and implemented effectively. All accredited building consent authorities need to meet these standards and criteria before 1 December 2010.

Content of the guide

The guide has been developed to provide organisations that are developing and implementing systems, policies and processes to achieve the requirements of regulation 17 with:

- generic quality assurance guidance that can be used by building consent authorities of all sizes and configurations
- information to assist organisations to make informed decisions about the work that needs to be done to meet the standards and criteria set out in regulation 17.

While the following guidelines have been generally set out as numbered in the regulations, it is important to recognise that a quality assurance system could also be organised by topic. It is also important to consider how the new requirements will integrate with the existing policies and procedures created to meet the first set of standards and criteria (regulations 5–16).

For example, the procedures relating to internal audit required by regulation 17 and the enquiries and complaints system required by regulation 7 may form part of the overall continuous improvement system.

As well as demonstrating effective implementation (as required by regulation 6), audit and process review records generated by the internal audit system could also be used as evidence in an individual's competency record (regulation 10), to identify training needs (regulation 11) and to demonstrate the allocation of work system (regulations 7 and 9) is effective.

The organisation of the system by topics or themes also encourages a BCA to think about the linkages to existing parts of the system, and makes the system more accessible and user-friendly to staff and contractors.

Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006, regulation 17 guidance

REGULATION 17(1)

A building consent authority must have a system for assuring the quality of its performance of its building control functions.

GUIDANCE

- IANZ will accept any system that can be demonstrated (by records (ref 17(2)(m)) and documented outcomes) to be capable of delivering all of the requirements of regulations 5–17.
- IANZ will accept the use of systems currently implemented in councils (eg, ISO 9001, ISO 17020 and ISO 14001 systems), but will still have to assess their effectiveness in meeting building consent authority accreditation regulation requirements. This means your existing system will still be audited for compliance against regulations 5–17.
- If the system comprises components from existing territorial authority systems, there must be an over-arching reference document describing where each of the requirements of regulation 17 can be found.
- If the building consent authority does not have overall control of an organisational-wide quality assurance system, there must be arrangements in place for the building consent authority to be consulted before any changes are made to systems that are required for compliance with the building consent authority accreditation regulations.

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

(a) the policies, procedures, and systems described in regulations 5 to 16;

GUIDANCE

- Documented systems must cover all requirements of regulations 5–16, and the policies, procedures and systems described in regulation 17.
- The building consent authority must be able to demonstrate, and provide evidence of, effective implementation (such as records of internal audits, process reviews and quality improvement initiatives, completed continuous improvements, and management review meeting minutes) and that all documented systems work effectively (ie, delivering the required outcomes).

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

(b) the policy on quality;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement and most building consent authorities will not have covered this in meeting regulations 5–16.
- A quality policy is a short statement of intent that demonstrates senior management commitment to the quality assurance system. A quality policy should include high level measurable objectives. These provide a framework for establishing the effectiveness of the quality assurance system.
- The quality policy should include a commitment such as to providing all necessary resources to support effective implementation of policies, procedures and systems to fulfil all statutory duties under the Building Act 2004 and the Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006.
- The quality policy must be appropriate for the organisation and will be assessed in terms of regulation 5(b) (fitness for purpose).
- The effectiveness of these policies will be assessed as part of the management review under regulation 17(5).

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

(c) the procedure for ensuring that the building consent authority operates within its scope of accreditation;

GUIDANCE

- No documented systems should be needed explicitly to meet 17(2)(c) for either territorial authority or regional authority building consent authorities.
- This is because for regional authorities and private building consent authorities these requirements should be met by the existing systems covering regulation 8 – Ensuring enough employees and contractors, regulation 9 – Allocation of work to competent employees or contractors, regulation 10 – Establishing and assessing the competence of employees and regulation 12 – Choosing and using contractors. Territorial authority building consent authorities are required to cover the full scope of work.
- If IANZ finds evidence of staff or contractors performing work outside of their assessed technical competence, CARs will not be raised against regulation 17(2)(c), but are likely to be raised against regulations 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Note: 17(2)(d) the procedure for the BCA's management to review the authority's performance is covered under regulation 17(5) below.

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

(e) the procedure for continuous improvement in the performance of the building consent authority's functions;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement not covered in regulations 5–16.
- Continuous improvement relates to the improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes an organisation undertakes.
- It provides a disciplined mechanism for addressing short-term corrective actions, long-term preventative actions and innovative improvements.
- Procedures intended to meet this regulation may be separate or be incorporated into procedures intended to meet regulations 5–16.
- All systems considered to contribute to meeting this regulation (eg, internal audits, process review, enquiries and complaints) should create records.
- A continuous improvement record should include the following minimum information.
 - A description of the issue
 - Outcome of an investigation of the facts and implications of the issue (when appropriate)
 - Immediate action to be taken (when appropriate)
 - Action to be taken to prevent recurrence of the issue (when appropriate)
 - Allocation of responsibility for action
 - Target date for action to be completed
 - Monitoring of action against target date
 - Review of effectiveness of action taken (may be part of systems under regulations 17(2)(5) and/or 17(2)(d))
- IANZ will assess systems and procedures for regulation 17(2)(e) against regulations 5(a) (written or electronic) and 5(b) (appropriate for their purposes).
- IANZ will accept any system that meets the requirements detailed above and that can be demonstrated to be effective in generating continuous improvements.

