

Purpose of this Guideline

This guideline explains how ABSA receives, reviews, manages, and concludes design registration applications. It is intended to improve transparency, clarify responsibilities and timelines, and help applicants prepare complete, well-organized submissions.

1.0 Purpose

ABSA is committed to providing consistent, timely, and transparent design registration services. Understanding the process helps applicants prepare complete and clearly organized applications and can reduce avoidable review delays.

This guideline is intended to:

- explain the typical ABSA Design Survey process from initial submission to registration;
- clarify applicants and ABSA responsibilities;
- describe how applications are reviewed, placed on hold, registered, administratively closed, or refused; and
- support a better applicant experience by understanding the process, reducing avoidable uncertainty, rework, and frustration.

Important: This guideline does not create new regulatory requirements and does not replace the Safety Codes Act, the Pressure Equipment Safety Regulation (PESR), the Pressure Equipment Exemption Order, the codes and standards declared in force in Alberta, or any applicable ABSA requirements. Where there is a conflict, the legislation and applicable codes and standards govern.

2.0 Regulatory Basis

2.1 Safety Codes Act — Design Duties

Section 6 of the *Safety Codes Act* establishes that a person who creates, alters, has care and control of, owns, or offers a design for use by others is responsible for ensuring that the design:

- a) complies with the Act;
- b) is submitted for review or registration where required; and
- c) is appropriately addressed if the design is deregistered.

Design registration does not transfer the designer's, manufacturer's, owner's, or applicant's responsibilities to ABSA.

2.2 Safety Codes Act — Registration Decision

Section 40 of the *Safety Codes Act* provides the statutory basis for:

- a) registration of a design that meets the applicable requirements;
- b) terms and conditions, where applicable;
- c) written notice where registration is refused;
- d) deregistration of a design that does not meet the requirements of the Act or is unsafe; and
- e) appeal rights in relation to refusal or deregistration.

2.3 Pressure Equipment Safety Regulation

The following PESR provisions are particularly relevant to design registration:

PESR Provision	Subject
Section 6	Codes and standards declared in force
Section 14	Pressure-equipment design registration
Section 15	Boiler, pressure-vessel, fired-heater pressure-coil, and thermal liquid heating-system design submissions
Section 16	Pressure-piping-system design submissions
Section 17	Pressure-fitting design submissions
Section 18	Welding, brazing, and other joining-procedure submissions
Sections 19–21	Registration of designs and procedures
Section 22	Changes to registered designs
Section 23	Alternative design codes and standards

The applicant is responsible for determining if design registration is required, including whether an exemption applies.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Applicant (Submitter)

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the design complies with applicable legislation, regulations, codes, standards, and ABSA requirements. The applicant must submit complete, accurate, and clearly organized documentation and respond to requests for clarification or correction.

ABSA Safety Codes Officer

The ABSA Safety Codes Officer (SCO) reviews the submitted information, identifies deficiencies or matters requiring clarification, and determines whether the design has demonstrated compliance with the requirements for registration.

Applicant Responsibility

Under Part 1, section 6 of the Safety Codes Act, the applicant is responsible for ensuring that the design complies with the Act. Submission quality is one of the most significant factors affecting review efficiency. Complete, accurate, and clearly organized applications are more likely to move through the process without avoidable delay.

4.0 Process Overview

The objective of the design review and registration process is to ascertain, within reasonable bounds, whether a submitted design or procedure demonstrates compliance with the Safety Codes Act, applicable regulations, adopted codes and standards, and relevant ABSA requirements.

Applications are generally reviewed in the order received within the applicable service category. Assignment and sequencing may also consider technical specialization, file complexity, workload balancing, and regulatory priorities.

Review timing is influenced by:

- The completeness, organization, and technical quality of the application
- The complexity of the design and applicable requirements
- The clarity of drawings, calculations, and supporting documentation
- The applicant's responsiveness to requests for clarification or correction
- Demonstrated compliance with applicable Alberta legislation and codes

5.0 Process Stages

5.1 Submission Intake and Assignment

When ABSA receives a design registration application, the submission is logged and assigned a unique tracking number. The application is then entered into the Design Survey review queue and assigned to a Safety Codes Officer (SCO) based on workload and technical considerations.

