

# Compliance & Enforcement

## What is Compliance & Enforcement?

Operators have a legal obligation to meet all legislated requirements. The Commission expects applicants and permit holders to use formal practices in day-to-day operations and comply with the Oil and Gas Activities Act (OGAA), the specified enactments and all related regulations.

It is the permit holder's responsibility to know and uphold any legal responsibilities inside and outside of the Commission's legislative authority. The Commission audits and inspects permit holder activities and investigates incidents of alleged non-compliance.



In 2020 the Commission completed **4,944** inspections.

There were **233** total complaints to Compliance and Enforcement.



## When Does Regulatory Compliance Begin?

Regulatory compliance is required before an application is submitted, including consultation and notification of land owners. Operators may seek advice from the Commission and should review all manuals, guidance and regulations for requirements. Once an application is submitted, the Commission reviews the applications against legislative (legal) requirements, and for environmental and public safety. During detailed project reviews, the Commission can and does require companies to change the application based on First Nations consultations, land owner concerns and/or technical assessment results.

If a permit is issued, the Commission oversees that project throughout its life cycle until the land used is remediated. The Commission works to make sure industry understands, respects and meets or exceeds all the regulations and standards. Industry is encouraged to develop best management practices and the Commission works with industry to share lessons learned and advances in science and technology.

Compliance and Enforcement Officers conduct site inspections, respond to incidents, and address complaints from land owners, First Nations, public and other stakeholders.

The **Compliance and Enforcement page** shows all orders and determinations issued to oil and gas operators and is updated weekly.

## Working with Other Agencies

The Commission works closely with other government Ministries including Environment, Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Agriculture, Finance and other agencies including: the National Energy Board and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

We have memoranda of understanding addressing aspects of compliance and enforcement, including information and data exchange, sharing of expertise and collaboration on audits, inspections and investigations.

For example, Compliance and Enforcement Officers at the Commission are designated as Conservation Officers under the Environmental Management Act. This designation provides the authority to enforce both the Environmental Management Act and the Water Sustainability Act.



## For Further Information

Email [ogc.communications@bcogc.ca](mailto:ogc.communications@bcogc.ca) or call 250-794-5200

24 Hour Incident Reporting for Industry 1-800-663-3456

This information is published by the BC Oil and Gas Commission and is available online at [www.bcogc.ca](http://www.bcogc.ca)

## How Does the Commission Enforce Compliance?

- ✓ Compliance is accomplished through proactive monitoring and inspection of permit holder activities, and investigation and enforcement of alleged non-compliances.
- ✓ The enforcement process encompasses an array of tools and actions that work to keep activities and operations in compliance with legislation, including the issuance of orders, findings of contravention, and execution of administrative penalties.
- ✓ Inspection results are tracked and shared with permit holders for action. The Commission has authority to order corrective work or even shut down operations not in compliance with the law.
- ✓ If a permit holder is found to have a high risk non-compliance issue, they must respond with an immediate action. If a non-compliance issue is not addressed, the Commission may respond with escalated enforcement action.
- ✓ The Commission can issue an Order requiring compliance within a set time period if industry does not comply with the legislation, regulations or requirements set out in permits and authorizations. An Order can also be issued to mitigate a risk to public safety, to protect the environment, or to promote conservation of oil and gas.
- ✓ If someone fails to comply with an Order issued by the Commission, they can be found in contravention of the legislation and may be subject to administrative monetary penalty or may be subject to prosecution in BC provincial court.



## How Do We Proactively Regulate?

The Commission has the legislative authority to make decisions on proposed oil and gas activities. While the Commission does not set policy, the diverse expertise and experience of Commission staff provides critical insight at every level of oil and gas development. This knowledge base provides perspective through scientific evidence, guidance, best practices, reports, tools and analysis.

Companies looking to explore, develop, produce, and market oil and gas resources in B.C. must apply to the Commission. The Commission reviews, assesses and makes decisions on these applications. This consolidated single-window authority provides not only a one-stop place for all oil and gas and associated activity requirements, but a consistent application, decision, regulatory and compliance authority. Stakeholders work with one agency; therefore, the Commission serves the public interest by having an all encompassing review process for oil and gas activities.

## Incident Reporting

The Commission manages a 24/7 emergency service. The service includes 24-hour standby of a designated Emergency Officer who answers all calls and determines how the Commission responds to the complaint or emergency.

Complaints are important in helping reduce the risk of potential incidents, and the Commission commits to responding within two hours. In most cases, inspectors are dispatched to the location to determine the cause of the complaint and assist to resolve the situation.



## Emergency Response

The Commission plays an integral role in emergency management for natural gas and oil related activities, including:

- Receiving reported incidents and complaints.
- Confirming emergency response needed and assessing potential risks.
- Oversight of permit holders' response actions including the notification of appropriate land owners, stakeholders and/or other agencies.
- Liaising with and coordinating interagency emergency operations.
- Providing regular situation updates.
- Authorizing official stand down of emergency response.



### Public Concerns and Complaints

**1-250-794-5200** (24-hour public number)

Report concerns such as odours, spills or noise.



### Incident Reporting for Industry

**1-800-663-3456** (24-hour emergency number)

Report oil and gas related incidents.