Continuing Competence Program

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Version 7.5 Approved – June 30, 2009
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document presents the requirements of the College of Alberta Professional Foresters (CAPF/College) Continuing Competence Program (CCP). CAPF Council has approved the Continuing Competence Program (March 15, 2005) for implementation. A copy has been provided to Alberta Human Resources and Employment for their information.

- Reporting requirements are effective April 1, 2005.
- The full program is effective beginning April 1, 2007.
- Audits of regulated member compliance begin in September 2010.

1.1 Purpose

The College of Alberta Professional Foresters has self-regulation status under the Regulated Forestry Profession Act (RFPA) and Regulation. The College’s primary mandate is “to serve society by regulating, enhancing and providing leadership in the practice of the profession of forestry in the best interests of the public”.

One of the key elements for safeguarding the public’s interest is to maintain the continuing competence of regulated professionals. Thus, the Regulated Forestry Profession Act requires that the College implement a program, which monitors the ongoing competence of its members and enhances the provision of professional services.

The purpose of the Continuing Competence Program is to provide a framework for developing, measuring and documenting the competency of our members with the goal of individual and public benefit.

1.2 Guiding Principles

1.2.1 Our continuing competence program will address the legal requirements as identified in the Regulated Forestry Profession Act (RSA 2000; Chapter R-13; Section 43(2) and the Registered Professional Foresters Regulation (AR 75/2002) Section 12 (a, b, c).
1.2.2 Our continuing competence program will be efficient, fair and effective.
1.2.3 Our continuing competence program will be publicly credible and respect member confidentiality.
1.2.4 Our College, its members, and their employers are encouraged to share responsibility in the delivery and success of our continuing competence program.
1.2.5 Our continuing competence program will ensure that accountability to the College for continued competence rests with the individual member.
1.2.6 Our continuing competence program will promote continuous learning and career-long professional development.
1.2.7 Our continuing competence program will recognize that professional competence requirements change over time as industries evolve and new technologies emerge.
1.2.8 Our College is responsible for periodically monitoring its regulated members’ efforts to maintain competency.
1.3 Commitments

1.3.1 CAPF will administer a continuing competence program with due diligence to demonstrate the on-going competence of professional foresters to the public.

1.3.2 The Continuing Competence Program will focus on encouraging and assisting members to be compliant. Compliance is necessary to demonstrate to the public that the College is capable of self-regulation.

1.3.3 The Continuing Competence Committee will define consequences for non-compliance and communicate them to members.

1.4 Acknowledgements

In developing the program model, the Competence Committee drew upon the experience of several other professional organizations including:
- The College of Psychologists of Ontario
- The College of Alberta Pharmacists
- The Alberta Association of Registered Nurses
- College of Physical Therapists of Alberta

2.0 CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Maintaining the competence of regulated professionals is a key objective of professional regulation. The Regulated Forestry Profession Act assigns the College of Alberta Professional Foresters the responsibility for establishing a Continuing Competence Program. The College's standards of practice require regulated members to "remain competent in their area of practice and only claim to be competent in those areas where they have specialized training or experience".

Competence is not permanent; it must be continually reviewed in light of evolving science, increasingly stringent professional standards, and public expectations. The College addresses this changing environment in its standards of practice by requiring its members to: "apply the best knowledge that is reasonably available to them and make a personal commitment to a process of continuous learning to keep current in the skills and knowledge of the professional practice of forestry."

The regulated member, the College, and the employer all share responsibility in ensuring that professional competence is maintained. However, CAPF believes that regulated members are best able to assess their own professional development needs and pursue these in a professional manner. Regulated members are expected to engage in activities directed toward maintaining and enhancing their levels of knowledge and skills in their field(s) of practice.

Maintaining competence is the professional’s responsibility and self-assessment is an important component. Members are required to keep records of their continuing competence activities and report them to the College. The College is responsible for ensuring that members are meeting the program requirements. Audits of member compliance will be conducted.
2.1 Updates to Continuing Competence Program Guide

Version 7.5 (June 30, 2009) - Updates were made to the March 15, 2005 CCP Guide to reorganize components for clarity and fluidity, adjust formatting for consistency and streamline and simplify text. Modernization of the web based Continuing Competence reporting and submission procedures were captured in Steps 2 and 3 of the “Three Step Approach”. Reference to the “Level III Learning” category was removed. Descriptions of acceptable “Self-study” learning options were added under Level I. A “Reporting and Submission Deadlines” section was added. The “Program Implementation” Section was removed.

Version 8.0 (March 19, 2010) - Updates have been made to Version 7.5, including numbering of the Table of Contents. Section 1.1 “Purpose” and Guiding Principle 1.2.1 have been added. In Section 4.0, Learning Events may be broken into both categories, Legislation, Policy and Professional Practice and General/Technical. Additional examples and self-study learning options have been added to Sections 4.2 and 4.3. In Section 4.3.1., two criteria have been amalgamated, added examples of Level I learning and a self-study option. In Section 4.3.2, a clarification of what is not Level II was added. Under Section 4.4, text was edited. Under Section 5.0, steps 4-6 have been removed. Section 5.1 has been reformatted and clarified. In Section 5.3, the process of “Declaration” has been edited. Section 6 “Non-compliance” added. Section 7 edited. Section 8 “Consequences” added. Section 9 edited. Section 10 added. Section 11 updated with new definitions and obsolete ones removed.