Applicants should reference the ABSA tracking number in all subsequent correspondence.

5.1.1 Administrative Screening

ABSA may conduct an administrative screening to determine whether a submission appears sufficiently complete before it is entered into the Design Survey review queue.

Technical review will not begin until the application has been logged in the Design Survey queue and a Tracking Number (TN) has been issued.

Once the application is logged, the applicant or submitter will receive written confirmation, normally by email, identifying the assigned Tracking Number. The Tracking Number shall be referenced in all communication related to the design review and registration process.

Administrative screening does not constitute a technical review and does not indicate that the design is acceptable for registration.

5.2 Technical Review

The technical review begins when a complete application is logged in the DS queue and is available for review. The Safety Codes Officer (SCO) evaluates whether the submitted information demonstrates compliance with applicable legislation, regulations, codes, standards, and ABSA requirements.

The review may include and is not limited to:

- Assessment of whether the applicable Alberta legislation and other regulatory requirements are satisfied
- Assessment of drawings (inclusive of notes in the drawings) and supporting documentation
- Confirmation of the applicable code, edition, addenda, and registration scope
- Evaluation of design conditions and intended service
- Review of materials, dimensions, weld details, examination requirements, overpressure protection, calculations, analyses, testing requirements or test results

- Identification of requirements that have not been adequately demonstrated

The depth of review may vary depending on the submission category, complexity, novelty, risk, and quality of the information provided.

5.3 Review Outcomes

A review cycle may result in registration, a request for clarification, identification of deficiencies, administrative closure, refusal of registration, or another applicable regulatory outcome.

- **Registration:**
Where the submitted information demonstrates compliance with the applicable requirements, the design may proceed to registration.
- **Clarification or deficiencies:**
Where additional information, corrections, or clarification are required, the application may be placed on hold. The Safety Codes Officer (SCO) will issue comments, questions, or identified deficiencies to the contact listed on the application.
- **Administrative closure:**
Where the application becomes inactive, remains incomplete, or the applicant does not adequately respond within the specified timeline, ABSA may administratively close the application.
- **Refusal of registration:**
Where the submitted design has not demonstrated compliance with applicable requirements, the Safety Codes Officer (SCO) may refuse registration in accordance with the *Safety Codes Act*.

5.4 On-Hold and Clarification Cycle

Where deficiencies, questions, or the need for additional information are identified, the Safety Codes Officer (SCO) may place the application on hold. This allows the applicant to provide corrections, clarification, or additional supporting information. A response that includes revised information, corrections, or additional documentation will be treated as a resubmission.

If the SCO does not receive a response within 30 calendar days, the application may be classified as inactive or stale. Before proceeding with administrative closure, ABSA will notify the applicant of any outstanding matters and any final response deadline.

Regulatory note:

The on-hold or clarification cycle is a discretionary administrative opportunity and is not a statutory right. ABSA may proceed with administrative closure in accordance with applicable procedures or, where the submitted design has not demonstrated compliance, may refuse registration in accordance with Section 40 of the *Safety Codes Act*.

5.5 Resubmission and Subsequent Review

To support an efficient review, the applicant or submitter should provide one coordinated and consolidated response to the Safety Codes Officer's comments.

The response should address each identified deficiency or question in a clear, point-by-point format. Revised drawings, calculations, and supporting documents should clearly identify all changes and supersede any previous versions, where applicable.

Fragmented, incomplete, unclear, or conflicting responses may delay the review and may result in additional comments or deficiencies.

When a resubmission is received, the application is returned to ABSA's review queue and a new review cycle begins. The time required for subsequent review depends on the completeness and quality of the resubmission, the extent of the revisions, technical complexity, workload, and any applicable service category.

The Safety Codes Officer (SCO) may allow more than one resubmission. However, repeated failure to resolve identified deficiencies may result in the application being classified as inactive or stale, administratively closed, or considered for refusal of registration, as applicable.

5.6 Inactive or Stale Applications

An application may be considered inactive when the applicant or submitter does not respond within the specified response period.

