

## 37.0: NATIONAL EXAMS, TEST INSPECTIONS & RETAKES

37.0.1: Licensing and regulation requires evidence that all home inspectors seeking certification must complete a proctored exam specific to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. An exam is provided by the NHICC and the applicant/candidate must provide an acceptable exam proctor to complete the exam.

37.0.2: The National Occupational Standards performance standards identifies the skill sets and provides the background to establish a testing process to allow home and property inspectors to be legitimately certified as competent and qualified professionals.

37.0.3: The Test Inspection and Peer Review (**TIPR**) process and the National Exam for Home Inspectors are open to all qualifying home inspectors in Canada. Its purpose is to test, validate and improve inspection and communication skills and assure confidence in the essential services provided to consumers. The peer review must be conducted by an individual other than the one involved in the supervision and practical training process.

37.0.4: Home inspectors seeking National Home Inspector (NHI) recognition are required to complete the National Exam and fulfill the Test Inspection with Peer Review requirements in order to advance in the National Certification Program. The acceptable minimum standard for passing any examination or final grade in any subject is seventy (70) percent. The pass grade for the TIPR is eighty (80%).

37.0.5: All exam records are kept on file for a period of (1) one year in paper format, and stored in an electronic database thereafter. Digital copies must be password protected. Digital records must be backed up weekly on an external portable hard drive.

37.0.6: Test Inspection with Peer Review exams must be conducted under the supervision of an NHICC approved Examiner.

37.0.7: The National Exam must be conducted under the direct supervision of an NHICC approved "proctor" and/or NHICC approved Examiner.

37.0.8: An exam retake (National Exam or Test Inspection with Peer Review) can be arranged after a 10 working days waiting period, based on the date of completion of the last exam. A fee is assessed for a Test Inspection with Peer Review retake.

**NOTE:** Typically the TIPR review is allotted up to a maximum of 60 days for full completion review. **TIPRs are typically arranged in a pre-arranged group format.**

**Updates noted in body of documents in red text.**

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### SAMPLE - REPORT OF TEST INSPECTION & PEER REVIEW – Report #0000

**The following is deemed Confidential Information:** The information is provided by the Chief Examiner from National Admissions Board for informational purposes only. The comments are intended to provide a response to the deficiencies and issues noted by the onsite examiner team with your specific Test Inspection and Peer Review. Two key elements are assessed –1) rating of must find conditions, and 2) inspection report verification and compliance to the Standards of Practice (SOP).

**CANDIDATE: (Name)**

**DATE OF TIPR: (Date)**

#### Field Review completed by *AB & CD*

The comments reported are briefly described below.

1. Report failed to identify the important “significant” deficiencies. – The home inspection report verification and peer review scored 50% versus the mandatory 80% minimum acceptance score weighted against the “must find defects”.
2. Report failed to provide the “client” with a clear understanding of the property conditions.
3. Candidate did not report on several important issues and furthermore did not make adequate recommendations to the client.

#### Recommendations for Improvement of Candidate:

1. Consistency and coordination of information between field notes and inspection report.
2. Electrical - significant safety concerns and hazards present in the home necessities to be addressed that impact the occupants.
3. Review of SOP terms of reference for “significantly deficient” and “unsafe” conditions.
4. Review enclosed list of “must find” deficiencies.

NOTE: Please review your report, against the established must find conditions. You may opt to retake your TIPR, or alternatively appeal where there are grounds for such a claim. Review policy # 37.

Report by: Head Inspector, Chief Examiner

Dated: January 8, 20XX

Included with the report is a copy of the following from: G-Mentoring Form -Policy

#### **REPORT EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

Applicant/Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## H- NATIONAL EXAM CRITERIA

### EXAM GUIDELINES

The National Admissions Board (NAB) is grateful for having monitoring examinations. The way examinations are conducted is as important to the applicants/candidates but equally so for the NHICC. It is therefore essential that these regulations are followed to the letter. The time allotted must be accurate, no applicant/candidate should begin before the official time and candidates should be seated so that they are not tempted to communicate with each other and that the atmosphere of the room to examinations is calm and quiet.

Examiners and/or exam proctors are asked to arrive at the examination room early enough before the time fixed for the start of the exam (preferably 20 to 30 minutes before) to ensure that setup are arranged in a satisfactory manner and everything is in order.