2.2 Continuing Competence Program Review

The Competence Committee will conduct a full review of the Continuing Competence Program in 2012 and provide a report to CAPF Council. The report shall recommend modifications, if any, necessary to improve the administration of the program and/or attain improved competence of the membership.

3.0 A THREE-STEP APPROACH

Understanding where individual effort should be directed to maintain or enhance skills and knowledge is imperative.

Step 1. Conduct a Practice Self-Assessment and develop an Enhancement Plan

The Practice Self-Assessment may take many forms, depending on the type of work, location, and personal preference.

The CAPF does not dictate a methodology for Practice Self-Assessment. It is user-defined and may vary widely from member to member. CAPF does require members to conduct an annual Practice Self-Assessment and develop an Enhancement Plan according to members’ individual preferences.

Many institutions have processes to assess annual performance and training needs. These types of planning tools may be effective for practice assessment and eliminate duplication of effort. Individuals may also have their own formalized process to carry out this assessment.
For those who prefer to think and act without formal documentation, the CAPF accepts this diversity of approach. However, a structured and documented method is preferable. **Documentation is imperative to proving due diligence in all aspects of professional activities and should be practiced.** Furthermore, a deliberate review of your practice that results in a defined Enhancement Plan can be referred to throughout the year to aid in selection of competency enhancement activities.

Audits will not review the specific details of the Practice Self-Assessment but only require the regulated member’s Annual Submission of Reporting Forms. With this submission, the College will assume that the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program have been met, of which the Practice Self-Assessment is a component.

An **Enhancement Plan** sets out the member’s learning focus to address the continued professional development needs identified as priorities for the upcoming years. The plan may include both areas of current practice and areas of future practice.

Mandatory minimum competence unit credits must be considered when planning these activities.

**Step 2. Record continuing competence activities**

Members shall maintain records of all completed continuing competence program activities for a period of 5 years to demonstrate their participation and have supporting documentation in case of audit or complaint. Continuing competence activities shall be recorded and reported on the CAPF website, [www.capf.ca](http://www.capf.ca). Drop down lists of common learning events with maximum CU are available for your convenience, or individual learning events and CU may be entered.

Members may and are encouraged to enter and update their Continuing Competency Learning Events on the CAPF website as they occur throughout the year. This will ensure your learning events are not lost or forgotten and the Competence Committee will be able to better monitor Member’s progress towards achieving the 3-year mandatory minimums.

**Step 3. Remit the required reporting forms.**

Members shall **remit continuing competence records annually between April 1st and June 30th**, ensuring all information is complete and accurate.

Members can “Export Continuing Competence Event Info to MS Excel / Create CSV List” from the web at any time during the year.

A numerical summary of the continuing competence activities completed during the reporting year is calculated automatically.
4.0 CONTINUING COMPETENCE ACTIVITIES

Continuing competence is gained by periodic and on-going educational or training experiences for personal or professional development, in which participants are assumed to have previously attained a basic level of education, training, or experience. These experiences may serve to gain new, or update existing competencies necessary for effective forestry practice, or be in ancillary competencies that can be applied to improve practice. A Competence Unit (CU) is a learning contact time equivalent. (i.e., Learning experiences are assessed based on the number of hours spent in that learning activity.) Learning events may be broken into two categories, (Legislation, Policy, and Professional Practice or General / Technical), and rounded to the nearest ½ CU.

4.1 Mandatory Minimums

Mandatory minimums are set for the 3-year total CU. A 3-year total of 84 CU is required, of which 14 CU must be achieved from training activities in Legislation, Policy, or Professional Practice (LPPP). The balance of 70 CU can be made up of General / Technical (Gen/Tech or G/T) over the 3-year period. General / Technical material may be specified within the Scope of Practice of Forestry, or related professional or business activities such as GIS, Safety, or business management and related to forestry, professionalism or the member’s position. The Competence Committee will provide guidance on the appropriateness of any Learning Activities claimed by members.

For reporting and totalling purposes, the 3-year required total will continue on a rolling basis, so that year-four CUs will replace year-one CUs. CAPF recommends members attain approximately 30 CU each year, to avoid “hills and valleys”, which may make it difficult to maintain the mandatory minimums.

4.2 Legislation, Policy, and Professional Practice (LPPP)

Over the three-year period, 14 CU must be achieved from activities specific to legislation, policy, or professional practice and may be comprised of any combination of Level I and Level II activities. LPPP learning requires direct involvement with the listening, viewing, researching, reading, writing, preparing or committee debate on material that does or will shape Provincial or Federal legislation, policy or professional practice references relative to the practice forestry. The CAPF recommends obtaining about 5 LPPP CU annually, to maintain the 3-year requirement.

Examples of these learning activities are:

- CAPF AGM (Level I)
- CAPF LPPP Designated Workshops (Level I)
- CAPF Professional Exam study session (Level I)
- CAPF Professional Exam (passing) – (4 CU, Level II)
• Forestry Commons Distance Learning Modules (Many modules, but not all qualify as LPPP. LPPP Examples: Forest Tenure 100, Public Participation in the Forest Sector, or Stewardship / Assessment Modules) (Level I) http://www.environment.ualberta.ca/Forestry_Commons/

• WOLF classroom and on-line courses. Many WOLF topics, but not all qualify as LPPP. LPPP Example: “Woodland Stewardship”, http://www.w-o-l-f.ca/index.html

• Seminars / Workshops on Aboriginal Consultation Legislation and Practical Implementation (Usually Level I)

• ABCFP on-line course, “Working Effectively with Aboriginal Peoples” http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_education/workshops.asp #ab09 (Up to 8 CU, Level II. Additional readings can be claimed as Self-Study as described below.)

