

ECOMPLIANCE



THE COMPLETE JOURNEY TO COR™ CERTIFICATION

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INTRODUCTION

No two companies will take the same path to achieve their Certificate Of Recognition (COR™). A company in manufacturing will face different challenges than an oil and gas company. At the same time, a construction company in Ontario will be audited to different standards than a construction company in British Columbia.

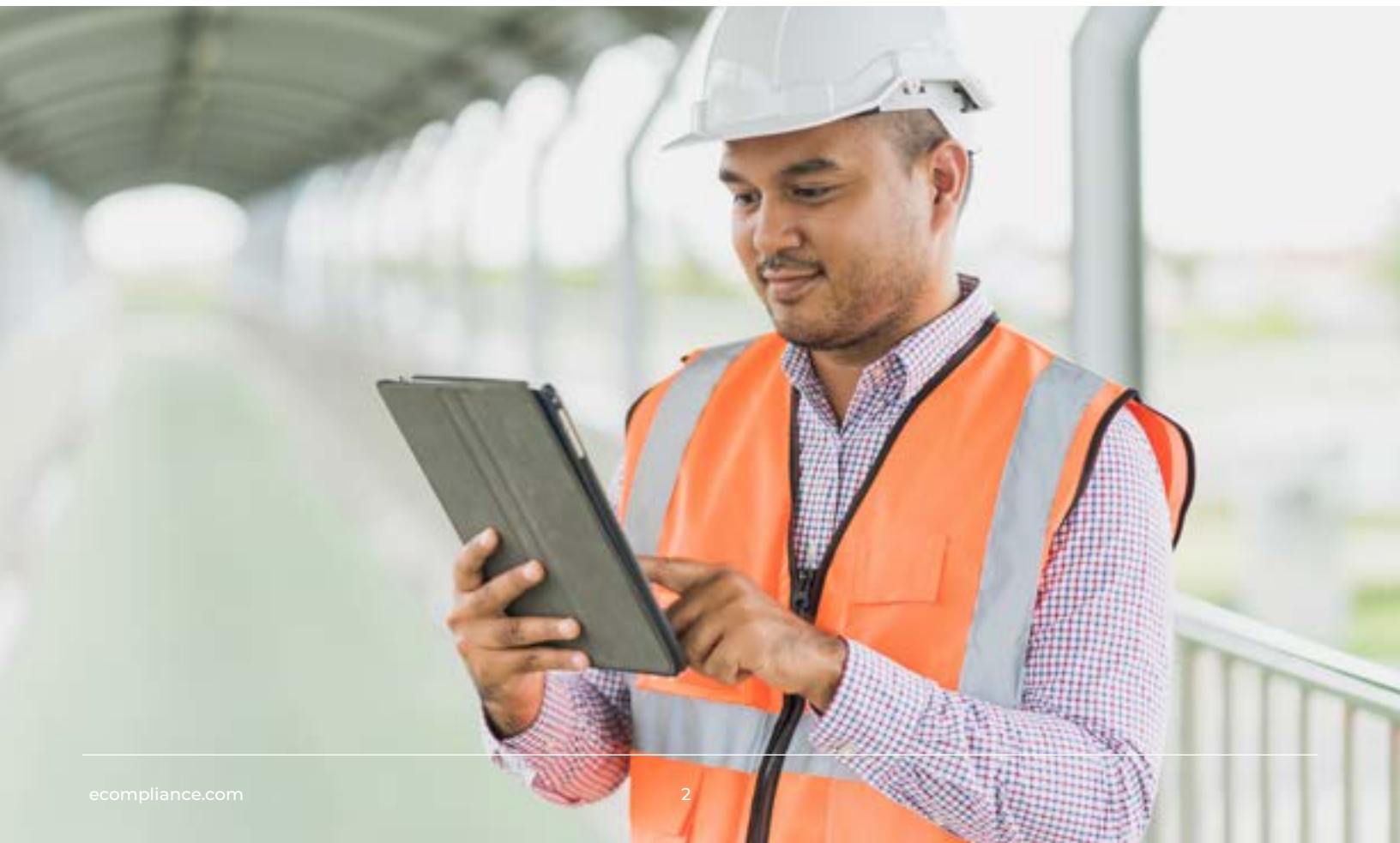
The reasons for pursuing COR™ may also differ. Some companies will have holistic reasons that are as simple as wanting every employee to go home safely every night, while others may see the financial benefits.

