

## External Contract Review Option: Summary of Fees and Time Schedule

Before a site investigation report, remediation plan, or confirmation of remediation report is approved by the ministry, it must be carefully reviewed through one of three options:

**Option 1:** Review by approved professionals

**Option 2:** Review by external contract reviewers

**Option 3:** Review by ministry staff

This fact sheet describes option 2 by which, under the provisions of the *Environmental Management Act* and Contaminated Sites Regulation, the ministry may contract out report reviews to qualified external consultants. The third option, review by the ministry directly, is generally reserved for high-risk sites and sites where risk-based standards are used.

### Why choose an external contract review?

Hiring external contract reviewers ensures a property owner that a report will be reviewed within a fixed timeline. Timely reviews reduce the costs of seeking ministry approvals.

### New submission process

Effective November 1, 2004, all applications for services involving low- to moderate-risk sites must now be submitted to the ministry from approved professionals acting on a client's behalf. This means that the number of cases where a client can request an external contract review is now quite limited, as described in section 10 (2) of the Regulation and the ministry's Protocol 6: "Eligibility of

Applications for Review by Approved Professionals."

### What submissions are now eligible?

External contract reviewers may review preliminary and detailed site investigation reports, remediation plans, risk assessments, and confirmation of remediation reports for sites that are not low to moderate risk.

An external contract review may be requested for sites using numerical (substance concentrations) standards only if:

- the submission relies on local background estimates for soil not derived from regional background soil estimates (see Protocol 4: "Determining Background Soil Quality"); or
- the site will not meet applicable numerical remediation standards within five years of the issuance of an Approval in Principle.

For sites being cleaned up to risk-based standards, an external contract review may be requested for any remediation plan and human health or environmental risk assessment. These applications are subject to the availability of professionals under contract to the ministry for this type of work. Currently the ministry has no such contracts.

### Who are the external contract reviewers?

External contract reviewers are individuals from environmental consulting firms selected following a rigorous qualification process. They are all approved professionals.

### **Applying for an external contract review**

If you wish to apply for an external contract review, check the appropriate box in Part C of the Contaminated Sites Services application form. The ministry will assign an external contract review team on a rotational basis. The external contract reviewers will have two days to confirm acceptance of the assignment.

Upon acceptance, ministry staff will sign off the application form and fax it to you. You must then submit a copy of your reports for review to the external contract review team.

### **How much does it cost?**

Fees for these reviews vary according to the type of report to be reviewed and the complexity of the contamination. The fees are specified in sections 9 and 10 and Schedule 3 of the Regulation and in the contracts the ministry has with the reviewers.

Current fees provided to the external contract reviewers are shown in Table A (attached) to this fact sheet. In addition to the fee charged for the external contract review team, 50% of the normal ministry fee is levied. These are shown in Table B (attached).

The total fees payable for a site, apart from resubmission fees, are summarized in Table C (attached).

### **Fees for resubmissions**

If an external contract reviewer finds that a report is incorrect or incomplete, he or she will advise the ministry, and the person requesting the service may submit a completed or corrected report for another review. If corrected or completed reports are submitted, a resubmission fee for the additional review by the external contract reviewer, plus 50% of the fee paid to the ministry specified in Table B, will be applied.

Under the ministry's contracts with external contract reviewers, the reviewer is paid \$150 per hour for time spent on the review of a resubmission, and these costs will be invoiced to the applicant.

### **How long will a review take?**

The review period specified in Table D (attached) begins when the external contract reviewer receives your documents. The length of time taken for an external contract review depends on the type of report reviewed and the complexity of the site.

External contract reviewers have specific time schedules to meet in their reviews.

Table D indicates the time frame in calendar days for various reviews. The external contract review team is obliged to submit your item and their review to the ministry within the specified time frame. Failure to respond to the ministry within that time will result in the contractor being penalized.

A resubmission review must be completed within 25% of the applicable time allowance shown in Table D. Extension will only be allowed with prior consent by the ministry.

### **Finalizing an external contract review**

Once a review is complete and the review report is forwarded to the ministry, additional time will be required to assess the external contract review, including the reviewer's conclusions and recommendations, and to finalize the review.

Ministry staff may elect to accept, modify, or reject the recommendations of the external contract review team. Any changes to the team's recommendations will be sent to the

applicant in writing. When the external contract review is accepted, ministry staff will forward a copy of it and the ministry's acceptance to the applicant.

*Note: This summary is solely for the convenience of the reader. The current legislation and regulations should be consulted for complete information.*

*For more information, contact the Environmental Management Branch at [site@gov.bc.ca](mailto:site@gov.bc.ca)*

### Summary of Fees and Time Schedule for External Contract Review Options, Contaminated Sites Services, April 1, 2004 – March 31, 2007

**Table A. External contract reviewers' fees (specified in contract)**

Activity or Action	Simple Sites	Complex Sites
<b>Reviews of Reports and Plans</b>	<b>Column 2</b>	<b>Column 3</b>
Fees for review of a preliminary site investigation report	\$2,400	\$4,400
Fees for review of a detailed site investigation report	\$3,500	\$6,700
Fees for review of a remediation plan that does not include a risk assessment or environmental impact assessment report	\$4,100	\$10,300
Fees for review of a confirmation of remediation report	\$2,800	\$6,500

**Table B. Ministry fees (50% of fees in Table 2 of Schedule 3, Contaminated Sites Regulation)**

Activity or Action	Simple Sites	Complex Sites
<b>Reviews of Reports and Plans</b>	<b>Column 2</b>	<b>Column 3</b>
Fees for the ministry to finalize a preliminary site investigation report external contract review	\$1,000	\$2,000
Fees for the ministry to finalize a detailed site investigation report external contract review	\$1,500	\$3,000
Fees for the ministry to finalize an external contract review of a remediation plan that does not include a risk assessment or environmental impact assessment report	\$2,000	\$6,000
Fees for the ministry to finalize a confirmation of remediation report external contract review	\$1,000	\$3,000

**Table C. Total fees for external contract review options (Table A plus Table B)**

<b>Activity or Action</b>	<b>Simple Sites</b>	<b>Complex Sites</b>
<b>Reviews of Reports and Plans</b>	<b>Column 2</b>	<b>Column 3</b>
Total fees for the review of a preliminary site investigation report	\$3,400	\$6,400
Total fees for the review of a detailed site investigation report	\$5,000	\$9,700
Total fees for the review of a remediation plan that does not include a risk assessment or environmental impact assessment report	\$6,100	\$16,300
Total fees for the review of a confirmation of remediation report	\$3,800	\$9,500

**Table D. Time schedule for external contract reviewers (in calendar days)**

<b>Activity or Action</b>	<b>Simple Sites</b>	<b>Complex Sites</b>
<b>Reviews of Reports and Plans</b>	<b>Column 2</b>	<b>Column 3</b>
Time in days for the external contract review of a preliminary site investigation report	14	21
Time in days for the external review of a detailed site investigation report	21	35
Time in days for the external contract review of a remediation plan that does not include a risk assessment or environmental impact assessment report	28	42
Time in days for the external contract review of a confirmation of remediation report	14	21