• Professional Ethics – University, College, (Usually Level II) and Professional Association courses (Usually Level I)

• Seminars / Workshops on Professional Sign-off Requirements (Usually Level I)

• Training on Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Act, Regulations and Code

LPPP Self-Study:

• Self-Study options and annual maximums as described under “Level I Learning 4.3.1”. For example, reading applicable Provincial and Federal Acts, Regulations, Policy and other LPPP-related literature, writing and publishing LPPP-related professional papers and preparing and delivering LPPP-related presentations.

• Sponsoring Forester: for active fulfilment of the “Sponsoring Forester Responsibilities” as per the Registration Policy - revised January 2009. Documentation should be kept of meeting times, discussion topics, etc. As well, you must submit the Competency Development Plan as per the Registration Policy (January 2009) etc.

Effective as of the 2008/2009 reporting year and going forward.

(Up to 2 CU annually, Level I, LPPP regardless of how many FITs you sponsor).

• Professional Committee: for fulfilling the obligations and duties as directed, as Committee chair or member, in the pursuit of developing policy or legislation that will affect the Practice of Forestry in Alberta.

Effective as of the 2009/2010 reporting year and going forward.

(e.g. College of Alberta Professional Foresters Council or sub-committees, AFPA Policy Committee, FMP development – available to lead strategists, ARS) Health and Safety Committee participation is not eligible. (Up to 5 CU annually, Level I, LPPP)
4.3 Learning Categories

Members participating in learning activities may claim CU credits to achieve the Continuing Competence Program mandatory requirements.

There are two learning categories for which competence unit credits may be claimed.

4.3.1 Level I Learning:

The Level I Learning category includes learning experiences that would be classified as a formally organized session of information exchange where the mode of learning is a “lecture” or “seminar presentation” to impart information from an expert to an audience. The communication is largely unidirectional (from presenter to audience) and there is minimal active participation of the audience, with no preparation or post-session follow-up required by the member. The objective of the session is to increase the technical understanding in the audience of the subject matter being presented.

Alternatively, Level I learning also includes member initiated learning through self-study. The member identifies the material to be learned, as well as when and where the learning will take place. The mode of learning is primarily “reading” but may include speaking to an audience in a formal, announced presentation or be the case of writing a paper for publication. Appropriate documentation is the responsibility of the member, and should include a copy of the material as well as the date(s).

Credit - Level I activities shall be assessed 1 CU per 1 hour.

For use as a Level I CU each learning experience must have at least 3 of the following 4 characteristics or be self-study:

- Session agenda/outline/learning objectives made available prior to session
- Hosted and presented by a formalized body (institutionally supported activity), or session leader / presenter who is a recognized expert in their field with a specialized/advanced knowledge of subject matter being shared with audience
- Registration necessary for attending
- Outcomes/proceedings (formal or informal) produced from session (record of the information presented is made available)

Examples of Level I Learning (lecture format) include:

- Forest Industry Lecture Series (FILS) lectures (usually 1.5 CU)
- CIF Technical Sessions (usually 5 to 6 CU)
- CIF E-Lectures in the current “real-time” series or past series by downloading the PowerPoint and WAV files for viewing and original lecture presentation. (usually 1 CU depending on the length of presentation.)
- Sustainable Forests Management Network of Centres of Excellence (SFMN-NCE) conferences, Knowledge Exchange and Technology Exploitation (KETE) workshops
- Workshops/seminars (includes classroom, on-line and CD-ROMS) put on by institutions such as the Forest Engineering Research Institute (FERIC), Alberta Research Council (ARC), Canadian Forest Service (CFS), Alberta Conservation Association (ACA), Foothills Research Institute, Alberta Forest Extension Network (AFEX) http://www.afex.ca/multimedia, and others.
- Teaching and Learning workshops/seminars delivered by a recognized expert (This can include in-house training and field tour sessions that meet the criteria described above. Example topics could include Silviculture, Operations or Reclamation Practices or Watercourse Crossing Management.)

Level I Learning (self-study) includes:

- Professional Presentations: for preparing and delivering an original, professional presentation. (e.g. at a conference, seminar, workshop, university, public advisory committee, study session or AGM). Depending on the material you are presenting, it may be Gen/Tech or LPPP. All listed authors may claim CU.
  Effective as of the 2008/2009 reporting year and going forward.
  Examples: If you gave a 45 minute presentation on the CAPF code of ethics at the annual CAPF Study Session, you would claim 1.5 hours under Level I; LPPP. If you gave a 30-minute general presentation on forest management, you would claim 1 hour under Level I; Gen/Tech.

- Publication of Professional Papers: for writing and publishing an original professional or refereed paper. Depending on the material you are writing, it may be Gen / Tech or LPPP. All listed authors may claim CU.
  Effective as of the 2008/2009 reporting year and going forward.
  Example: If you published a paper (e.g., research findings, forestry practices or policy, professional ethics, etc.) in a peer-reviewed publication, you can claim 2 hours for that under Level I; Gen/Tech or Level I; LPPP.

- Reading: of Legislation, refereed or professional articles. Depending on the material you are reading, it may be LPPP or Gen / Tech.
  Effective as of the 2008/2009 reporting year and going forward.