COR™ certification is definitely a competitive advantage. As soon as you achieve this distinction, you are immediately in a position to bid on (and win) bigger projects.

For example, COR™ certification is a priority with high-value clients such as the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, Canada's Wonderland, the Toronto Transit Commission, York University, the City of Toronto, and more. The sky's the limit when you have COR™!

However, the ability to bid on more projects is only one of the benefits of an improved safety culture and COR™ certification. Your company's bottom line could also be helped by:

- Fewer costly workplace incidents, or lost-time incidents
- Lower insurance and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) costs
- Less downtime and a boost of productivity
- A better reputation, leading to higher employee retention and lower recruitment costs
- Higher overall operational efficiency



COR™: PROVINCE BY PROVINCE

COR™ certified means different things in different provinces. For example, there are 13 elements that are universal across Canada:

1. Policy Statement
2. Hazard Analysis
3. Safe Work Practices
4. Safe Job Procedures
5. Company Rules
6. Personal Protective Equipment
7. Preventive Maintenance
8. Training and Communication
9. Workplace Inspections
10. Investigations and Reporting
11. Emergency Preparedness
12. Statistics and Records
13. Legislation

However, Ontario has 6 unique elements:

1. Occupational Health
2. First Aid
3. Health and Safety Representative/Joint Health and Safety Committee
4. Workplace Violence and Harassment
5. Return to Work
6. Management Review

A COR™ audit in BC would not contain those last 6 elements. This makes creating a compliant safety culture a massive challenge if your company works in multiple provinces.

You will also find that the COR™ landscape is different in each province. For example, COR™ is almost a given for construction companies in BC — it's seen as the bare minimum and your company needs to be certified to survive. However, in Ontario, COR™ has not reached that level yet.

“Out west, the concept of COR™ is almost mandatory at this point. If you want to work in manufacturing, if you want to work in oil and gas, if you want to work in construction, it's almost a must at this point,” said Cam Mitchell, Certified Registered Safety Professional (CRSP) and certified COR™ Auditor.

Cam Mitchell, one of 16 approved auditors for the IHSA, has personally performed over 250 COR™ audits across Canada and said that Ontario companies likely face the most difficulty getting certified.

“I've had the opportunity to audit in Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan, BC, and Manitoba. And I definitely see companies having the largest struggles meeting the criteria in Ontario. Which is very cool, in my opinion. That means Ontario is endeavoring to take their game and raise it another notch.”

The key takeaway here is that you need to know exactly what your province's COR™ guidelines are to ensure that there are no surprises when an auditor shows up to your site.

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YOU'RE NOT EVEN GETTING ON THE PLAYING FIELD WITHOUT COR™

Cam Mitchell
Certified Registered Safety Professional
and Certified COR™ Auditor

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COR™ TODAY AND BEYOND

The sudden and massive impact of COVID-19 sent shockwaves across all industries. Companies in every sector had to rewrite their playbooks for nearly every aspect of their business, and safety is certainly no exception.

Keeping your workers safe today has taken on a whole new meaning. At the beginning of the pandemic, management needed to create new policies and procedures for things like wearing masks/PPE, maintaining social distancing, limiting the number of people on-site, and sanitizing equipment.

However, the new challenges are much deeper than that.

The Real Cost of Shutting Down

Many companies are finding that the biggest challenge they're facing during COVID-19 is maintaining a strong safety culture with remote workers, dispersed teams, and worksites that may be closed.

Shutting down or disconnecting the workforce, may mean that the recent momentum their new safety movement has earned is suddenly halted. New safety habits their staff was starting to learn didn't get the proper chance to solidify. They may even feel like they're starting from scratch when things resume.