The applicant/candidate should have his/her photo ID approved and must also sign the verification of the identity. The examiner/proctor will check photo identification after the start of the examination. The applicant/candidate must put on their table, a piece of photo identification accepted by the government authorities to allow verification of their identity. This may be a driver's license, passport or medical ID card. If you do not have photo identification, as described, a student card with photo of a university or college may be accepted.

Applicants/candidates should carefully read the instructions provided for the exam.

Applicants/candidates may not leave the examination room only if accompanied by the examiner or proctor or have completed their exam.

Applicants/candidates are prohibited to use textbooks, dictionaries, books, notes, stationery or other document whatsoever during the examination. It is also forbidden to bring such documents in the examination room, toilets and any place accessible during an exam. This regulation also applies to cameras, telephones, personal digital assistants, MP3 players, handheld devices such as a "Blackberry", iPods, pagers, cellular equipment and other electronic devices.

The use of a calculator is permitted for the exams, provided they are simple calculators that cannot be programmed, battery-powered and silent. Using a cell phone or other electronic device such as multifunction calculator is prohibited.

It is forbidden for applicants/candidates to communicate among themselves or with anyone other than authorized personnel, during the examination.

Applicants/candidates are allowed to go to the washroom only after he/she has passed half an hour since the beginning of the exam. Please raise your hand to attract the attention of a proctor. One applicant/candidate at a time can be in the washroom. No document relating to the course, related documents, electronic device or communication device is allowed in the washroom. All regulations relating to examinations remain in effect.

Applicants/candidates arriving after the time fixed for the beginning of the examination will be allowed to take the examination but will only have time remaining on the time allocated for the exam. The exam invigilator should note their names and their reasons. No applicant/candidate will be admitted more than half an hour after the start of the examination. In special circumstances, invigilators will be based on their own judgments and report the facts in detail to the NAB.

Any breach of the above regulations will result in disqualification and the applicant/candidate.

The examiner and or proctor invigilating the exam must ensure that the exam has been forwarded to the NHICC at the end of the examination session.

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## NATIONAL EXAM OVERVIEW

The NHICC National Exam for the National Certification Program is based on meeting the following:

1. **Objective** – prepared primarily as a multiple choice exam style for home inspection based on questions with a **5** multiple choice responses per question. **Defect recognition photo images are essay style questions challenging visual identification skills. Additionally knowledge of NHICC Ethics and Standards of Practice are challenged by correct responses for True/False Statements. All questions are pertinent to the key skills (importance, frequency and criticality) identified in the National Occupational Standards. (A copy of the current NOS DACUM is provided on the end of this document)**
2. **Question Database** – There are approximately 500 questions to start in the database categorized by specific residential building systems and related subsystems. In addition questions include Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics issues. Similar/related questions apply to every duty (domain) that would be released on the exam taken by the examinee.
3. **Questions and Answers** – The exam questions are worded so that there is only a single correct answer.
4. **Defect Recognition** - at least **5** questions will be presented that assess defect recognition and reporting skills in Blocks B to F.
5. **Recommended Exam Program Design** – Identification of the learning objectives and relationship to the National Occupation Standards that need to be included in the exam.

**Core areas include:** performance based knowledge and skills from the 2014 version - Canadian National Occupational Standards. Blocks are defined as a general area of competence.

1. Block A: Manages Inspection Process (Communication and Obligations)
2. Block B: Exteriors – (Building Exterior and Adjacent Property)
3. Block C: Interiors – (Building Interior)
4. Block D: Heating & Air Conditioning – (Building HVAC Systems)
5. Block E: Plumbing – (Building Plumbing Systems)
6. Block F: Electrical – (Building Electrical Systems)
7. **Block G: Life Safety Systems – (Safety Issues)**

**\*\* Ethics & Standards of Practice**

**Exam Structure:** is based on surveys for “Importance and Criticality” weighting ratings. These were obtained from sources such as the National Home Inspectors Exam and from the most recent version 2014 NOS DACUM (**National Occupational Standards**) that provide the following guidelines for determining the delineation for number and domain of questions on the exam.