- Practice Self-Assessment and Enhancement Plan: for documenting in writing a plan that demonstrates consideration for maintaining and enhancing professional competence in one or more of the seven areas identified in the “Practice of Forestry”. Refer to Section 3, Step 1.
  Effective as of the 2009/2010 reporting year and going forward.

**Self Study CU Summary Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Self-Study</th>
<th>Annual Maximum CU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsoring Forester (Effective 08/09, forward)</td>
<td>Up to 2 CU, LPPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Committee (Effective 09/10, forward)</td>
<td>Up to 5 CU, LPPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (Effective 08/09, forward)</td>
<td>2x presentation length, 4 CU max, LPPP or G/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Publication (Effective 08/09, forward)</td>
<td>Up to 2 CU / paper, 4 CU max, LPPP or G/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (Effective 08/09, forward)</td>
<td>Up to 1 CU /document, 3 CU max, LPPP or G/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Self-Assessment (Effective 09/10, forward)</td>
<td>Up to 1 CU Gen/Tech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational meetings, administrative meetings, board meetings etc. where the objective is administration are not acceptable Level I learning experiences.

4.3.2 Level II Learning:

The Level II Learning category includes learning experiences that are significantly more interactive with greater emphasis on the learning process or engagement at the participant level. Due to the engagement level, the participant’s retention and ability to apply their learning is much higher than in Level I Learning. Pre and/or post session effort will likely be required of the member, and may include an exam or final report submission.

The intention of Level II CU is to recognize the increased effort and expectations for active involvement by the participants. (e.g., whereas a 1 hr FILS seminar would be assigned 1 CU, a 7 hour EMS training session would yield 14 CU.)

Credit - Level II activities shall be assessed 2 CU per 1 hour.

For use as a Level II CU each learning experience must have at least 5 of the following 8 characteristics:

- Session agenda/outline/learning objectives made available prior to session
- Hosted and presented by a formalized body (institutionally supported activity), or session leader / presenter who is a recognized expert in their field with a specialized/advanced knowledge of subject matter being shared with audience
- Learning material (textbooks, class handouts) required for meaningful participation
- Individual work (outside of session) required for meaningful participation and an expectation of ‘homework’ is part of the session’s learning process
- Testing/evaluation of participant’s learning is part of the session and evidence of testing must be retained for audit purposes
- Meaningful interaction among participants and/or with leader/teacher is a functional part of the learning experience
- Session is offered as part of a formalized learning program leading to a certificate, diploma or degree
- Session is a minimum of one half day in length (contact time)

Examples of Level II learning include:

- Module-type learning experiences (e.g., Silviculture Institute of BC, some courses or portions thereof delivered by the Hinton Training Centre)
- Formal courses from a university, college, or technical institute
- Courses from training agencies such as First-Aid/EMS, TDG, WHMIS, or software companies training in technical (non-administration-type) software usage. (Knowledge testing usually leads to a certificate being issued.)
- Canadian Forest Service’s Interactive Fire CD-ROM
For clarity, asking questions as an audience member in a CIF or FILS type lecture, visiting mills or other processing facilities, or attending field tours where the material and learning process is not formally tested, are not acceptable Level II learning experiences. Depending on the event structure, these experiences may qualify as Level I learning CU by meeting the required criteria as described in Section 4.3.1.

4.4 Practical (Work) Experience

Members are asked to report on their practical work experience. However, these hours do not contribute towards fulfilling a member’s Continuing Competence requirements.

The CAPF acknowledges that for various reasons (Extenuating Circumstances such as illness, Leave of Absence, Maternity Leave, extended travel, or layoffs), members may maintain their “Active” status while not actually practicing forestry. Members may also engage in the practice of forestry part-time by working less than full-time hours, or by dedicating a significant percentage of their working time outside of the scope of the practice of forestry. If appropriate, members should declare less than full time practice as this will allow the Competence Committee to exercise appropriate judgement when reviewing Continuing Competence accomplishments in the three-year period.

As per Section 6.1.3, if a Member determines that there are extenuating circumstances that have resulted in the member being non-compliant with the CCP, the member must submit a Variance Request to the Competence Committee.

5.0 ANNUAL REPORTING

Annual reporting as prescribed under Section 34(1)(b)(i) of the RFPA and Section 12(b) and (c) of the Regulation shall be done by each regulated member and submitted to the College. Annual Reports are complete if:

1. All reported information is accurate and submitted on time.
2. Valid Competence Units have been tallied and reported for 3 years. (Zeros are valid and must be reported.)
3. Competence Units have only been claimed for the reporting period in which they were earned. (i.e., carry forward or backward between reporting years is not permitted.)
5.1 Reporting, Remitting and Audit Notification Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Periods</th>
<th>Remitting Periods</th>
<th>Audit Notification Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008</td>
<td>April 1, 2008 – June 30, 2008</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009</td>
<td>April 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some circumstances, a member’s records may show a shortage on the 84/14 requirements. This may be caused by a member having not completed a full 3-year reporting window. A variance may be approved for extenuating circumstances such as periods of unemployment, leave of absence / maternity leave, registration acceptance part way through a fiscal year, member not registered for a full 3-yr period yet, etc.