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

(f) the procedure for managing the provision of human resources;

GUIDANCE

- If an accreditation assessment concludes that the requirements of regulation 8 – Ensuring enough employees and contractors, regulation 10 – Establishing and assessing competence of employees, regulation 11 – Training employees, regulation 13 – Ensuring technical leadership and regulation 15 – Keeping organisational records have been met, then regulation 17(2)(f) will also be considered to be met without further assessment.
- No documentation, in addition to that required to meet regulations 8, 10, 11, 13 and 15, will be required to meet regulation 17(2)(f) as long as these systems are working effectively.

REGULATION 17(2)

The quality assurance system must cover the following:

- (g) the procedure for ensuring that the necessary technical and administrative information, facilities, and equipment –
 - (i) are available; and
 - (ii) are appropriate; and
 - (iii) remain fit for their purposes;

GUIDANCE

- If an accreditation assessment concludes that the requirements of regulation 14 – Ensuring necessary resources are being met, then regulation 17(2)(g) will also be considered to have been met without further assessment.
- No documentation, in addition to that required to meet regulation 14, will be required to meet regulation 17(2)(g).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- (h) the procedure for ensuring that an internal audit of every building control function occurs within 12 months of the completion of the last internal audit of the function;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement not fully covered in regulations 5–16.
- The requirements of this regulation should also be understood in association with regulation 6(b), (c) and (d).
- Internal audits or process reviews are intended to determine:
 - whether or not documented systems comply with relevant specifications (regulations etc)
 - the degree to which a documented system is being implemented as intended
 - the degree to which a documented system is delivering the desired outcomes.
- Internal audits and process review records may also be used as evidence of effective implementation of other processes such as competency assessments, training needs assessment, and appropriate allocation of work to staff.
- Internal audits of technical building control functions (covered by regulation 7 – Performing building control functions) should be carried out at least annually.
- These audits should include witnessing of work being performed by a representative range of building consent authority staff.
- Audits should include a technical review of completed consent files.
- The auditor must be technically competent to perform the task being reviewed.
- Process reviews are a type of non-technical internal audit and are carried out on supporting management and quality assurance procedures (regulations 8–17). Process reviews can be used to demonstrate that such policies/procedures are being effectively implemented.
- Persons undertaking such internal audits and process reviews must be:
 - able to demonstrate effective audit or process review skills
 - independent (ie, should not audit their own work).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- (h) the procedure for ensuring that an internal audit of every building control function occurs within 12 months of the completion of the last internal audit of the function;

GUIDANCE (continued)

- Audit and process review records must include at least:
 - the scope of the audit or review
 - the date(s) of the audit or review
 - the name of the auditor(s) or reviewer(s)
 - details of what was observed (such as building consent file numbers, check sheets and forms, training records, competency assessment reports that were reviewed/checked
 - the reasons for the decisions
 - details of conclusions arising from the audit or review
 - details of any improvement opportunities arising from the audit or review (see regulation 17(2)(e) for details).
- Internal audits and process reviews form part of the continuous improvement system required by regulation 17(2)(e).

Note: An audit or review cannot be considered effective if issues arising are not effectively addressed and recorded as per regulation 6(b), (c) and (d).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- (i) the procedure for identifying and managing conflicts of interest;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement not covered in regulations 5–16.
- The intent of this regulation is to ensure the reliability and independence of building control processes by identifying, recording and managing any potential or actual conflicts of interest.
- Conflicts of interest may include having a financial, commercial or personal interest in a piece of work, or being subject to inducements, coercion or threats from within the building consent, territorial or regional authority such as political pressure or from external parties.
- Procedures are required for the:
 - identification and disclosure of potential conflicts of interest
 - management of potential or actual pressure, inducements or threats from within the territorial authority
 - management of potential or actual external pressure, inducements or threats.
- Procedures must include a definition of the records to be kept and records must include the outcome of any actual incidents, see regulation 6(b), (c) and (d).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

(j) the procedure for communicating with internal and external persons;

GUIDANCE (further clarification)

- This is a new requirement in part and is unlikely to have been fully covered in existing procedures to meet regulations 5–16. The procedure should incorporate the existing systems required by regulation 7(2)(a), (g) and (h).
- This procedure must describe what, how and how frequently internal and external communications take place, and who is responsible for them. This could be described in a simple table.
- Different methods of communicating information are needed as appropriate to the internal/external audience.
- Some information may need to be communicated in more than one way (for example, not every member of the public has access to the internet and so hard copy front counter material may also be required).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

