



Office of the Auditor General / Bureau du vérificateur général

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2009 AUDIT OF
SPECIFIC HOUSE DRAWINGS**

2011

**SUIVI DE LA VÉRIFICATION DE PLANS
D'UNE MAISON PRÉCISE DE 2009**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Follow-up to the 2009 Audit of Specific House Drawings was included in the Auditor General's Audit Plan.

The key findings of the original 2009 audit included:

- City staff were diligent in their review to address concerns regarding a particular builder.
- House models built in Kingston resulted in disciplinary hearings by the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario in October 2007. One of these models was to be built in Ottawa. Although City staff were not aware of this at the time, they identified similar issues with the drawings and requested revisions.
- The audit found that revised drawings submitted by this builder had dealt with the Professional Engineers of Ontario's concerns.

Summary of the Level of Completion

The table below outlines our assessment of the level of completion of each recommendation as of January 31, 2011.

CATEGORY	% COMPLETE	RECOMMENDATIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS
LITTLE OR NO ACTION	0 – 24	-	-	-
ACTION INITIATED	25 – 49	-	-	-
PARTIALLY COMPLETE	50 – 74	-	-	-
SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE	75 – 99	-	-	-
COMPLETE	100	1, 2	2	100%
TOTAL			2	100%

Conclusion

Building Code Services (BCS) has satisfactorily addressed both recommendations made in the original audit. In our opinion, BCS has been diligent in ensuring that the recommendations are acted upon.

Acknowledgement

We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance afforded the audit team by management.

RÉSUMÉ

Introduction

Le Suivi de la vérification de plans d'une maison précise de 2009 était prévu dans le Plan de vérification du vérificateur général.

Les principales constatations de la vérification de 2009 sont les suivantes :

- Le personnel de la Ville avait fait preuve de diligence dans son examen afin de remédier à des irrégularités concernant un constructeur en particulier.
- Des modèles de maisons construites à Kingston ont abouti à la tenue d'audiences disciplinaires de la part de l'Ordre des ingénieurs professionnels de l'Ontario en octobre 2007. Un de ces modèles devait être construit à Ottawa. Sans être au courant des problèmes soulevés, le personnel de la Ville a décelé des problèmes similaires dans les plans et demandé des révisions.
- La vérification a constaté que les plans révisés soumis par ce constructeur avaient répondu aux préoccupations des ingénieurs professionnels de l'Ontario.

Sommaire du degré d'achèvement

Le tableau ci-dessous présente notre évaluation du degré d'achèvement de chaque recommandation le 31 janvier 2011 :

CATÉGORIE	POURCENTAGE COMPLÉTÉ	RECOMMANDATIONS	NOMBRE DE RECOMMANDATIONS	POURCENTAGE DU TOTAL DES RECOMMANDATIONS
PEU OU PAS DE MESURES PRISES	0 – 24	-	-	-
ACTION AMORCÉE	25 – 49	-	-	-
COMPLÉTÉE EN PARTIE	50 – 74	-	-	-
PRATIQUEMENT COMPLÉTÉE	75 – 99	-	-	-
COMPLÉTÉE	100	1, 2	2	100 %
TOTAL			2	100 %

Conclusion

Le Service du Code du bâtiment a réglé de façon satisfaisante les deux recommandations formulées dans la vérification originale. Nous sommes d'avis que le Service du Code du bâtiment a fait preuve de diligence pour s'assurer qu'on y donnait suite.

Remerciements

Nous tenons à remercier la direction pour la coopération et l'assistance accordées à l'équipe de vérification.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Follow-up to the 2009 Audit of Specific House Drawings was included in the Auditor General's Audit Plan.

The key findings of the original 2009 audit included:

- City staff were diligent in their review to address concerns regarding a particular builder.
- House models built in Kingston resulted in disciplinary hearings by the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario in October 2007. One of these models was to be built in Ottawa. Although City staff were not aware of this at the time, they identified similar issues with the drawings and requested revisions.
- The audit found that revised drawings submitted by this builder had dealt with the Professional Engineers of Ontario's concerns.

2 KEY FINDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL 2009 AUDIT OF SPECIFIC HOUSE DRAWINGS

1. Interviews with the Building Code Services Branch management and staff disclosed that the developer offered in the City of Ottawa only one model of the three offered by the developer in Kingston. Consequently, the review addressed only the pertinent house model.
2. The City of Ottawa building permit and inspection file for a house of the subject house model was examined to determine whether the documentation provided to the City of Ottawa meets the Code requirements.
3. The Building Code requirements are summarized in the City's House Submission Record for single-family dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and townhouses. The Plans Examiner concluded that the building permit application contained the required information in the City's House Submission Record for the subject Building Permit Application.
4. Subsequent to review of the information in the application and supporting documents, the Plans Examiner wrote to the applicant requesting additional information. In the request for additional information, the Plans Examiner identified five issues that were similar in scope to those that were raised in the complaint to the PEO. This demonstrates that the Plans Examiner was diligent in the review of the application and submitted documents.
5. The Applicant submitted in a letter a response to the request by the City for additional information. With the letter, the engineering company submitted drawings with the required revisions marked by hand.