5.2 Documentation

Members are required to keep physical evidence of all professional development activities for a period of 5 years. This would include as a minimum: an updated list of professional development efforts to include all agendas, outlines, course syllabuses, Journal and article cover page documents annotated to show when the paper/report was read for self-study CU, copy of authored profession papers or presentations, Table of Contents for major workshops or course binders, receipts for registration fees, attendance lists for in-house presentations, certificates of attendance or completion, copy of FIT/SF Competency Development Plan, record of committee meeting times, dates and durations etc.

Member’s Continuing Competence records can be maintained throughout the year on the CAPF website and can be exported periodically, including a progress summary of your CU obtained to-date.

The documentation of personal development will be examined and evaluated when a member’s file is selected for audit. Only members of the College’s Continuing Competence Committee or a person directed by the CAPF Council will have access to a member’s records (see Section 5.4 for further clarification).

5.3 Signatures / Declaration

The CAPF deems submitted on-line forms as equivalent-to-original signed forms. It is the Member’s responsibility to annually submit their CUs, with this submission being the Member’s declaration of understanding of the continuing competence program requirements. The on-line system will automatically lock down all Continuing Competence records pertaining to an individual at midnight on June 30th.
5.4 Confidentiality of Continuing Competence Materials

The security and confidentiality of the information (records and documents) accumulated or produced to demonstrate continuing competence will be strictly maintained. All material associated with participation in a continuing competence program is confidential as per Section 43.2(1) of the RFPA, which states:

Information related to participation in a continuing competence program under this Part is confidential, and any person who has access to or comes into possession of such information shall not publish, release or disclose the information in any manner except as is necessary to carry out powers and duties under this Part.

Continuing competence records are confidential and will not be provided to your employer, clients or the public.

However, under the RFPA, the Competence Committee may:

- Publish or provide information obtained from members in a summarized or statistical form that does not compromise the identity of a specific member.
- Refer specific member records to the Complaints Director for consideration for non-compliance in the CCP, displaying a lack of competence or unprofessional conduct.
- Release or disclose to the counsel of a regulated member in connection with specified College proceedings.

6.0 NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE CCP

As per Section 1.3.3 this Section describes the process that will be followed in the event a regulated member is not compliant with the CCP (minimum 84/14 CU) requirements. Annually, membership records will be reviewed and members who are not in compliance will be contacted. This Section describes factors that the Competence Committee will consider when determining:

- when members will have conditions applied to their Practice Permit
- when suspension of the member’s Practice Permit will occur
- when suspension of the member’s registration will occur
- when a member will be referred to the complaints director for unprofessional conduct

In the event a member is not in compliance with the CCP requirements at the end of a three-year reporting period, there will be a four-step process (Sections 6.1, 6.2, 8.3 and 8.4), with the consequences for non-compliance increasing with each step.

6.1 Process: Notification to Member

Between April 1st and June 30th, the Competence Committee will review all member’s Continuing Competence reported CU. The College will notify any member that has not reported that they have met the CCP requirements – this notice will:
i. Remind the member that the annual window for official on-line remittance of Continuing Competence CU closes June 30th and that CAPF’s records currently show they have not met the CCP requirements. (Members must contact the CAPF office to have previous reporting periods unlocked to be able to enter older activities.)

ii. Outline the process the College will follow beginning July 1st, in the event of member non-compliance with the CCP (Sections 6.2, 8.3 and 8.4.)

iii. Outline the process the member must follow in the event that there are extenuating circumstances (Section 6.1.3) that have resulted in the member being non-compliant with the CCP.

### 6.1.2 Making a Variance Request to the Competence Committee

As described in Section 6.1, iii, a member who has extenuating circumstances and will not be in compliance with the CCP as of June 30th, must immediately, but no later than June 30th, submit to the Competence Committee Chair in writing (email preferred) a request for a variance. The variance request must provide all relevant details with respect to why they are requesting a variance, describe any extenuating circumstances, and the timing and duration of the period causing the request for a variance.

The Competence Committee will evaluate each variance request case, including any remitted continuing competence records, and apply one or more of the following outcomes so that the member:

1. be permitted extended time to complete their CCP requirements relative to the CCP reporting and remitting deadlines,
2. be permitted to have adjusted CCP requirements,
3. be required to submit an Action Plan to come into compliance with the CCP,
4. be required to document and submit a written Practice Self-assessment and Enhancement Plan (as per the CCP)
5. may or may not have Condition(s) placed on their Practice Permit
6. may be denied the recognition of extenuating circumstances and must comply with the current CCP requirements. The member will be referred to Section 6.2.
6.1.3 Extenuating Circumstances

When deciding on whether or not a variance request is acceptable or unacceptable, the Competence Committee may take the following extenuating circumstances into consideration (note – these are common examples; this is not an all inclusive list):

1. Has the member been unable to work for a significant portion of the three year reporting period due to, for example:
   a. maternity or paternity leave
   b. a lengthy illness or injury
   c. the inability to secure full-time work
2. Did the member engage in the practice of forestry part-time by working less than full-time hours, or by dedicating a significant percentage of their working time outside of the scope of the practice of forestry?
3. Was the member’s enrolment or re-instatement date with the College such that a significant portion of the reporting year was not spent as a Regulated Member?
4. Are there other extenuating circumstances that have prevented the member from being in compliance with the CCP?