(k) the procedure for document control;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement not fully covered in regulations 5–16.
- The intent of this regulation is to develop a more disciplined approach to managing documents the building consent authority creates and uses. This ensures everyone has access to the current versions of documented policies, procedures and forms, and can identify any changes made to these.
- This regulation should also be read in conjunction with the existing requirements of regulation 14 (management of technical library).
- Documents include any information in any format or medium that defines how something is managed, performed, recorded or reported. This includes all relevant reference material, statutes, regulations, standards, policies, procedures, systems and forms. It may also include critical software and suppliers' literature.
- A document control system must include a system for ensuring that every current document is:
 - appropriately authorised (by the person managing the quality assurance system)
 - uniquely identified (ie, has a unique and traceable building consent number)
 - available at all relevant places and to all relevant persons
 - disseminated to all relevant locations in a timely manner.
- Changes to documents must all be:
 - appropriately authorised, and
 - appropriately identified (what has changed).
- Superseded documents must be:
 - clearly marked to indicate superseded status (there is a later version)
 - if withdrawn from use, archived (at least one copy) for a defined period (eg, two years, to ensure it is available at the subsequent accreditation assessment).

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

(l) the procedure for contract management;

GUIDANCE

- If a building consent authority continues to meet the requirements for regulation 12 – Choosing and using contractors, then regulation 17(2)(l) will also be met.
- This regulation does not require any documentation in addition to that required for regulation 12 as long as the system for regulation 12 is working effectively.

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

(m) the procedure for record-keeping;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement in part. Building consent authorities are unlikely to have fully covered this with their work to meet regulations 5–16. These requirements should also be read in conjunction with the existing requirements of regulation 16 – Filing applications for building consents.
- Records relate to specific events in time and include completed forms, checklists, reports, certificates, photographs, inspection or file notes, sound recordings etc, in any form including written and electronic.
- A record-keeping system must include all of the following.
 - Systems required for keeping records under regulation 16
 - Identification of records produced by the documented systems for regulations 5–15
 - Identification of what is relevant information
 - Description of how relevant information is to be recorded
 - Procedures to ensure the security of information
 - Procedures to ensure the integrity of information
 - Procedures to ensure information is accessible
 - Procedures to ensure information is retrievable
- IANZ will assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of these procedures in line with regulation 5(a) and (b).

Note: Regulation 17(2)(n) the procedure for the BCAs management to review the effectiveness of the authority's quality assurance system is covered under regulation 17(5) below.

REGULATION 17(3) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST RECORD WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING ITS QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM.

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement. Building consent authorities are unlikely to have fully covered this with their work to meet regulations 5–16. This regulation should be read in conjunction with the existing requirements of regulation 15 – Keeping organisational records.
- There must be a named **person** or **persons** who is/are responsible for the effective operation and maintenance of the quality assurance system (eg, quality assurance coordinator or quality assurance manager).

REGULATION 17(3) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST RECORD WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING ITS QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM.

GUIDANCE (continued)

- The people filling this role must be accessible whenever reasonably required by building consent authority staff to take responsibility for quality assurance system issues and to exercise authority as appropriate.
- People filling this role may be employees or contractors and may be full time or part time.
- They must have the authority to make appropriate changes, and this authority must be recorded along with their roles and responsibilities.
- They must have access to a level of management which has the ability to effect change (eg, General Manager, CEO or Managing Director).
- If more than one quality assurance coordinator/manager is named, the system must clearly define each individual's scope of responsibilities and ensure that all responsibilities are allocated.
- Contractors appointed as quality assurance coordinators or quality assurance managers could work across a number of building consent authorities (the Department encourages this model).

REGULATION 17(4) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST HAVE A SYSTEM FOR ENSURING THAT—

- (a) its employees comply with the authority's quality assurance system; and
- (b) its contractors comply with—
 - (i) the authority's quality assurance system; or
 - (ii) the contractor's quality assurance system.

GUIDANCE

Regulation 17(4)(a)

- This is a new requirement. Building consent authorities are unlikely to have fully covered this with their work to meet regulations 5–16.

Employees

- The building consent authority must have a system to show that its employees are adhering to the building consent authority's quality assurance system.
- This could be achieved via a range of mechanisms including, but not limited to:
 - sound induction processes
 - internal audits
 - process reviews
 - peer reviews
 - performance reviews
 - training records.
- Most of these requirements should be met by existing systems covering regulation 6 – Building consent authority's observance of policies, procedures, and systems, regulation 9 – Allocating work to competent employees or contractors, regulation 10 – Establishing and assessing competence of employees, regulation 11 – Training employees and regulation 13 – Ensuring technical leadership in accredited Building Consent Authorities.

