

Annual Compliance Plan  
Overview  
Fiscal Year 2024/25



# PURPOSE

This report provides a summary of activities carried out under the British Columbia Energy Regulator's Annual Compliance Plan for fiscal year 2024/25 and progress made towards achieving our associated targets.

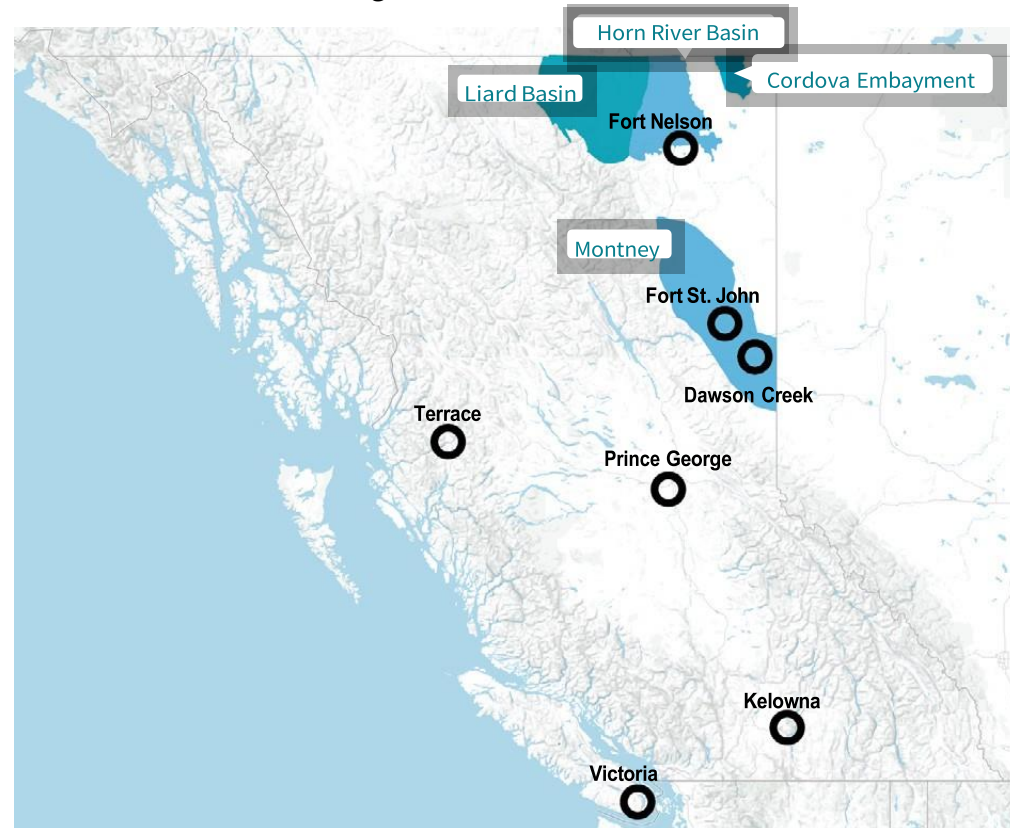
The BCER's Plan, Do, Check, Act method provides certainty that our approach continuously improves, leading to increased effectiveness of compliance oversight.

About the

# British Columbia Energy Regulator

The [British Columbia Energy Regulator](#) (BCER) oversees the full life cycle of energy resource activities in B.C., from site planning to restoration. We ensure activities are undertaken in a manner that protects public safety and the environment, supports reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, conserves energy resources and fosters a sound economy and social well-being. We work collaboratively across government and industry sharing policy and technical expertise in support of B.C.'s transition to low-carbon energy and helping meet future global energy needs.

BCER Office Locations Throughout B.C.



We acknowledge and respect the many Indigenous Territories and Treaty areas, each with unique cultures, languages, legal traditions and relationships to the land and water, which the British Columbia Energy Regulator's work spans. We also respectfully acknowledge the Métis and Inuit people living across B.C.

## COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

The BCER's mandate to regulate energy resource activities in B.C. is provided through the Energy Resource Activities Act (ERAA). It is part of a comprehensive regulatory framework governing energy resource operations and the assessment of compliance within that framework is a critical element in fulfilling the BCER's mandate.

The BCER's Compliance Management System (CMS) includes the principles, roles, responsibilities, requirements, and methodologies - established in a Compliance Management Policy - through which the BCER assures compliance of energy resource activities with the regulatory framework.