6.2 Process: Issuance of Temporary Practice Permit

On July 1st (i.e. immediately after the on-line remitting period has closed), the CAPF will determine and notify CCP non-compliant members of their status. (Members who submitted a variance request on June 30th will be issued a temporary practice permit, effective August 1st for 60 days, while the Competence Committee reviews their request.)

i. The Registrar will notify the member that the member’s practice permit will be issued effective August 1st (providing Good Character annual remittance and membership dues payment are also made) and remain valid for 60 days. As per the Regulation, Section 11(2), there will be a condition(s) placed on the Practice Permit, which will not be removed until such time as the member has met the CCP requirements.

ii. The Registrar will also outline the consequences for non-compliance with the CCP. (Section 8.0)

   a. If the member is able to meet the CCP requirements by the expiration of the Practice Permit on September 30th, the Member must immediately upon completion of the CU deficiency enter the new activity hours online in the current open reporting period and notify the Registrar.

   b. If the Registrar is satisfied that the deficiency has been rectified, a new Practice Permit may be issued without conditions and remain valid until July 31st of the following year.
7.0 AUDITS

The Competence Committee (or designate) shall conduct audits of regulated members to ensure consistent and on-going compliance with the requirements of the CAPF Continuing Competence Program. Audits shall be performed annually, beginning in September 2010 at the completion of the first 3-year reporting period (2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10).

7.1 Audits of Members in Compliance With the CCP

Annual audits of regulated members in compliance with the CCP requirements will have the following components:

- A sample of 5% of the total number of regulated members will be selected for audit.
- Members will be selected based on a random selection of registration numbers.
- Where a member has been audited in the previous audit year, does not have “active” status or is not in compliance with the 84/14 CCP requirements, a replacement member will be drawn to complete the audit sample selection process.

7.1.1 Notification

The Chair of the Competence Committee (or designate) shall advise in writing each regulated member selected for audit that his/her file has been selected by September 1st (or as early as July 1st) annually.

7.1.2 Requirement for Documentation

Selected members shall submit documentation as per the Regulation, Section 12(c), supporting competence units claimed to the Chair of the Competence Committee (or designate) within 45 days (or as early as August 15th and no later than October 15th) of receipt of audit notification.

Failure to provide documentation or to provide such within specified periods will result in the Competence Committee Chair filing a complaint with the Complaints Director.

The Competence Committee may, at its discretion, contact the member to confirm information/documentation provided for audit.

7.1.3 Audit Parameters

The Competence Committee (or designate) reviews supporting documentation and submitted on-line records within 45 days of receiving documentation (as early as October 1st and no later than January 1st).

The audit will determine the regulated member’s status (i.e. Compliant or Non-compliant) with the provisions of the Continuing Competence Program by verifying the following.
The Member may be offered a limited timeframe to rectify documentation deficiencies, should any be discovered during the Member’s Records Audit. The timeframe, method of re-submission and number of acceptable submissions will be at the discretion of the Competence Committee (or designate) and must occur before the completion of the Audit Report.

7.1.4 Audit Reports

The Chair of the Competence Committee (or designate) will prepare a detailed audit report for each member audited, including specific directions to the regulated member and Registrar for follow-up action.

The Chair of the Competence Committee,

a. may direct a member to complete courses/training in a specified period of time,

b. may direct the Registrar to place conditions on a regulated member’s practice permit,

c. may register a complaint with the Complaints Director regarding a regulated member’s professional practice,

d. shall provide the regulated member with the audit report concerning their status (compliant/non-compliant) within 45 days (as early as November 15th and no later than February 15th) of completing the audit of the regulated member’s file.

8.0 CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

8.1 Non-Compliant After an Audit Assessment

Members who believe that they have met the requirements of the CCP, but upon audit review of their records, are found to be insufficient in the number of qualifying credits, (e.g. due to the nature or topic matter of the CU being claimed as inappropriate; or in the Learning Level being reclassified upon audit review, from a Level II to a Level I; or an LPPP activity being reclassified as Gen/Tech; or in the over claiming of self-study activities beyond the Annual Maximum), will be referred to Section 8.3.

Members who have failed to meet the CCP requirements after an audit assessment will be required to submit an Action Plan to the Competence Committee within 30 days of being notified of the audit results.
8.2 Non-compliant After a Temporary Practice Permit Expires

If the member is unable to meet the CCP requirements for the previous 3-year reporting period by the expiration of the Practice Permit on September 30th, they must prepare and submit in advance of September 30th, to the Registrar an Action Plan with a completion date, detailing how and when the CCP requirements will be met.

8.3 Process: Submitting an Action Plan

The Competence Committee will review the Action Plan, the proposed completion date and decide whether the action plan is acceptable, needs minor amendments, or is unacceptable and within 60 days either:

1. Approve it as is
2. Approve it with conditions
3. Reject it, provide reasons and ask for a resubmission

If a member obtains an Approved Action Plan by September 30th, the Registrar will issue a Practice Permit, with conditions, valid until the date approved to complete the Action Plan.

At the completion of the Action Plan to the satisfaction of the Registrar, a new Practice Permit will be issued without conditions and remain valid until July 31st of the following year.

8.4 Process: Practice Permit or Registration Suspension, or Refer to Complaints Director

As soon as is reasonable after October 1st, the Competence Committee will review the records of any members not in compliance with the CCP. Excepting out those with an approved variance request or approved action plan, the Competence Committee will make a recommendation to the Registrar on whether to suspend the practice permit, registration or refer the member to the complaints director.

Registrar will notify (via registered mail) non-compliant Members who did not submit an Action Plan by September 30th, informing them that either their practice permit is suspended as per the RFPA Section 34(2)(c), and/or that their registration is suspended as per the RFPA Section 37(4) until they comply with the CCP requirements or that the member will be referred to the complaints director for unprofessional conduct as per RFPA Section 43.1(2)(b) and Section 1(1)(gg)(vi).