"Trapped" Information

Many companies are also re-opening with a smaller number of on-site employees, which means it's difficult to maintain the same quality and frequency of inspections or maintenance.

At the same time, your management team and safety/EHS team may be working remotely. This makes it difficult for front-line employees to share the data from their safety activities with management—and if you're using a paper-based safety record system, it's nearly impossible.

"Being able to maintain that ongoing communication, it's crucial," said Mitchell.

"How are we connecting with our people? If we can't connect with our people, the culture starts to die. And as soon as you lose the culture, you lose that crucial aspect of COR™ compliance."

An option to help fortify connections with all team members, whether on or off-site, is the use of a digital safety software solution to carry out daily safety tasks. This will make it easier for you to not only maintain, but strengthen your safety culture.

Training is a Challenge

Other companies may struggle because they've lost the ability to host organized training sessions, or even simple daily toolbox talks.

Training and up-training sessions are critical to building a high participation safety culture. It

ensures that everyone on staff is on the same page when it comes to what they should be doing. Perhaps more importantly, it gives safety leaders a chance to convey the “why” behind any new safety measures, which is crucial in earning employee buy-in.

New Types of Audits

COVID-19 restricts COR™ auditors like Cam Mitchell, from going on-site to perform traditional COR™ audits. This presents a whole new set of challenges.

At the present time, each province is handling this issue differently. For example, auditors in Alberta are performing documents-only audits. Meanwhile, auditors in BC are still doing observations and interviews by leveraging technology like Zoom, FaceTime, or Skype wherever possible.

Having a digital safety software in place during such unpredictable times, will truly simplify all processes as it will allow external auditors to access your organization’s system from anywhere at any time, using their own unique log-in.

It’s important to know your province's guidelines and what new ones may be in store to properly prepare for your upcoming audit.

New Guidelines for the Future

COR™ is being updated to COR™ 2020 in order to help interested workplaces qualify for financial rewards and recognition from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

This includes new standards and guidelines for:

- Procurement and Change Management
- Contractor Management
- Control of Documents
- Control of Records

At the present time, COR™ 2020 is optional, with the hopes of moving all organizations over to the new standards between January 2022-2024. But it’s recommended that safety leaders become familiar with the new requirements as soon as possible.



THE MOST COMMON COR™ CHALLENGES

As we mentioned, no two companies are going to face the same would-be obstacles when seeking COR™ certification. However, there are certainly some common challenges.

Several companies start with a very high-level issue: unrealistic expectations. A C-level official may see their company's incident rates rising or their projects going to COR™ certified competitors. This leads them to say things like, "We need to get COR™ in 12 months."

That statement is immediately unrealistic. A COR™ auditor needs to see evidence and documentation of a compliant workplace for the last 12 months. So, to "get COR™ in 12 months," you would have to make the organization perfectly compliant tomorrow and then maintain/document it over the next 12 months. That's impossible.

Building the type of high participation safety culture that passes a COR™ audit takes time and resources. If you...

1. Get the C-level to commit to safety
2. Find the right safety leader
3. Earn buy-in from the front-line workforce
4. Work with a COR™ consultant
5. Properly introduce a digital safety solution

... you could feasibly achieve COR™ certification in 16-24 months.

The Most-Failed Elements of COR Audits

It can be helpful to learn from other organizations' mistakes. With that in mind, here are the COR™ elements that a lot of teams struggle with.

1. Formal Hazard Assessments (Section 2 of the Audit)

What Goes Wrong: A company may not have adequately completed its task inventory or assessed all hazards associated with jobs on-site. To COR™ auditors, this means that not all controls have been identified and not all risks have been properly mitigated.

What You Can Do: Take the time to individually assess hazards associated, and take this part of the assessment very seriously.

It can also be very helpful to leverage a digital solution to simplify hazard assessments. For example, Zip Signs used Alcumus eCompliance to bolster their safety culture and achieve COR™ certification, with a 100% Hazard Assessment Completion Rate.



2. Preventative Maintenance

(Section 7 of the Audit)

What Goes Wrong: A company cannot prove that they have met the manufacturer's guidelines or preventive maintenance requirements for its asset inventory.

