

Certification



Background Review

OVERVIEW

Certifying individual home inspectors requires policies regarding all areas of the industry, including but not limited to, examination eligibility requirements, submission of applications, registering and administering examinations, examination development, examination scoring, reporting of results, testing candidates with disabilities, and recertification requirements.

A “**Background Review**” (aka: **Prior Learning Assessment**) process is used by the NHICC to determine the appropriate stage for an individual. Any individual who wants to be considered at a particular stage must apply to the NHICC and present their background documentation of their personal background. Background review criteria are based on the tasks defined in the National Occupational Standard for home and property inspectors and the specific job task skills identified in the National Certification Program.

The development of the **National Occupational Standard** as well as the development of the **National Certification Program** for home and property inspectors was largely funded by CMHC and HRSDC. Research has shown that currently there are a number of private inspection associations and organizations across the country each with different inspection standards and levels of qualifications. **Even to this day, significant variations still exist.**

The difference in standards for certifying private inspectors in Canada has caused confusion in the minds of consumers as well as within other sectors of the housing industry. Also highlighted in the research, is the considerable variation in the availability and quality of the home inspection service offered across Canada, with large regional differences. At the time of the initial research, the majority of practitioners appeared not to belong to any professional inspection association or a competent private firm. As a result, the consumer and the housing sector could not be assured of competency in a minimum standard of private inspection services.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of CMHC’s National Initiative indicated:

- 1. To elevate the status of the Canadian home and building inspection profession in the minds of the consumer, home inspectors, building officials, government and key stakeholders across Canada.*
- 2. To establish minimum national occupational standards, code of ethics and criteria for inspector certification so that the general public can have confidence that all certified inspectors meet the requirements of the national certification process.*
- 3. To ensure that inspections comply with the same performance standard throughout Canada.*
- 4. To approve, support and coordinate provincial/regional accrediting bodies to administer, certify and provide disciplinary control of private-sector home inspectors.*

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The **Canadian Home Inspection and Building Officials (CHIBO) Steering Committee** for National Occupational Standards was first formed and convened in April, 2000 with a mandate to develop uniform national occupational standards for those employed as home inspectors and municipal building officials.

Professional standards associated with occupational testing are delineated primarily in these resource documents – The NHICC Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics and the National Occupational Standards. The strategies to achieve and maintain professional standards are based on attaining compliance with ISO 17024 - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons.

33.0: NATIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (Based on the NHICC Policy & Procedures)

33.0.1: The key to any successful certification program is the ability to certify individuals who meet the competence standard for their occupation. A certification model is only as good as the certification body's ability to certify individuals against the National Occupational Standards for Home and Property Inspectors.

33.0.2: The governance and structural elements of the models are based on criteria defined in the CAN-P-9 (ISO) Standard 'Criteria for Accreditation of Personnel Certification Bodies'. The CAN-P-9 Standard is published by the Standards Council of Canada, and is based on the international ISO standard ISO/IEC 17024.

33.0.3: Individuals who are within the National Certification Program will be at one of the following stages – **'Candidate', 'Provisional' or 'National Home Inspector' (NHI)**.

The **'Candidate' stage** is for individuals who have the appropriate training and who have displayed the required degree of competence to be home and property inspectors but lack experience to obtain certification. The **'Provisional' stage** provides a mechanism to oversee the activities of individuals already working in the occupation and that need to complete their TIPR exam. And further fee-paid inspection requirements. The **'National Home Inspector' (NHI) stage** is for individuals who have the appropriate training, experience and competence.

33.0.4: A **'Background Review'** process will be used by the **National Admissions Board** to determine the appropriate stage for each individual. Any individual who wants to be considered for either stage would apply to the National Admissions Board and present their personal background. Background review criteria are based on the tasks defined in the National Occupational Standard for home and property inspectors.

33.0.5: To determine where an individual fits within the National Certification Program, an assessment process called a 'background review' is used. Background review is the process that the National Admissions Board uses to determine if an individual should be within program, and if so, at what stage. An individual, who wants to be considered for any stage, would apply to the NHICC and present their personal background. An individual's personal background would be presented through a structured application form completed by the individual, which may be supplemented if necessary through an interview.

33.0.6: NHICC certification criteria, does not allow decisions on certification to be subcontracted. However, other formally recognized home inspection organizations could provide the National Admissions Board with recommendations as to whether specific individuals meet the background requirements of the National Certification Program.

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