

# Self-Certification Guide

**Date:** September 13, 2022

**Version:** 4.0

**Classification:** Public

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 BACKGROUND	1
1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE	1
1.3 APPLICABILITY	1
<b>2. About this Guide</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 SECTIONS	2
2.2 NAVIGATING THE DOCUMENT	2
<b>3. Procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 SELF-CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW	3
3.2 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS	3
3.2.1 <i>Understand the four basic steps of the self-certification process</i>	3
3.3 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS TIMING	3
3.3.1 <i>Understand the process timelines</i>	4
3.3.2 <i>Identify what cycle has been assigned to a market participant</i>	4
3.3.3 <i>If required, request a change to the self-certification schedule</i>	4
3.3.4 <i>If required, request an extension to the self-certification submission</i>	4
3.3.5 <i>Obtain access to the ARS Portal</i>	4
3.3.6 <i>Attend the self-certification workshop</i>	5
3.3.7 <i>Identify which standards are part of the advanced self-certification process</i>	5
3.3.8 <i>Notice of intent to participate in Advanced Self-Certification (ASC)</i>	5
3.3.9 <i>Prepare RSAWs (if participating in advanced self-certification)</i>	5
3.3.10 <i>Identify Delegation of Authority for Officer Sign-Off</i>	5
3.4 SELF-CERTIFICATION LETTER	6
3.4.1 <i>Access the Self-Certification Application within the Portal</i>	6
3.4.2 <i>Complete the Self-certification Workflow in the Portal</i>	6
3.4.3 <i>Submit evidence for Advanced Self-Certification</i>	6
3.4.4 <i>Submit the Self-Certification Letter</i>	6
3.5 SELF-CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT	6
3.5.1 <i>Understand the assessment</i>	6
3.5.2 <i>Respond to a notification of deficiency</i>	7
3.5.3 <i>Respond to Information Requests (IRs)</i>	7
3.5.4 <i>Receive technical assessment letters</i>	7
3.5.5 <i>Receive ASC Information Request</i>	7
3.5.6 <i>Respond to the ASC Assessment Information Request</i>	7
3.5.7 <i>Receive a copy of the MSA referral</i>	7
3.5.8 <i>Closure of the self-certification</i>	7
3.5.9 <i>Download the self-certification package</i>	8
<b>4. Guidelines</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 SELF-CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW	8
4.2 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS	9
4.2.1 <i>Notification of Self-Certification</i>	9
4.2.2 <i>Preparation for Self-Certification</i>	10
4.2.3 <i>Completion of the Self-Certification Letter</i>	10
4.2.4 <i>Submittal of the Self-Certification Letter</i>	10
4.2.5 <i>Retraction Process</i>	10
4.3 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS TIMING	10
4.3.1 <i>Self-certification cycle</i>	10
4.3.2 <i>Self-Certification Schedule</i>	11
4.3.3 <i>Change of the Self-Certification Cycle</i>	11
4.3.4 <i>Self-Certification Notification</i>	12

4.3.5	<i>Self-Certification Extension Process</i> .....	12
4.3.6	<i>Self-Certification Letter Submittal</i> .....	12
4.3.7	<i>Self-Certification Letter Assessment</i> .....	12
4.4	<b>SELF-CERTIFICATION LETTER</b> .....	12
4.5	<b>SELF-CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT</b> .....	13
4.5.1	<i>Administrative Assessment</i> .....	13
4.5.2	<i>Deficient Submittals</i> .....	13
4.5.3	<i>Technical Assessment</i> .....	13
4.5.4	<i>Advanced Self-Certification Assessment</i> .....	14
4.5.5	<i>ASC Information Request</i> .....	14
4.5.6	<i>Referral</i> .....	14
<b>5.</b>	<b>Related Documents and Revision History</b> .....	<b>16</b>
5.1	RELATED DOCUMENTS .....	16
5.2	REVISION HISTORY .....	16

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

The AESO is mandated to carry out compliance monitoring for Alberta Reliability Standards (ARS) under Section 23 of the Transmission Regulation. In alignment with ISO rule 103.12, the Alberta Reliability Standards Compliance Monitoring Program (CMP) was established, which defines more specific methods of monitoring compliance with reliability standards. Self-certification is one of the methods defined in the CMP.

