

Contractor Health and Safety Pre-qualification Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) for Contractors

Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 states that “Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking” (PCBU) ie Councils, are responsible for the health and safety of all workers. A worker includes those working for contractors and sub-contractors.

Currently, Waikato and Bay of Plenty Councils have a varied approach to the assessment and evaluation of health and safety plans associated with tender submissions, with some Councils not pre-qualifying at all. Councils’ experience with contractors involved in non-tendered work has revealed, on a number of occasions, no or inadequate health and safety plans are in place. Additionally, there are inadequate systems or processes in place to ensure that contractor’s insurances are monitored to ensure they are appropriate and current.

Members of an existing Waikato/Bay of Plenty Local Government Health and Safety forum formed a working party to develop and implement a contractor pre-qualification system across Councils who wish to participate. This project was then picked up under the Waikato Local Authority Shared Services (LASS) with full support from the board and sponsored by the LASS Chair.

The project team have identified a number of questions that may be asked by you and have provided responses to those for your information. Should you have any further questions, please contact a member of the project team or email the Project Manager on hands@hcc.govt.nz

CHANGE PROCESS FAQ's (All)

Q1	Why are we doing this?	A	<p><i>Currently Councils have a varied approach and level of assessment/evaluation of contractors' health and safety information. Introducing a contractor Prequalification system will ensure consistency across participating Councils.</i></p> <p><i>There is also a desire for more shared services across councils to provide value for money for our ratepayers.</i></p>
Q2	What are we trying to achieve?	A	<p><i>The project aim is to provide formalised, consistent and effective shared service which benefits both Council and Contractors at a reasonable cost. It also provides Councils with an assurance that Contractors have Health and Safety Systems in place.</i></p>
Q3	What will the benefits be?	A	<p><i>The saving of time for both Council and contractors who currently do the pre-qualification process. Having a shared system that provides a consistent approach to assessing contractors Health and Safety systems.</i></p> <p><i>Benefit to Councils:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• reduced resource requirements</i><i>• reduced organisational risk</i><i>• heightened Health and Safety awareness and compliance within our communities</i><i>• abilities to influence businesses and our and our communities to improve their health and safety systems and practices</i><i>• regionally consistent and standardised approach.</i> <p><i>Benefits to the contractors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• only making one application</i><i>• to be able to work for any of the participating Councils</i><i>• Education and improved practices</i>
Q4	How are people impacted? (technology, work processes, etc)	A	<p><i>Council staff - New or amended process for project/contract managers, needing to check contractor database to ensure a contractor/sub-contractor is pre-qualified. Initiating pre-qualification if not on contractor database</i></p> <p><i>Contractors – less time applying for pre-qualification with multiple Councils, associated cost, requirement to pre-qualify where no requirement previously (with some Councils)</i></p>
Q5	What is the timeframe for the changes?	A	<p><i>The system will go live on 5 September 2016 and from that date all applications must be entered through the SHE Software NZ website. As a contractor to Hamilton City Council, your company will need to be pre-qualified in this system by 30 June 2017.</i></p>

Q6	What obstacles and barriers do you foresee?	A	<p><i>Staff:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>new system</i> • <i>lack of understanding</i> • <i>out of house process, not in house</i> • <i>loss of control</i> • <i>no immediate processing</i> <p><i>Contractors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>cost</i> • <i>reviewed by someone else</i> • <i>not understanding the benefits</i>
Q7	Will we have to train people?	A	<i>Yes – All staff that engage new contractors</i>

CONTRACTOR FAQs

Q8	What is this going to cost? Council staff used to perform this function free.	A	<p><i>Pre-qualification- bi annually</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>< 5 employees</i> <i>\$180.00</i> • <i>5 – 24 employees</i> <i>\$400.00</i> • <i>25 or more</i> <i>\$900.00</i> <p><i>Insurances - annually</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>\$25.00 per insurance type</i>
Q9	I am already pre-qualified with another reputable Health and Safety pre-qualification company – can this count instead of registering again?	A	<i>No – the project team has developed a specific set of questions to ensure a standardised approach across local authorities.</i>
Q10	I am a contractor that needs help to get my Health and Safety system sorted. Who should I approach?	A	<p><i>Contractors who require professional advice on their Health and Safety systems should search for a fully qualified, competent business or professional. This information is contained on the HASNZ website ‘Choosing a Workplace Health and Safety Advisor’</i></p> <p><i>http://www.hasanz.org.nz/. There is also advice on the WorkSafe NZ website.</i></p>
Q11	Do I still have to do a Site Specific Safety Plan or Job Safety Analysis for the work?	A	<i>Yes. The pre-qualification process ensures that your organisation has a robust Health and Safety Management System in place for the work you do. It does not eliminate the need to plan work for the site/task/on job specifics.</i>
Q12	If I get stuck when entering my documentation, who do I contact?	A	<i>Refer to the contact section of the website and SHE Software NZ Ltd will provide assistance.</i>
Q13	What if I need to use a sub-contractor urgently and they’re not on the list?	A	<i>Send URL to sub-contractor to apply for pre-qualification. Contact your contract manager to arrange for application to be escalated.</i>

Q14	How do I add further services I can provide once I have already signed up?	A	<i>Refer to the contact section of the website and SHE Software NZ will provide assistance. Note: that there may be a charge for the assessment of any additional information needed to be provided.</i>
Q14	What if I miss a deadline to re-qualify?	A	<i>SHE will notify you at least two months prior to your expiry date. If they don't receive any, or insufficient, information from you, your status will show "expired". You can still send in your information but it will be processed in the order received, so may take a few weeks depending on workload. During this time Councils may choose not to use your services.</i>
Q15	If I don't send my application in will I be removed?	A	<i>No – the status will show as expired until it is re-approved. Company name will not display on the 'pick list'. SHE Software NZ will audit/monitor expiration dates and email contractors directly prior to expiration to provide full opportunity to remain on the 'pick list'.</i>
Q16	What if I miss notifications due to change of details? How do I update my details?	A	<i>Email any changed email details to your Council's Health and Safety Team and they will arrange for them to be updated. If you have generic business email address, please use this in your application. SHE Software NZ will make direct contact via phone if a renewal application has not been initiated by the contractor.</i>