REGULATION 17(4) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST HAVE A SYSTEM FOR ENSURING THAT—

- (a) its employees comply with the authority's quality assurance system; and
- (b) its contractors comply with—
 - (i) the authority's quality assurance system; or
 - (ii) the contractor's quality assurance system.

GUIDANCE (continued)

Regulation 17(4)(b)

Contractors

- For contractors, building consent authorities must choose between the options represented by clauses 17(4)(b)(i) and 17(4)(b)(ii).
- If the building consent authority chooses to use clause 17(4)(b)(i) for a contractor, that contractor must be treated as an employee for the purposes of the regulations and is to have similar records to employees.
- If the building consent authority chooses the clause 17(4)(b)(ii) for a contractor, then the building consent authority must have procedures in place to:
 - define what quality assurance is required of the contractor. (This could range from some simple quality performance requirements in a contract for small, low-risk pieces of work, through to requiring a certified or accredited quality management system for large, multi-disciplined pieces of work.)
 - monitor compliance with the quality assurance requirements specified for that contractor
 - define the actions to be taken if the contractor does not meet defined quality assurance requirements
 - define the records to be kept to demonstrate that quality assurance requirements have been met or appropriate actions have been taken.

Note: these requirements could form part of the existing procedures required for regulation 12 – Contractor evaluation system.

REGULATION 17(5) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST HAVE A SYSTEM FOR PERIODICALLY—

- (a) reviewing its quality assurance system; and
- (b) making appropriate changes in the quality assurance system.

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement not covered in regulations 5–16.
- This regulation needs to be read in conjunction with regulation 17(2)(d) and (n).
- For a building consent authority to meet this regulation, IANZ will expect to see documentation that defines the system for reviewing the building consent authority's quality assurance system and making appropriate changes to the quality assurance system.
- Elements of the system should include procedures for:
 - continuous improvements 17(2)(e)
 - operational management reviews (eg, monthly) 17(2)(d)
 - internal audits 17(2)(h)
 - annual strategic management reviews 17(2)(n).

REGULATION 17(5) A BUILDING CONSENT AUTHORITY MUST HAVE A SYSTEM FOR PERIODICALLY—

- (a) reviewing its quality assurance system; and
- (b) making appropriate changes in the quality assurance system.

GUIDANCE (continued)

- The two types of management reviews, operational review 17(2)(d) and annual strategic review 17(2)(n), are intended to take place at differing frequencies.
- The review procedures should include:
 - the frequency of each type of review of the quality assurance management system
 - the purpose and methodology of each review
 - the records to be kept of each review, including records of the actions required as outcomes of these reviews
 - how actions are to be monitored.

Additional detail on the requirements for each type of review is included under regulation 17(2)(d) and (n) below.

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- (d) the procedure for the building consent authority's management to review the authority's performance;

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement.
- Regulation 17(2)(d) is understood to be part of the review system required by regulation 17(5).
- Regulation 17(2)(d) is intended to cover relatively short-term, operational review activities (eg, monthly).
- Procedures are required to define what operational review activities are to be carried out in the short term to ensure outputs are appropriate, reliable and timely.
- Procedures must define the frequency of these activities, the records to be kept and the actions to be taken if unsatisfactory performance is identified.
- Items to consider in the operational management reviews include, but are not limited to the:
 - effectiveness of actions arising from previous management reviews
 - review actions from internal audit and external assessment findings
 - building consent authorities' progress against statutory timeframes and performance (key performance indicators (KPIs))
 - analysis of appeals/compliments/complaints to determine common causes or trends
 - other changes related to scope or volume of building control work, industry practices, system controls, legislation, or training requirements.

REGULATION 17(2) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING:

- (n) the procedure for the building consent authority's management to review the effectiveness of the authority's quality assurance system.

GUIDANCE

- This is a new requirement. Building consent authorities are unlikely to have fully covered this with their work to meet regulations 5–16.
- Regulation 17(2)(n) is understood to be part of the review system required by regulation 17(5).
- To meet regulation 17(2)(n) – The annual strategic management review, a building consent authority must have documented processes that define:
 - the frequency of scheduled strategic reviews of the quality assurance management system
 - circumstances that could trigger an unscheduled strategic review.
 - the types of data that will be reviewed
 - records to be kept of strategic reviews, including decisions and conclusions
 - the procedure for recording action plans, if required
 - the procedure for monitoring the implementation of agreed action plans.
- Items to consider at the annual strategic review could include:
 - achievement of quality objectives and whether these need to be reviewed or updated
 - review internal and external audit trends and identify changes to system
 - review changes in organisational structure, responsibilities and authorities in response to changes in building volumes, scope or legislative change.
- IANZ will assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of these procedures in line with regulations 5 and 6.

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