This document is a guide only and may be revised as considered necessary by the AESO.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this document is to define the processes, procedures, timelines, and other details for self-certification.

The end goal is to establish a common understanding of the self-certification process, and to ensure that the implementation of the process is consistent, fair, and efficient.

## 1.3 APPLICABILITY

This guide applies to all registered market participants in the Alberta Reliability Standards Registry and to the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO).

## 2. About this Guide

### 2.1 SECTIONS

This guide is divided into 5 sections:

#### **Section 1:** Introduction

Provides the background, purpose and applicability of this document.

#### **Section 2:** About this Guide (this section)

Provides information on how to use this document.

#### **Section 3:** Procedures

Provides information on what the market participant needs to do and what they can expect during the self-certification process. Subsections cover:

- Self-certification overview,
- Self-certification process,
- Self-certification process timing,
- Self-certification letter,
- Self-certification assessment.

#### **Section 4:** Guidelines

Provides information on the guidelines used to create the compliance monitoring self-certification processes.

#### **Section 5:** Related Documents and Revision History

Provides links to documents referenced in this document and the revision history.

### 2.2 NAVIGATING THE DOCUMENT

This guide contains useful navigation tools that can be used to find pertinent information without searching through each section.

#### [Table of contents](#)

The table of content shown prior to section 1 can be used as a means of navigating to any section or subsection in the guide.

To jump to a section or sub-section simply click on any line item in the table of contents.

#### [Underlined text](#)

Text that is underlined in blue is used to indicate a link to related topics within the guide or to documents on the internet

To use the link, click on the underlined text.

## 3. Procedures

The purpose of this section is to give market participants procedures related to the self-certification process.

### 3.1 SELF-CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW

Self-certification is a process for a market participant to determine and annually certify to the AESO that it has met the requirements of each reliability standard applicable to its registered functional entities.

All market participants must annually complete a self-certification letter and submit it to the AESO for review.

### 3.2 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The self-certification process takes place in four basic steps.

#### 3.2.1 *Understand the four basic steps of the self-certification process*

The four basic steps to the self-certification process are:

- a. Based on the assigned cycle, the market participant receives the self-certification notification at least 60 days prior to the self-certification submittal deadline. (See section 3.2.)
- b. The market participant completes the self-certification letter using the ARS Compliance Portal (“Portal”). (See section 3.3.)
- c. The market participant submits the completed self-certification to the AESO via the Portal (see section 3.3)
- d. The AESO performs an assessment on the self-certification. (See section 3.4.)

### 3.3 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS TIMING

The self-certification process follows strict schedules for notifications, self-certification periods, submissions, and assessments.

### 3.3.1 Understand the process timelines

Each registered market participant is assigned a self-certification cycle. The table below shows the self-certification process timelines:

CYCLE	PERIOD START	PERIOD END	NOTIFICATION DATE	SUBMITTAL PERIOD*
1	January 1	December 31	November 1	March
2	April 1	March 31	February 1	June
3	July 1	June 30	May 1	September
4	October 1	September 30	August 1	December

\* Anytime during the months of the submittal period with a due date on the last day of that month.

- a. Period: Time period for which the market participant is self-certifying
- b. Notification Date: The date by which the market participant will receive self-certification notification.
- c. Submittal Period: The period when the market participant may submit the self-certification letter.
- d. Due Date: The absolute deadline date for submitting the self-certification letter.

### 3.3.2 Identify what cycle has been assigned to a market participant

The Alberta Reliability Standards compliance monitoring self-certification cycle assignment can be found on the AESO's website under: Rules, Standards and Tariff > Compliance > Alberta Reliability Standards compliance > Self-Certification. To open the schedule, click here select Self-certification and then click on the Self-Certification schedule.

### 3.3.3 If required, request a change to the self-certification schedule

A market participant may request a change to their self-certification cycle 90 days prior to their initial cycle or 90 days prior to the requested self-certification cycle if it is for an earlier cycle. The request should be sent via the Communication Channel in the Portal and must detail the reasons for the change. The AESO will evaluate the request and notify the market participant of the result within 30 days of the request.

### 3.3.4 If required, request an extension to the self-certification submission

A market participant may request an extension on a self-certification submission by sending a request to the AESO up to five business days prior to that cycle's submission start date. The request should be sent via the Communication Channel in the Portal and must detail the reasons for the extension. The AESO will evaluate the request and notify the market participant of the result within 5 business days of the request.