Alternatively, if an Approved Action Plan is not completed as scheduled, the Registrar will notify the member (via registered mail) that either their practice permit is suspended as per the RFPA Section 34(2)(c), and/or that their registration is suspended as per the RFPA Section 37(4) until they comply with the CCP requirements or that the member will be referred to the complaints director for unprofessional conduct as per RFPA Section 43.1(2)(b) and Section 1(1)(gg)(vi).

The Registrar may advise the member's employer and post notice of the practice permit or registration suspension on the CAPF website and in the College’s newsletter.
9.0 APPEALS

Appeals may be requested by a member: Where a member is notified of a pending or of an immediate suspension of their practice permit or registration, or of conditions placed on their practice permit under 8.4 above, for being non-compliant with the Continuing Competence Program.

9.1 Appeal Process

If a member’s practice permit or registration is suspended, or their practice permit has conditions placed on it under the authority of the RFPA Section 34(2), (applying for or renewing a practice permit), the member may appeal for a review by council within 30 days under Section 35(1).

9.1.1 Records

Decisions of the council review may be posted on the CAPF website and in the College’s newsletter. Personal information of individuals will not be published.

Audit Reports and decisions of the council review will be retained by CAPF for a period of 3 years. The Registrar shall destroy the audit reports in the 4th year. Decisions of the council review shall be retained for reference.

9.2 The Criteria for Reinstatement

In the event a Member’s registration is suspended due to non-compliance with the CCP, the member may be reinstated if the Registrar is satisfied that the CCP requirements have been met and that there are no outstanding fees or other unmet obligations to the College as per the RFPA Section 39(1) and the CAPF bylaws.

10.0 TIMELINES

The process of handling member non-compliance with the CCP has a timeline (expressed in the number of calendar days and dates) associated with it. The following flowchart and table briefly illustrates the timeline.
Flow Chart – CCP Non-Compliance Process

CAPF notifies all non-compliant members. This notice:
- explains the remittance window ends June 30th, and CAPF’s records show they have not met the CCP requirements;
- outlines the process beginning July 1st, in the event of member’s non-compliance with the CCP; and
- describes the process the member must follow (i.e. Variance Request) if there are extenuating circumstances that have resulted in the member being non-compliant with the CCP.

July 1st non-compliant members are notified:
- 60 day practice permit will be issued effective August 1st
- that there will be a condition(s) placed on the Practice Permit, until the member meets the CCP requirements.

Members that won’t be compliant by September 30th, must prepare and submit prior an Action Plan with a completion date, detailing how and when the CCP requirements will be met.

Non-compliant Members who do not submit an Action Plan by September 30th will have their practice permit or registration suspended, or be referred to the complaints director.

After October 1st, on recommendation from the Competence Committee, the Registrar will notify the member that his/her practice permit and/or registration is suspended; or that they are being referred to the complaints director.

Notice of the suspension may be posted on the CAPF website and in the College’s newsletter.

A Variance Request is submitted by a member by June 30th and approved by the Competency Committee.

Member meets CCP requirements by September 30th: submit on-line and notify the Registrar.

At the satisfaction of the Registrar, a new Practice Permit will be issued without conditions and remain valid until July 31st of the following year.

If a member obtains an Approved Action Plan, the Registrar will issue a Practice Permit, with conditions, valid until the date approved to complete.

At the completion of the Action Plan to the satisfaction of the Registrar, a new Practice Permit may be issued without conditions and remain valid until July 31st of the next reporting year.

If the member complies with the CCP requirements – the member’s practice permit and registration may be reinstated.

Non-compliant Members who do not submit an Action Plan by September 30th will have their practice permit or registration suspended, or be referred to the complaints director.

At the completion of the Action Plan to the satisfaction of the Registrar, a new Practice Permit may be issued without conditions and remain valid until July 31st of the next reporting year.

If the member complies with the CCP requirements – the member’s practice permit and registration may be reinstated.
# Continuing Competence Program Non-Compliance Time Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 6.1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1 - March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPF Prompts members (&lt;84/14) to record CC events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPF reminds members to remit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prompts members to submit a Variance Request if appropriate</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 6.2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1 - June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System locks down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence Committee reviews variance requests (approve /deny)</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Section 8.3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 1 - August 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with variance requests</td>
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<tr>
<th>Section 8.4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1 - September 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Temp PP with condition(s) and an expiry date of Sept 30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member meets CCP requirements, new PP issued w/o cond.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member short, submit Action Plan for Approval (PP issued dated to Action plan.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspend Practice Permit or registration or refer to complaints director if:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compliant and no submitted or approved variance request or action plan</td>
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</table>
11.0 DEFINITIONS

**Action Plan** – A written submission to the Registrar by a non-compliant Member detailing how and when the CCP requirements will be met by a proposed completion date.

**Annual Remittance** – On-line submission of continuing competence records required by the CAPF to be completed by regulated members. The format is prescribed by the CAPF and may be amended from time to time.

**Audit Report** – Document prepared by the Competence Committee Chair (or designate) following an audit of a regulated member’s Continuing Competence records and supporting documentation.

**Competence** – the combined knowledge, skills, abilities and judgment required to provide professional services (*Section 1(1)(d) Regulated Forestry Profession Act*).