## Compliance Principles

All compliance management processes under the BCER's CMS are designed, planned, carried out and evaluated in accordance with the following principles:

- **Fair:** Compliance activities afford all affected parties a fair process and compliance decisions are made by objective, competent decision-makers.
- **Defensible:** Compliance activities and supporting intelligence are accurate and support activities undertaken by the BCER.
- **Predictable:** Enforcement outcomes from compliance activities are fair and predictable under clearly understood conditions.
- **Risk-informed:** Compliance management processes are informed by risk, ensuring resources are used to the maximum effect.
- **Responsive:** All identified potential situations of non-compliance are examined and non-compliances are met with appropriate action and tracked until corrected.
- **Collaborative:** Business areas work together, share information and engage stakeholders, to ensure the CMS achieves performance expectations.
- **Adaptive:** Knowledge gained from compliance management processes, independent third-party observations and other sources will be used to systematically improve the CMS through a continuous improvement process.



## Compliance Verification Activities

The BCER carries out several activities and business processes every year to assess whether or not regulatory requirements have been met by energy resource permit holders. These activities include, but are not limited to, audits, inspections, administrative monitoring, as well as permit holder self-assessments. Annual Compliance Plan documents include annual plans for audits and inspections, the results of which may inform adjustments or improvements to other verification processes.

- **Audit:** An independent, systematic and documented process to obtain and evaluate evidence to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled.
- **Inspection:** An on-site, compliance verification activity or process that involves the methodical examination and assessment of regulated activities or operations against requirements. May occur at any time during the life of a project.
- **Administrative Compliance Monitoring:** An office-based compliance verification procedure which may include any activity to track or assess compliance associated with operational submissions that must be provided to the BCER, including data, notices, reports or any other information required to be submitted. Some administrative monitoring mechanisms may consist of or be aided by automated tools to identify alleged non-compliances, such as reports.
- **Permit holder self-assessment:** A compliance verification method carried out by permit holders, which uses a standardized approach pre-defined or sanctioned by the BCER to assess and/or report on compliance with a requirement.



## Natural Resource Aboriginal Liaison Program

Established in 2014, the Aboriginal Liaison Program (ALP) is a partnership between Indigenous communities, the BCER, the BC Oil and Gas Research and Innovation Society (BCOGRIS) and other natural resource agencies. Through this partnership, participating Indigenous communities and agencies work to develop collaborative compliance oversight processes that incorporate Indigenous land values, interests and perspectives while fostering opportunities for two-way information sharing.

The ALP provides training and mentoring opportunities to improve Liaisons' knowledge and understanding of development activities and impacts, as well as enabling them to inform their community members with reliable and sound information about development activities on their traditional territories. By working directly with Liaisons, BCER staff are provided with opportunities to deepen their understanding of Indigenous peoples' values and traditional knowledge in relation to energy resource development and learn about the communities and cultures of the people they work with.



## ANNUAL COMPLIANCE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Annual Compliance Plan establishes the BCER's priorities and targets for inspections and audits for the coming fiscal year. The annual plan consists of an inspection plan and an audit plan, along with measurable targets against which quarterly and annual reporting can be carried out.

The Annual Compliance Plan is created using a cyclical Plan-Do-Check-Act process for continuous improvement.

**Plan:** Key inputs into the ACP are inspection selection and planning criteria and methodologies, audit planning schedules, results from previous ACP implementations, corporate-level risk registers and other strategic drivers.

**Do:** Includes the implementation of the annual inspection and audit plans.

**Check:** Includes quarterly and annual reporting related to the progress of plan implementation, identification of any key trends, and any recommended actions. This may also incorporate operational data and trends from the various compliance verification process carried out at the business unit level.

**Act:** Involves responding to information obtained from the check phase – both quarterly and annually - to enhance performance to expectations. Some actions identified may be executed immediately upon observation, or as part of improvements prioritized within the next year's ACP.



## ACP Component: Annual Inspection Plan

The Annual Inspection Plan sets a performance target for conducting data and risk-informed inspections within the fiscal year. These inspections constitute the foundation of our program and are determined through risk modeling processes that prioritize site inspections. Additionally, a random sample is included to validate the model and promote continuous improvement.