### 3.3.5 Obtain access to the ARS Portal

Access to Portal is granted to individuals who are identified as the compliance primary, alternate or officer contacts for a market participant. Information regarding the Portal sign-up process can be found in the ARS Compliance Portal User Guide.

### **3.3.6 Attend the self-certification workshop**

Currently, a quarterly self-certification workshop is offered to market participants that are scheduled for an upcoming self-certification cycle. An invitation will be sent to the market participant's primary Alberta Reliability Standard's Compliance Monitoring Program (CMP) contact person approximately at least one month prior to the workshop.

### **3.3.7 Identify which standards are part of the advanced self-certification process**

The Alberta Reliability Standards compliance monitoring advanced self-certification standard list can be found on the AESO's website under: Rules, Standards and Tariff > Compliance > Alberta Reliability Standards compliance > Self-Certification. To open the list, click here select Self-certification and then click on the advanced self-certification standard list.

### **3.3.8 Notice of intent to participate in Advanced Self-Certification (ASC)**

Advanced Self-Certification is a voluntary option of self-certification. To enroll into Advanced Self-Certification, Market Participants are required to inform the AESO of its intention to participate by including which standards and requirements selected from the published ASC scope available for the self-certification period, by submitting the evidence in support of their compliance status claim(s), together with their signed declaration statement for self-certification.

### **3.3.9 Prepare RSAWs (if participating in advanced self-certification)**

If participating in advanced self-certification, the market participant should download the latest version of each applicable Reliability Standard Audit Worksheet(s) (RSAW). RSAWs can be found at [www.aeso.ca](http://www.aeso.ca) under Rules, Standards and Tariff > Compliance > Alberta Reliability Standards Compliance > Reliability Standards Audit Worksheets (RSAWs). Click here then select the Reliability standards audit worksheets section header to access the RSAW page.

The standards and requirements subject to assessment during advanced self-certification are new, or significantly revised, standards or requirements in which the effective date is within the assigned cycles' self-certification period and have been identified in the ARS Advanced Self-Certification List. ASC is only available for the first self-certification cycle of each market participant after the effective date of a considered standard or requirement.

The market participant selects the standards and requirements which will be assessed during advanced self-certification and therefore only the RSAW sections pertaining to those requirements selected for advanced self-certification will need to be filled out.

The RSAW should be filled out appropriately and submitted to the AESO with the evidence files. For each applicable requirement subject to advanced self-certification, the market participant must provide a hyperlink(s) to the individual evidence document(s) or embed the evidence into the RSAW. The hyperlink or embedded file should be placed in the "Evidence" column.

The "Evidence Description" column should be used by the market participant to provide further detail on the evidence location (such as page or paragraph). The "Evidence Description" column should not be used to provide additional evidence. The RSAW is simply meant to point to evidence documents that are related to the particular requirement and associated request.

### **3.3.10 Identify Delegation of Authority for Officer Sign-Off**

If required, a delegation of authority (when someone else other than the officer will access and digitally sign the Officer's certificate) should be submitted to the AESO prior to the submission period. To ensure that that delegated individual has proper credentials within the Portal to timely sign-off, the delegation



should be submitted to the AESO in advance of the self-certification submission window. The delegation of authority must be signed by the officer and can be sent via Communication Channel in the Portal.

### **3.4 SELF-CERTIFICATION LETTER**

A completed self-certification letter must be submitted by the market participant to the AESO for self-certification. To ensure secure transfer of information, consistency of the information required, and to assist market participants in the self-certification process, the AESO maintains, has developed the Self-Certification Application within the ARS Portal.

#### **3.4.1 Access the Self-Certification Application within the Portal**

Access to the Portal will be available on the first day of the submission period.

#### **3.4.2 Complete the Self-certification Workflow in the Portal**

The market participant must use the Portal to create its self-certification letter. Complete the self-certification as per instructions in the ARS Compliance Portal Guide. To download the Portal Guide, click [here](#).

#### **3.4.3 Submit evidence for Advanced Self-Certification**

The RSAWs should be uploaded to the Portal by opening a Communication Channel within that self-certification. The self-certification acronym listed in the compliance process in the Communication Channel should match the self-certification acronym on the initiate page. All RSAWs should be uploaded prior to officer sign-off and submission of the self-certification letter to the AESO.

