

Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) Process for Geotechnical Standards

The Geotechnical Services Standards Unit (GSSU) performs Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) to evaluate the quality of products produced by Geotechnical Services (GS) staff, to measure the effectiveness of the GS Quality Management Program, and to provide feedback to the Deputy Division Chief and the GS Management Team (GSMT). This process will also help identify training needs and/or whether development or modification of standards is needed. The IQA process is as follows:

Step 1: The Deputy Division Chief, GSMT, or GSSU identify work products to evaluate. The work products may be finalized documents, such as geotechnical reports or a log of test borings (LOTB), or they may be intermediate work products, such as LOTB drafting submittals.

Step 2: GSSU identifies all applicable standards relating to the work products.

Step 3: The GSSU reviewer evaluates the work product. Deviations from the applicable standards, if any, are documented on an IQA Report (attached) and may also be shown on the actual work product using red ink (red-line). The IQA report consists of five sections that present the project and product identification, IQA comments, relevant standards, recommendations, and action taken. Only a representative sample of errors will be documented so that the recipient can reasonably understand the nature of the errors or omissions. The GSSU will complete the first four sections of the IQA Report and forward it to the Geoprofessional, Branch Chief, and Office Chief.

Step 4: Upon receipt of the IQA Report, the Geoprofessional is expected to:

- Read and understand the comments, and seek clarification for issues not understood by directly contacting the GSSU reviewer
- Consider the recommendations and implement as appropriate; and
- Keep their Branch Chief informed of actions proposed or taken.

The Branch Chief is expected to:

- Read and understand the comments, and seek clarification for issues not understood by directly contacting the GSSU reviewer
- Document the action taken in response to the IQA Report and return the completed IQA Report to the GSSU within 10 business days; and
- Identify and implement training or other remedial measures as appropriate.

The Office Chief is expected to:

- Have a general understanding of the comments and how any deviations from Departmental standards might impact the project.

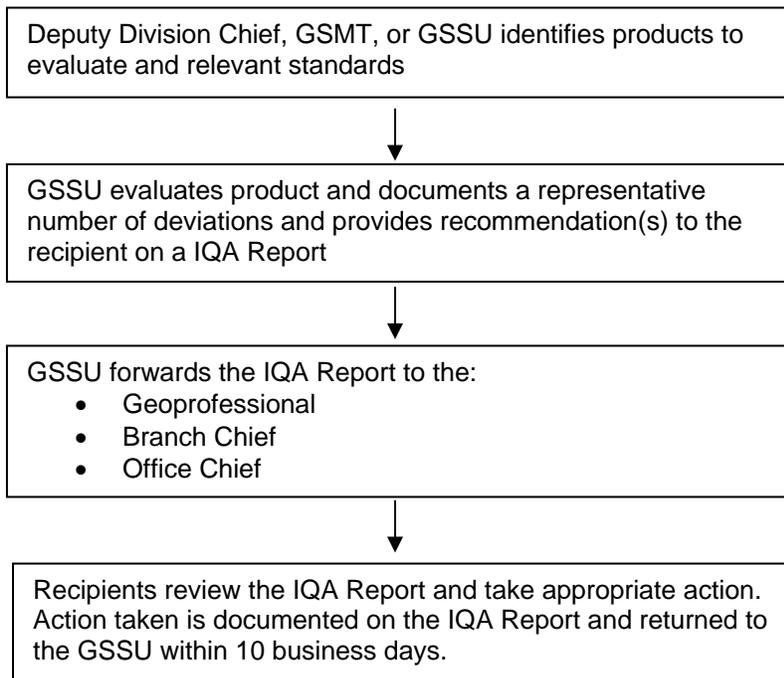
- Seek clarification for issues not understood by directly contacting the GSSU reviewer
- Assure that appropriate actions were taken in response to the IQA Report; and
- Identify and implement training as appropriate.

The GSSU reviewer will be available to meet and discuss any issues related to IQA at the request of the Geoprofessional, Branch Chief or Office Chief. Meeting with the GSSU is beneficial to both parties as discussions can help the GSSU identify standards or processes needing modification and/or clarification.

The GSSU will report the IQA program results to the Deputy Division Chief and the GSMT on a quarterly basis along with related recommendations for improvement to the geotechnical program. Recommendations may include:

- Training proposals;
- Modifications to current standards or business practices; and
- Identification of new standards for development.

IQA Process



Work Product:

Date:

Location:

Project ID:

Geoprofessional:

IQA By:

Branch Chief:

IQA Date:

IQA Comments

[Empty dotted box for IQA Comments]

Reference Standards

[Empty dotted box for Reference Standards]

Recommendations

[Empty dotted box for Recommendations]

Action Taken (Branch Chief to complete and return to the Standards Unit within 10 business days)

[Empty dotted box for Action Taken]