6. Our review of the information provided by the engineering company confirmed that the information conforms to the requirements of the Code.
7. Upon review of the PEO Gazette and the Decision and Reasons summarizing the disciplinary hearing, the Building Code Services Branch reviewed the house model drawings submitted to the City by the developer, with particular emphasis on the items noted in the PEO complaint and disciplinary hearing summary. The review confirmed that the drawings submitted for the house model reviewed addressed all the items in the PEO disciplinary hearing.
8. The results of the review by BCSB are summarized on one page of undated handwritten notes. We note that the handwritten notes should have a title (for instance, Review of House Model vs. PEO Disciplinary Hearing), should be dated, and should have the name of the person doing the review. When we requested a copy of the review notes, we found that they were not included with the house file, but were kept separately by the Plans Examiner in a separate file.
9. Review of the overall file for the subject house showed that the documentation in the file was complete, per the requirements of the Policies, Guidelines and Standards Manual and the Building By-law. However, we noted that the HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record, which BCSB requested of the builder in May 2007, was only provided by the builder to the City on May 25, 2009, four days before the Final Occupancy Permit was issued. The HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record is on the checklist of items to be submitted during the occupancy inspection, and as such should be provided by the builder on time.
10. The Final Occupancy permit was issued in May 2009.

3 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF 2009 AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

2009 Recommendation 1

That the City ensure that the review notes by the Plans Examiner be filed with the respective building permit and inspection file, and that the document be titled, dated, and signed (with name printed) by the Plans Examiner. This was not the case in the file we audited.

2009 Management Response

Management agrees with the recommendation.

In compliance with the City's Records Management Policy, the personal notes kept by the Plans Examiner were deemed transitory in nature and were not an *official business record*.

The supplementary review of the specific model was undertaken at the request of the Chief Building Official to confirm that the plans and specifications were in compliance with the Ontario Building Code, with specific reference to outstanding documentation as noted in the Professional Engineers of Ontario disciplinary hearing summary. The notes were kept for future reference only and did not document any obligation or responsibility and were, therefore, not considered an official business record. Notwithstanding, the documentation has been formalized and filed in the permit file.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 1 as of January 31, 2011

As indicated at the time of the audit, the documentation referred to above was formalized and filed in the permit file.

Management: % complete *100%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 1

BCS provided documentation to demonstrate that the notes were included in the file.

In addition, from information provided for the Follow-up of the 2009 Audit of Eight Specific Files in BCS, we are aware that BCS has implemented a program for quality control of the files.

OAG: % complete *100%*

2009 Recommendation 2

That the City ensure that the documentation requested of the builder be submitted on time to permit the Inspector to review the documentation. In this case, the HRV balancing report was not provided by the builder until two years after BCSB requested it.

2009 Management Response

Management agrees with the recommendation.

A review of the audited file confirmed that the required documentation was submitted within the prescribed timeline in accordance with the Building Code Services (BCS) branch Policies, Guidelines and Standards.

Specifically, the Building Official flagged to the permit holder, at the time of the Partial Occupancy inspection, the requirement to submit the report with the expectation it would be submitted prior to the issuance of the Final Occupancy Permit. There was no expectation to receive the report immediately following the issuance of the Partial Occupancy report. This is in recognition that the 'HRV balancing' report [known as the HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record]

documents the *as-built* condition of a system that is commissioned only at the final stages of construction.

It is important to note that in the majority of Partial Occupancy inspections performed for single dwelling units where an HRV is installed and balanced per the HRAI design summary, a copy of the HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record is provided to the Building Official by the builder even though this documentation is not required for partial occupancy. In this instance, the HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record was requested by the Building Official and was received prior to the issuance of the Final Occupancy permit in accordance with branch Policies, Standards and Guidelines.

Thus, there will be instances where documentation, to be produced as a prerequisite to the issuance of the Final Occupancy Permit, is submitted some time after the Partial Occupancy Permit is issued

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 2 as of January 31, 2011

The required documentation was submitted within the prescribed timeline in accordance with the Building Code Services (BCS) branch Policies, Guidelines and Standards.

Specifically, the Building Official flagged to the permit holder, at the time of the Partial Occupancy inspection, the requirement to submit the report with the expectation it would be submitted prior to the issuance of the Final Occupancy Permit. There was no expectation to receive the report immediately following the issuance of the Partial Occupancy report. This is in recognition that the 'HRV balancing' report [known as the HRAI Residential Mechanical Ventilation Record] documents the *as-built* condition of a system that is commissioned only at the final stages of construction.

Management: % complete *100%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 2

We are satisfied that the City has now established procedures to confirm that all the required documentation is in place, and for the quality control of the files.

OAG: % complete *100%*

4 SUMMARY OF THE LEVEL OF COMPLETION

The table below outlines our assessment of the level of completion of each recommendation as of January 31, 2011. Management's response was in agreement with that assessment.

CATEGORY	% COMPLETE	RECOMMENDATIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS
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5 CONCLUSION

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6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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