#### **3.4.4 Submit the Self-Certification Letter**

The completed self-certification letter must be submitted within the prescribed timelines (see section 3.3) to the AESO using the Portal. Instructions on submitting the completed self-certification letter can be found in the ARS Compliance Portal Guide.

The following documents must be completed and submitted for self-certification via the Portal:

- a. Initiation Page
- b. Applicable Standards
- c. Officer's Certificate
- d. RSAWs (for market participants participating in advanced self-certification).

### **3.5 SELF-CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT**

Once the self-certification letter has been submitted to the AESO, the AESO will perform an administrative and a technical assessment on the submission, as well as an assessment on any new standards which have been voluntarily selected by the market participant for participation in the advanced self-certification.

#### **3.5.1 Understand the assessment**

There are three steps in the assessment process:

- a. The administrative assessment which verifies that the submission is complete and follows the process.
- b. The technical assessment which evaluates the compliance assessment provided in the self-certification letter.
- c. The review of the evidence submitted during the advanced self-certification.

### **3.5.2 Respond to a notification of deficiency**

In case the administrative review of the self-certification letter determines that the letter is deficient, the market participant will be notified of the incompleteness and be given five business days to revise the submission. The notification of deficiency will be identified in the Portal workflow as a “NoD” and will result in the information within the Portal being sent back to the market participant and the workflow moved to the initiate page. If the revised submission is deficient, the submission will be treated as a suspected non-compliance event. Failure to revise a submission will be treated as suspected non-compliance.

### **3.5.3 Respond to Information Requests (IRs)**

As the AESO reviews evidence there may be a need to request additional information. Information requests will be sent using the Portal’s Communication Channel. The market participant will be given two or five business days to respond to the request, depending on the context, by completing the IR template.

If the market participant has any questions regarding the information request, they should contact the individual who requested the information as soon as possible after receiving the request.

### **3.5.4 Receive technical assessment letters**

The technical assessment described in 1b above is only conducted on administratively compliant submissions of the self-certification letter. The technical assessment is identified in the Portal workflow and may result in a Technical Assessment Letter (TAL), which identifies standards or requirements in which the AESO will still monitor regardless of the applicability self-assessed within the self-certification.

### **3.5.5 Receive ASC Information Request**

If a suspected non-compliance is identified during the advanced self-certification, an ASC Assessment Information Request is sent to the market participant. The ASC Assessment Request will include the following information:

- a. description of objective, scope, and methodology of the advanced self-certification
- b. the suspected contravention(s)
- c. the nature of confidential information.

### **3.5.6 Respond to the ASC Assessment Information Request**

The market participant will be given 10 business days to respond to the ASC Assessment Information Request. The response will be brought forward and will appear verbatim in the referral to the MSA for suspected contraventions that remain.

### **3.5.7 Receive a copy of the MSA referral**

The AESO will formally refer any suspected contraventions to the MSA. The officer of the registered market participant as shown on their registration form will receive a copy of the referral.

### **3.5.8 Closure of the self-certification**

Once the assessments are completed, the AESO will close the self-certification within the Portal workflow. Once the self-certification is closed, the information will be considered deactivated and moved to the

“Deactivated” view within the Portal. Market participants will be able to view the self-certification status in the workflow including that it has been closed.

### **3.5.9 Download the self-certification package**

Market participants should use the ZIP function within the Portal to download the entire self-certification package upon the closure of the self-certification. The download should occur within 60-days of the closure of the self-certification. After 60-days the self-certification information within the Portal will be deleted.

## **4. Guidelines**

The purpose of this section is to give market participants information on the guidelines related to the self-certification process. Procedures related to the guidelines are given in section 3.

### **4.1 SELF-CERTIFICATION OVERVIEW**

Self-certification is a process for a market participant to determine and certify to the AESO that it has met the requirements of each reliability standard applicable to its registered functional entities.

It is defined under the Compliance Monitoring Program as “a letter of certification provided by a market participant to the AESO to certify that the market participant complies with applicable reliability standards requirements pertaining to their function for that year or period and, if not compliant, to provide disclosure of instances of non-compliance.”