What You Can Do: Ensure that all manuals and guidebooks are centrally available to all employees, and ensure that everyone knows where to find them.

This is another area where a digital tool can be invaluable. For example, we helped Kokosing Materials Inc. use Alcumus Field iD, a robust asset inspection system, to make over 900 equipment documents and procedures accessible to 35 front-line users, across 20 different job sites.

3. Inspections

(Section 9 of the Audit)

What Goes Wrong: Once again, unrealistic expectations are an issue, as is a failure to understand legislative requirements. Too many companies set the bar too high for the frequency of inspections, and subsequently fall short.

What You Can Do: When coming up with your own frequency of internal inspections (anything that is not legislated), be realistic! Remember, you need to hit this number for an entire year.

Also, remove any barriers that may stand in the way of your front-line staff carrying out regular inspections. For example, Benson Steel was able to complete their inspections 10x faster after giving their staff the ability to perform inspections on their smartphones with the Alcumus eCompliance mobile app.

This also gave their leaders a better line-of-sight into their inspection program, which was a key step in helping them achieve COR™ certification.



CONCLUSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING COR™

Do not think of COR™ as a destination; think of it as a journey. It's not a sprint. It's a marathon with no finish line. Your commitment to safety cannot end after you're certified.

Achieving COR™ certification often requires large organizational shifts to get there. You may have to allocate new funds, create new full-time roles, implement new systems/tools, and work new procedures into your day-to-day operations. Decreasing your commitment to any one of these areas can unravel your entire safety culture.

Every employee needs to believe in safety, from the front office to the frontline. When a new employee is trained, they need to be taught that, "We take safety seriously and we don't take shortcuts." More importantly, they need to see that behavior mirrored in the more tenured employees.

Alcumus eCompliance has helped several organizations achieve COR™ certification, and they have maintained their high safety standards ever since. Taking your safety culture from good to great, is our specialty.

How can Alcumus eCompliance help your company achieve COR™ certification in any province? Our dynamic software solution makes it easy to identify gaps in compliance with complete transparency into your safety program.

After certain elements have been pinpointed, Alcumus eCompliance then helps you build a strong safety program that is in line with COR™ standards, efficiently digitizing and centralizing all data for easy access.

What's more is our platform also allows you to grant external auditors, like Cam Mitchell, virtual access to your safety program, reducing the chance of risks during an inspection in the midst of the present pandemic.

Our mobile app also empowers your front-line employees to quickly carry out crucial safety activities, like hazard assessments or equipment inspections, in a few quick taps on their smartphones.

At the same time, Alcumus eCompliance gives your safety leaders access to real-time safety data that they need to spot trends, potential issues, and opportunities to improve. With such 360 insight, they can make more informed and data-driven high-level decisions.

Want to see what this can mean for your workplace? Feel free to reach out to us at 1-800-686-1915, or [schedule a meeting](#) with one of our Safety Experts here today.



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ABOUT ALCUMUS ECOMPLIANCE

Alcumus eCompliance safety software is the leader for improving worker participation in safety.

The Alcumus eCompliance mobile app connects workers with head office, creating a two-way conversation so safety leaders can make faster, fact-based decisions, and executives gain an unrivaled view of safety risks across their company.

With a mission to protect 5 million workers from workplace incidents by 2025, Alcumus eCompliance is the fastest growing safety software company in the world with hundreds of client success stories.

Alcumus eCompliance empowers organizations to improve EHS performance and use safety as a competitive differentiator. For more information, visit ecompliance.com

ABOUT ALCUMUS

Alcumus is a leading provider of technology-led risk management solutions providing clients with advice, expertise and support to help them identify and mitigate risks, navigate compliance and keep people safe. It supports clients with a wide range of risk management services, including products across Supply Chain Management, EHS Software and Asset Inspection Systems.

Our people are at the heart of our business, building strong relationships with our clients to understand their needs, minimize risks and navigate compliance through our in-depth knowledge of your sector, regulations and challenges.

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