Domain (Duties and Tasks)	Block	Duty Rank Score	NOS % Exam	Duty Weight	# of questions
Ethics & Standards	4	**	50	**	50
Manages Inspection Process	A	12.7	13.2	10	10
Exterior / Adjacent Property	B	14.2	14.5	15	15
Interiors	C	13.4	13.8	15	15
HVAC Systems	D	14.1	14.5	15	15
Plumbing Systems	E	14.1	14.5	15	15
Electrical Systems	F	14.4	14.9	15	15
Life Safety Systems	G	13.9	14.4	15	15

**\*\* Home inspector licensing regulation in British Columbia requires successful completion of a proctored exam specific to the “Code of Ethics”.**

The weighting is based on statistical calculations derived from review of each of the tasks within the duties and an analysis of the relative ranking of each of those tasks as well as the frequency each of

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those tasks would be performed on the job. Final weighting allowed for more questions from duties with tasks that were considered more important and performed more frequently. Minor adjustments to the final examination blueprint weighting will be made through a consensus process with the advisory panel.

**NOTE:** The exam results will also be used as a diagnostic tool to identify and develop an applicant/candidate training plan using a gap report. Included with the results of the exam will be a report identifying any knowledge/skill gaps, together with the options and/or recommendations to assist in bridging any gaps.

**Scheduling Exams:** the applicant/candidate must contact the NHICC – Registrar to register prior to the date and time an applicant/candidate wants to take the exam. Applicants/candidates are required to complete a Background Review Application Form. There is no guarantee of a set time or date for the exam until all of the required forms are properly completed.

**ALL** Exams must be **proctored**. Further details' regarding exam criteria is referenced in Policy # 37. Further information may be obtained on the NHICC Exam Coursesite - <HTTPS://WWW.COURSESITES.COM/WEBAPPS/PORTAL/FRAMESET.JSP>

### I-TEST INSPECTION WITH PEER REVIEW

#### RATIONALE

This skill-based practical exam known as the TIPR assesses a home inspectors expertise and practical knowledge, thus validating competency in conducting a representative home inspection. This includes the examination of three distinct skill sets noted below.

In the case of a selection procedure for measuring knowledge, the knowledge being measured is operationally defined as that body of learned information which is used in regular day-to-day home inspection practice, and is a necessary prerequisite for observable aspects of work skills essential to the occupation. A home inspector can typically acquire the knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete the TIPR exam through on-the-job experience, recommended training courses, and/or through a solid understanding of home inspection reference materials.

All applicants/candidates will be tested in the following skill sets:

1. Inspection knowledge and skills: The National Occupational Standards identifies the tasks that practitioners must actually perform in the workplace.
2. Reporting: Both oral and written reporting skills are the tangible evidence (finished products) of the results of a home inspection. Applicants/candidates are encouraged to utilize their own reporting system for the submission of the written inspection report.
3. Standards of Practice: Applicants/candidates are benchmarked against the ASHI Home Inspection Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.

#### TIPR OVERVIEW

The Test Inspection and Peer Review (**TIPR**) process is open to all home inspectors in Canada. The purpose is to test, validate and improve inspection and communication skills and assure confidence in the essential services provided to consumers. Home inspectors seeking National Home Inspector designation are required to fulfill the TIPR requirements in order to advance in the National Certification Program. There are three distinct categories in the review process. (See graphic TIPR Flow Chart image)

1. **Onsite Inspection:** This is a realistic home inspection. In the test inspection component the applicant/candidate is given time to inspect a pre-selected house as if he/she were working for a fee paying client. The applicant/candidate independently conducts the inspection of the peer review house at the specified start time. The methodology of the inspection and use of inspection tools or aids are left to the choice of the applicant/candidate.

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2. **Peer Review:** After inspecting the house the applicant/candidate presents the inspection findings to a peer review panel. The applicant/candidate is expected to identify all the “significant” major deficiencies and demonstrate sound technical knowledge and communication skills. The Examiner(s) will ask questions and test the participant’s communication skills on the home inspection completed.
3. **Inspection Report Review:** The applicant/candidate is required to provide substantiation of their inspection reporting skills through completion and submission of a documented inspection report. Applicants/candidates are free to use any report system for this submission. The report may be handed over to the Examiners or mailed within 24 hours of completion to the NHICC Registrar.

**Note:** The home will be pre-inspected by a panel of qualified home inspector Examiners prior to the applicant/candidate reviews. This establishes a defined level of mandatory “significant” deficiencies and “must find conditions” to assure quality for benchmarking purposes for the inspection review process.

It is forbidden for applicants/candidates to communicate among themselves or with anyone other than authorized personnel, during the Test Inspection process.

**Scheduling Exams** To schedule and pay for a TIPR exam the applicant/candidate must contact the NHICC Registrar to register prior to when an applicant/candidate wants to take the exam. Applicants/candidates are required to complete a Background Review Application Form and review by National Admissions Board. There is no guarantee of a set time or date for the TIPR Exam until all of the required forms are properly completed. Typically TIPR’s are conducted in an area when there are sufficient numbers to accommodate a full day of examinations.