During self-certification, a market participant may use advanced self-certification for new standards that have come into effect that year and are identified on the advanced self-certification standard list. The purpose of the advanced self-certification is to assess new standards in advance of the scheduled audits and within one year of the standards effective date. Advanced self-certification is a voluntary process. Market participants must communicate their intent to participate in advanced self-certification, including which standards or requirements are to be included in the assessment. The self-certification process replaces the need for more frequent scheduled audits of the registered market participant and in the case of advanced self-certification may reduce the number of requirements or standards in-scope for the scheduled audit. The highlights of the self-certification process are presented below:

- a. The AESO establishes an annual self-certification schedule by assigning each market participant in one of the self-certification schedule’s cycles.
- b. The AESO establishes a list of standards and requirements which will be part of the advanced self-certification during that cycle’s submission.
- c. The market participant self-certifies for a period determined by the assigned cycle’s self-certification period, unless otherwise directed by the AESO.
- d. The market participant’s self-certification letter must contain a compliance assessment of each reliability standards requirement pertaining to its functional entities for the self-certification period.
- e. The compliance assessment reported in the self-certification letter should be supported and based on market participant’s internal compliance checks and evidence.
- f. The self-certification letter must be submitted to the AESO following the processes using the Portal and must include the sign-off of an Officer of the market participant’s corporation.

- g. The evidence supporting the self-certification evaluation should not be submitted as part of the self-certification letter, unless in the case of an advanced self-certification.
- h. The market participants should submit evidence in a form of RSAWs to the AESO if choosing to participate in the advanced self-certification for one or more new standards.
- i. The registered market participant should retain and have ready the evidence used in the assessment of the self-certification period.
- j. The AESO reviews the self-certification letter.
- k. Failure to submit a complete, accurate, and true self-certification letter results in the registered market participant being evaluated as non-compliant with all standards applicable to its functional entities for the self-certification period.
- l. Failure to submit the self-certification letter on time results in the registered market participant being evaluated as non-compliant with all reliability standards applicable to its functional entities for the entire self-certification period.
- m. Any non-compliance with applicable reliability standards identified during the self-certification process is referred by the AESO to the Market Surveillance Administrator (MSA).
- n. The AESO notifies the pertinent market participant when a referral of a non-compliance event is made to the MSA.
- o. The self-certification letter may be used as evidence in other compliance activities, including audits and referrals.
- p. The market participant must ensure that documents are downloaded from the Portal within 60-days of receiving an email notification that the self-certification is closed.

The self-certification processes and their associated documents and timelines are detailed in the following sections.

## **4.2 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

The self-certification process takes place in four basic steps,

1. The notification submitted by the AESO to the market participant to self-certify.
2. The market participant completes the self-certification letter.
3. The market participant submits the letter to the AESO.
4. The AESO performs an assessment of the self-certification letter.

The self-certification steps are detailed in the following sections.

### **4.2.1 Notification of Self-Certification**

The AESO notifies the market participant to self-certify. The notification specifies the self-certification period and the timelines for the submission of the self-certification letter.

The notification is sent by email to both the primary and alternate compliance contacts provided in the Registration form.

#### **4.2.2 Preparation for Self-Certification**

The self-certification letter should be based on evidence of compliance with the reliability standards. The market participant is responsible for the collection and assessment of this evidence.

The extent of preparation for self-certification is the responsibility of each market participant. The development of an internal compliance process, which institutes formal processes and controls, has been established as a best practice in the industry.

#### **4.2.3 Completion of the Self-Certification Letter**

The market participant must use the Portal to complete and submit their self-certification. The self-certification application within the Portal will be available on the first day of the submittal period for that cycle.

#### **4.2.4 Submittal of the Self-Certification Letter**

The letter must be submitted to the AESO by following the self-certification workflow within the Portal.

The timelines of the submittal process are defined in the “Self-Certification Process Timing” – Section 4.2 of this guide.

#### **4.2.5 Retraction Process**

The market participant can retract the self-certification letter in the case that information in error has been included in the letter. The retraction process is subject to the following:

- a. Only one retraction per a self-certification cycle is permitted.
- b. The retraction must be requested during the self-certification submittal period.
- c. The retraction cannot be made after the AESO has issued a notification of administrative deficiency.

The retraction request must be made via Communication Channel specifying the self-certification letter identification.

Once the AESO has approved the retraction, the AESO will move the Portal workflow back to the Initiate page of the Portal.

The revised self-certification letter must follow the exact submission process and timelines as the initial self-certification letter. No extension to the submittal timelines is allowed for resubmission.