- **Data and Risk-Informed:** This stream selects inspections based on site characteristics, observed compliance trends, and associated risk. Random sampling is also included to support validation processes.

The following categories of inspections, triggered by operational events, external requests, or field observations, complement the overall inspections conducted within a fiscal year, significantly enhancing program efficiency.

- **Event-Driven:** This stream selects inspections after operational events at oil and gas sites (notice of construction, pressure test, Leave to Open notices, etc.).
- **Responsive:** These include inspections requested by a business area within the BCER or by an external party. This stream provides responsiveness to specific stakeholder interests or concerns, and identification of potentially emergent compliance trends.
- **Officer Selected:** These inspections are selected by officers based on an evaluation of inspection frequency, inspection coverage within an area, local knowledge and response to seasonal access into remote areas. As these inspections are often conducted alongside other planned inspections, they positively influence inspection efficiency by rounding out daily activities in a particular area.

## ACP Component: Annual Audit Plan

The BCER performs audits to assess the effectiveness of permit holders' program areas in accordance with specified audit criteria. Auditing is used to assess compliance with requirements, which are outside the scope of routine inspections and involves verifying adherence to specific criteria derived from requirements or regulations and looks at the overall method by which a risk is managed. Audits may also be broad-based, assessing industry trends or effectiveness of existing regulation.

The focus is on the processes and procedures used to meet specified criteria or requirements, and the overall effectiveness. The scale and scope of individual audits is based on the size and nature of the auditee as well as on the nature, functionality, complexity and the aspect of the area or system to be audited. This includes audits of single, multiple or integrated management system(s) or program areas conducted either separately or in combination.



## ACP Component: Annual Emergency Management Evaluation Program

To assess the effectiveness of permit holders' emergency management programs and their compliance with emergency management regulations, the BCER conducts exercise evaluations in conjunction with a systematic review of each operator's emergency response plan. Upon submission, all emergency response plans undergo a thorough review to ensure compliance and completeness, detailing the processes and procedures permit holders will follow in responding to emergencies.

A fundamental operational aspect of the emergency management program is the completion of annual exercises. Conducted by permit holders, these exercises provide an optimal opportunity for the BCER to evaluate permit holders under real-life scenarios.

As such, the BCERs onsite participation in exercises has been established as a core compliance operation, allowing the BCER to confirm the permit holder's knowledge, skills, and abilities to respond effectively to incidents relevant to their operations.

Exercise attendance is prioritized based on factors such as the type of exercise (tabletop or full-scale), past performance, the size and nature of the permit holder, as well as the complexity, area, and/or assets involved.

Through this process, the BCER provides assurance that permit holders have the necessary people, processes, and equipment in place to respond to emergencies effectively and efficiently.

## ACP MONITORING AND RESULTS

The BCER tracks progress towards completion of planned activities in the ACP through preparation and review of quarterly and annual reports. These reports are reviewed by business unit leaders and all members of an internal Compliance Management Steering Committee.

After the completion of an ACP cycle, the BCER reviews and analyses audit and inspection results to identify trends or findings that may inform changes to criteria used in planning future ACP activities.



**TABLE 1: COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION PROGRAM AREA GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

AUDIT PLAN	NUMBER OF AUDITS	PERFORMANCE TARGET
ALR Schedule B Audit	5	90% completion of planned audits
Dam Safety Audit	4	90% completion of planned audits
Damage Prevention Program	11	90% completion of planned audits
Facilities Integrity Management Program	11	90% completion of planned audits
Ground Water Audit	10	90% completion of planned audits
Methane Emissions	20	90% completion of planned audits
Pipeline Environmental Audit Program	10	90% completion of planned audits
Pipeline Integrity Management Program	11	90% completion of planned audits
Restoration Verification Audit Program	10	90% completion of planned audits
Road Permit Holder Inspection Program Self-assessment	10	90% completion of planned audits
EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVALUATION PROGRAM	PERMIT HOLDER REVIEWS	PERFORMANCE TARGET
Exercise Assessments	40	90% completion of planned exercise assessments
INSPECTION PLAN	NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS	PERFORMANCE TARGET
Risk and Data Informed	2,800	Measure 1: 90% completion of planned inspections. Measure 2: 60% or greater of all fiscal inspections completed are risk and data informed.

For specific questions or enquiries regarding this data, please contact: [Communications@bc-er.ca](mailto:Communications@bc-er.ca)





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