**Rescheduling an Exam** If you have a scheduled a date and time for your examination, and you need to reschedule the TIPR the applicant/candidate must contact the Chief Examiner and/or Deputy Examiner at least two weeks prior to the examination. No refunds are offered after the above two week rescheduling date.

**Conflict of Interest** The TIPR program is conducted as an open and fair process. If a “conflict of interest” arises the applicant/candidate may request another Examiner to conduct to review. Likewise, an Examiner also is required to declare when or if a conflict arises in the TIPR process.

**Exam Results** Most questions about scores or exam results cannot be answered on the date of the TIPR exam. Applicants/candidates will be advised of their successful or non-successful status based on the TIPR evaluation by your on-site Examiner by the Chief Examiner. Typically Examiners’ are unable to tell applicants/candidates the final results of their score over the telephone or by email. However, they will help an applicant/candidate get that information if it is not released in a timely manner.

### Changes Effective April 2010

**Provide a TIPR A (Alternative - one on one)** is intended for those applicants/candidates known and proven to be at a distinct disadvantage due to distance (over 500 km from the closest TIPR site) such as a practitioner operating in a remote region.

### Changes Effective April 2014

**Provide a TIPR B (Alternative – teleinspection)** is intended for those pre-approved applicants/candidates known and proven to be at a distinct disadvantage due to distance (over 500 km from the closest TIPR site) such as a practitioner operating in a remote region.

### TIPR - Questions and Appeals

1. **Rescheduling a TIPR** If an applicant/candidate has a scheduled date and time for the TIPR, and there is a need to reschedule the TIPR, the applicant/candidate must contact the Chief Examiner/Deputy Examiner at least two calendar weeks prior to the TIPR. Any cancellations after this



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date is subject to a fee of \$150 that is charged for rescheduling a TIPR without due notice to compensate the examiners work.

2. **TIPR Results** Most questions about scores regarding TIPR results cannot be answered on the date of the TIPR. Applicants/candidates will NOT be advised of their TIPR status based on the TIPR evaluation by your on-site Examiner; that information is released by the Chief Examiner. Final results will not be released until all documents are received and reviewed verified.
3. **TIPR Retakes** If an applicant/candidate does not pass their TIPR exam; the applicant/candidate another effort may be scheduled. A fee of \$300 is required to be relisted for a TIPR retake.
4. **TIPR Appeal** If an applicant/candidate believes that the results of the exam are not valid; the applicant/candidate may file an appeal with the TIPR Chief Examiner or Registrar.
  1. An appeal must be in writing.
  2. The applicant's/candidates signature must be on the letter of appeal.
  3. The applicant/candidate must mail, fax or email it - (with signature).
  4. The applicant/candidate must provide complete documentation and required fee clearly identifying their grounds to substantiate the appeal.
5. **TIPR Appeal** An appeal is defined as a written petition requesting a review and a re-evaluation of a specific TIPR. An appeal must be made with 15 business days after completing a scheduled TIPR or receipt of the score on the TIPR exam.
6. **Appeal Process** An appeal process is noted in #7 below for an applicant/candidate to submit an appeal of the TIPR results. An appeal fee is sent to the National Certification Program National Registrar. The appeal documents must provide evidence to support the appeal claim. The appeal must be sent to the Chief Examiner or Registrar. The Chief Examiner will primarily evaluate the grounds for an appeal and where necessary implement the process to address those verifiable issues documented.
7. **Appeal Process Steps**
  - a) The applicant/candidate submits a notice of appeal to the National Certification Program Office. Appeals must be accompanied by an appeal fee that may or may not be refundable, depending upon the outcomes and findings and to reduce potential for frivolousness or abuse of the process.
  - b) The TIPR Chief Examiner will accept and evaluate the merits for the appeal.
  - c) The Chief Examiner checks the appeal for completeness, documentation and filing fee payment. The Chief Examiner acknowledges receipt of the appeal by the appellant within 15 business days of its delivery, advising that the appeal is under review. If the appeal form is not filled out completely it is returned to applicant/candidate for completion and re-submittal. Failure to resubmit within 20 business days is grounds for closing the file.
  - d) The appeal is logged and forwarded to the 3 alternate TIPR Examiners for review. Based upon the nature of the appeal and the findings the Chief Examiner will submit a response back to the appellant or, begin an In-Committee analysis (if warranted).
  - e) Responses to an appeal that can be resolved immediately will be responded to within 20 business days of receiving written appeal.
  - f) A response (and the timing) for an appeal requiring In-Committee analysis or other detailed analysis are dependent upon the complexity and evaluation findings.
  - g) There are no further rights for an additional appeal after findings are released, except to retake a TIPR.
  - h) Address for Appeals

**NHICC Head Office/Siege Social**  
**P.O. Box 22028**  
**Windsor ON, N8N 5G6**

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Further details' regarding test inspections is referenced in Policy # 3.