An application may also be considered stale when repeated review cycles do not resolve identified deficiencies, when required information remains outstanding, or when the submitted information is no longer sufficiently current to support continued review.

Before proceeding with administrative closure, the Safety Codes Officer (SCO) will issue a notification to the applicant. The notification may identify the outstanding matters and should provide a final response deadline.

5.7 Registration

When a design is accepted for registration, ABSA will issue the applicable registration package.

The registration package may include, as applicable:

- registration number;
- an acceptance letter or certificate of registration, together with the registered documents; and
- Invoice for the applicable review and registration fees.

Note: Registration numbers may be CRN, ALD, ALT, PP, or another applicable designation, depending on the type of submission and the outcome of the Design Survey process.

5.8 Administrative Closure

An application may be administratively closed due to:

- an incomplete submission;
- a non-responsive applicant or submitter;
- extended inactivity or stale status;

- failure to respond within specified timelines; or
- voluntary withdrawal by the applicant or submitter, where applicable.

Administrative closure ends the current application process.

Applicable fees will be calculated and invoiced to the applicant or submitter for submissions that have been administratively closed.

Notes:

- Where reasonable additional time is required, the applicant or submitter should request from the Safety Codes Officer an extension before the response deadline. Any extension is discretionary and may be subject to conditions.
- Administrative closure is an administrative file-management action. It is distinct from a formal refusal of registration.
- Where an administratively closed submission is later reactivated, ABSA may require a new application, updated forms, a new tracking number, applicable fees, and placement in the current review queue.

5.9 Refusal of Registration

A refusal of registration is a formal regulatory decision.

The Administrator or Safety Codes Officer may refuse registration in accordance with Section 40 of the *Safety Codes Act*.

Where registration is refused, ABSA will issue a written notice identifying the basis for the decision, as required by Section 40 of the *Safety Codes Act*.

A refusal of registration may be issued when the submitted design has not demonstrated compliance with applicable legislation, regulations, codes, standards, or other registration requirements. A refusal may be initiated at any technical review stage where the requirements for registration have not been met.

Where registration is required and a design submission has been administratively closed or registration has been refused, the design that was the subject of that submission shall not be used to manufacture pressure equipment or be placed into pressure service in Alberta.

Applicable fees will be calculated and invoiced to the applicant or submitter for submissions where registration has been refused.

6.0 Target Review Turnaround Times

The following targets apply to complete applications that are ready for technical review. They are review-cycle targets and do not guarantee registration.

Review cycle	Regular service	Rush service
Technical review	15 business days	10 business days
Resubmission review	15 business days	10 business days

Note: The initial technical review starts only after the application is logged into the Design Survey queue and TN is issued.

6.1 How the Turnaround Target Is Measured

The turnaround target begins when a complete application or complete resubmission is entered into the applicable technical review queue. The target ends when ABSA completes that review cycle.

A review cycle may result in registration, a request for clarification, identification of deficiencies, administrative action, refusal of registration, or another applicable regulatory outcome.

Actual turnaround time may be affected by submission volume, technical complexity, the quality and clarity of the application or resubmission, and the availability of required specialist resources.

7.0 Communication Expectations

- ABSA will communicate primarily with the contact identified on the applicable application form.
- Application-specific information will not be disclosed to other parties without written authorization or another legal basis.
- All correspondence should reference the ABSA Tracking Number.
- Responses should address each comment, question, or deficiency in a clear, point-by-point format.
- Revised drawings and documents should clearly identify changes and replace superseded versions, where applicable.

8.0 Submission Checklist

Before submitting an application, the applicant or submitter should confirm that the submission includes, as applicable:

- the completed application form;
- required drawings and specifications;
- design calculations and supporting analyses;
- material information, service conditions, and design conditions;
- required declarations, reports, and test documentation;
- a clear document index, consistent document revision identification; and
- payment or billing information required for the selected service.

Note: The checklist is intended to support completeness of the submission. Additional information may be requested where necessary to complete the review.

9.0 Design Registration Process Flow

ABSA DESIGN SURVEY DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

ABSA

The Pressure Equipment Safety Authority