**Competence Committee** - Is a multi-member committee of CAPF members in good standing who have indicated a willingness to serve and have been appointed by the Chair of the Continuing Competence Committee to make recommendations to the council on continuing competence requirements and the assessment of those requirements. Refer *RFPA Section 10(5)*

**Competence Committee Chair** – is a member in good standing who has been appointed by CAPF Council. Refer *RFPA Section 10(1)(b)*

**Competence Unit (CU)** - A CU is a learning contact time equivalent. (i.e., Learning experiences are assessed based on the number of hours spent in that learning activity.) Each activity claimed will be rounded to the nearest ½ CU.

**Compliant** – Audit finding of the Competence Committee following an audit of a member’s Continuing Competence records where all the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program have been met.

**Continuing Competence (CC)** – the ongoing or continued capacity to apply current knowledge, skills and attitudes. Continuing competence is the outcome of the continuing professional development process undertaken by a practitioner that reflects their commitment to lifelong learning (*CAPF Continuing Competence Program Guiding Principles*).

**Continuing Competence Activities** - Activities professionals undertake to gain competencies that are necessary for effective practice and/or ancillary competencies that can be applied to improve practice. It includes organized programs and independent learning activities. It is broader than continuing education¹.
Continuing Competence Program (CCP) – Is the well defined and managed program, which gives each member the responsibility for acquiring and reporting on a specified minimum amount of learning activities. The program address the legal requirements as identified in the Regulated Forestry Profession Act (RSA 2000; Chapter R-13; Section 43(2) and the Registered Professional Foresters Regulation (AR 75/2002) Section 12 (a, b, c).

Continuing Education and/or Training - Structured educational and/or training experiences for personal or professional development in which participants are assumed to have previously attained a basic level of education, training, or experience. It is also used to describe education and/or training beyond the basic education, training, or experience required for a license, certification, degree, or beyond the entry-level position of a job1.

General / Technical (Gen/Tech) (G/T) General / Technical material may be specified within the Scope of Practice of Forestry, or related professional or business activities such as GIS, Safety, or business management and related to forestry, professionalism or the member’s position.

Enhancement Plan – Developed after a practice self-assessment, the content should identify areas of practice that require further development and include a specific plan to upgrade in these areas, or to increase knowledge into new areas of practice.

Extenuating Circumstances - Members may, from time to time over their career, have extenuating circumstances which are unique from other members and which the Competence Committee can review on a case by case basis to determine if modifications or accommodations to the CCP requirements are appropriate while still protecting the public interest.

Learning Activity - Any activity that enables learning to take place. Learning activity is a generic term, which may refer to Continuing Education / Training programs, courses, or smaller portions of either. A learning activity may be taught in different time frames, such as one hour, one day, one week, or over a period of days, weeks, or months1.

Learning Contact Time Equivalent – The cumulative total of time spent in a particular learning activity (Level I or Level II) tallied in hours (i.e., attending two 30 minute sessions = 1 hour equivalent).

Legislation, Policy and Professional Practice (LPPP) - LPPP learning requires direct involvement with the listening, viewing, researching, reading, writing, preparing or committee debate on material that does or will shape Provincial or Federal legislation, policy or professional practice references. Examples of jurisprudence material required to practice forestry as a Professional Forester in Alberta are listed on the CAPF RPF Professional Examination Reading list.

__________________________________________
1College of Alberta Pharmacists
**Level I Learning** – The Level I learning category includes learning experiences that would be classified as a formally organized session of information exchange where the mode of learning is a “lecture” to impart information from an ‘expert’ to an audience. The communication is largely unidirectional (from presenter to audience) and there is minimal active participation of the audience. Level I learning also includes member initiated learning through self-study. The member identifies the material to be learned, as well as when and where the learning will take place. The mode of learning is primarily “reading”. Level I activities shall be assessed 1 CU per 1 hour equivalent.

**Level II Learning** – All learning experiences (as in Level I above) but where the learning experiences are significantly more interactive with greater emphasis on the learning process / engagement at the participant level. Pre and/or post session effort will likely be required of the member, and may include an exam or final report submission. Level II activities shall be assessed 2 CU per 1 hour equivalent.

**Non-compliant** – Audit finding of the Competence Committee following an audit of a member’s Continuing Competence records where all the requirements of the Continuing Competence Program have been not been met.

**Practice Permit (PP)** an annual College-issued document to regulated members which is intended for public scrutiny; addressing a member’s authority to use protected title(s) and practice. Issuance of such is subject to a member’s annual remittances of Good Character and Continuing Competence Program compliance, payment of annual membership dues and keeping personal database information up to date.

**Practice Self-assessment** – Critical thought process designed to help individuals assess their competence in an area through the use of tools such as checklists or rating scales.

**Professional Practice** – Relating to ethical behaviour, professional accountability, and conduct of a regulated professional forester.

**Self-Study** – learning activities where the member selects, directs and is responsible for achieving their own learning objectives by obtaining a higher level of knowledge in a specific area.

**Variance Request**– If a member expects to be non-compliant with CCP at the end of any three-year reporting period, and if the member believes there are extenuating circumstances applicable to their situation, they must submit a request for variance to the CCP requirements. (The extenuating circumstances may have occurred or recurred anywhere in the 3-year period.) The variance request must provide all relevant details with respect to why they are requesting a variance, and the timing and duration of the period causing the request for a variance. A new variance request must be submitted each year that it is required, but include the previously approved document for more efficient processing.