## DACUM Research Chart for Canadian Home Inspectors

Note: a home inspection is primarily a visual review of the condition a house and property

Duties ←					Tasks				
<b>1</b>	<b>CAREER PATH</b>	1.1 Complete an Intro to Home Inspection course	1.2 Recognize cost of entry	1.3 Identify time required to practice	1.4 Recognize return on investment	1.5 Define expectations	1.6 Understand potential risks	1.7 Recognize physical mobility issues	1.8 Report prior background 1.9 Organize Peer Support
<b>2</b>	<b>TRAINING</b>	2.1 Complete requisite education requirements	2.2 Develop inspection skills	2.3 Complete on the job training (mentor/field supervision)	2.4 Complete test inspection/peer review	2.5 Continue professional development			
<b>3</b>	<b>MARKETING</b>	3.1 Analyze your market	3.2 Allocate for coaching	3.3 Investigate advertising/branding	3.4 Create marketing materials	3.5 Perform cold calls (real estate offices, etc.)	3.6 Join a professional association	3.7 Identify "specialism" (different related specialties)	
<b>4</b>	<b>ETHICS</b>	4.1 Recognizes professional practices	4.2 Identify duty of care	4.3 Recognizes duty to warn	4.4 Demonstrate fiduciary responsibilities	4.5 Manage integrity	4.6 Define conflicts of interest	4.7 Disclose conflicts of interest	4.8 Maintain client confidentiality
<b>A</b>	<b>MANAGES INSPECTION PROCESS</b>	A1 Recognizes legal responsibility	A2 Confirm house is prepared for inspection	A3 Performs pre-inspection procedures	A4 Communicates orally	A5 Provides written reports	A6 Resolves conflicts of interest		
<b>B</b>	<b>INSPECTS BUILDING EXTERIOR/ADJACENT PROPERTY</b>	B1 Inspects site elements	B2 Inspects exterior structure	B3 Inspects exterior wall cladding	B4 Inspects exterior windows & skylights	B5 Inspects exterior doors	B6 Inspects exterior roof system	B7 Inspects attached structures	
<b>C</b>	<b>INSPECTS BUILDING INTERIORS</b>	C1 Inspects all accessible systems and components	C2 Inspects windows & skylights	C3 Inspects doors	C4 Inspects insulation	C5 Inspects interior surfaces	C6 Inspects interior structure	C7 Inspects condition of built-in appliances	
<b>D</b>	<b>INSPECTS BUILDING HVAC SYSTEMS</b>	D1 Inspects primary heating systems	D2 Inspects supplementary heating systems	D3 Inspects permanent cooling systems	D4 Inspects air handling systems	D5 Inspects mechanical and passive ventilation point			
<b>E</b>	<b>INSPECTS BUILDING PLUMBING SYSTEMS</b>	E1 Inspects water service supply & distribution	E2 Inspects & operates fixtures	E3 Inspects water heaters	E4 Inspects drain, waste and venting	E5 Identifies waste systems			
<b>F</b>	<b>INSPECTS BUILDING ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS</b>	F1 Inspects exterior service entrances	F2 Inspects main panel	F3 Inspects distribution	F4 Inspects outlets, switches & fixtures	F5 Inspects auxiliary elec. service systems			
<b>G</b>	<b>INSPECTS LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS</b>	G1 Inspects for presence of smoke detectors	G2 Inspects for presence carbon monoxide detectors	G3 Inspects for fire safety provisions	G4 Inspects for safe means of egress				

November 14, 2014 - Full report available at <http://www.nationalhomeinspector.net/2014Report4final.pdf>

Larger copy available at: <http://www.nationalhomeinspector.org/2014Dacum1pg.pdf>

Detailed copy available at: <http://www.nationalhomeinspector.org/2014Report4final.pdf>