Failure to submit a revised self-certification letter is treated as a suspected non-compliance event.

### **4.3 SELF-CERTIFICATION PROCESS TIMING**

The self-certification process follows strict schedules for notifications, self-certification periods, submissions, and assessments. The details of the timelines defined for this process are presented in the following paragraphs.

#### **4.3.1 Self-certification cycle**

A self-certification cycle is one of the four cycles of an annual self-certification schedule, for which a self-certification period, a notification date, a submittal period, and a due date have been defined.

The table shown below presents the self-certification schedule’s timelines for a generic year.

CYCLE	PERIOD START	PERIOD END	NOTIFICATION DATE	SUBMITTAL PERIOD*
1	January 1	December 31	November 1	March
2	April 1	March 31	February 1	June
3	July 1	June 30	May 1	September
4	October 1	September 30	August 1	December

**\*\* Anytime during the month(s) of the submittal period with a due date on the last day of that month**

#### **4.3.2 Self-Certification Schedule**

The AESO establishes an annual self-certification schedule by assigning each market participant to one of the four self-certification cycles.

Once initially assigned to a self-certification cycle, the market participant self-certifies in this cycle for the upcoming years.

The annual self-certification schedule is posted under the Compliance section of the AESO website by the end of the previous calendar year. The publishing of the initial annual self-certification schedule, and of any subsequent revisions of it, is announced by the AESO through a notification inserted under the Compliance section of the AESO bi-weekly stakeholder newsletter.

#### **4.3.3 Change of the Self-Certification Cycle**

In special situations, the market participant may submit to the AESO an application to request to self-certify in a different cycle than the one in which it has been initially assigned.

In order to evaluate the application, the AESO must receive the application 90 days prior to:

- a. The requested self-certification cycle if their request is for an earlier cycle, or
- b. The initially assigned self-certification cycle if their request is for a later cycle.

The application should be submitted via the Communication Channel in the Portal and should detail the reasons why the market participant is requesting to self-certify in a different cycle.

In the application evaluation process, the AESO makes its best effort to accommodate the change. Due consideration is given to:

- a. Each market participant application in conjunction with those of the other market participants, and
- b. Balancing the workload through each of the self-certification cycles at the AESO.

The AESO notifies the registered market participant about the resolution of the application within 30 days of its receipt. The notification is sent via email submitted via the Communication Channel in the Portal.

A market participant, whose request is approved, self-certifies from the last day of its previous self-certification.

In case the application is declined, the market participant must provide the self-certification letter as per the assigned self-certification cycle's timelines.

#### **4.3.4 Self-Certification Notification**

The AESO notifies the market participant to complete a self-certification letter 60 days prior to the first day of the self-certification cycle's submittal period, unless specified otherwise by the reliability standard.

#### **4.3.5 Self-Certification Extension Process**

The registered market participant can request to extend the self-certification letter's submission deadline due to an extenuating business circumstance. The extension is subject to the AESO's approval; the extension request must be sent to the AESO no later than five business days prior to the start date of the submission period. The AESO will make an assessment and notify the market participant of its decision within five business days.

#### **4.3.6 Self-Certification Letter Submittal**

The self-certification letter must be submitted to and received by the AESO in accordance with the self-certification cycle's submittal period and no later than the cycle's self-certification due date of the market participant's assigned cycle.

#### **4.3.7 Self-Certification Letter Assessment**

The AESO performs an assessment of the self-certification letter. The assessment timelines are defined by the ISO rule 103.12.

### **4.4 SELF-CERTIFICATION LETTER**

The market participant must use the Portal to submit the self-certification. For procedures related to completing the Portal workflow, please refer to the ARS Compliance Portal Guide which can be found on the AESO's website under: Rules, Standards and Tariff > Compliance > Alberta Reliability Standards compliance > Portal.

The forms and a high level of their functionalities are presented below:

- a. The "Initiate" form records the contact information, the self-certification period, and the functional entities. It allows the identification of the applicable reliability standards and requirements based on the selection of the functional entities and the self-certification period. Information on the form may be populated from the current registration on file with the AESO. market participants must ensure that this information is correct prior to moving forward with the self-certification workflow within the Portal.
- b. The "Applicable Standards" form lists all requirements of the reliability standards applicable to the market participant. The compliance assessment and, when applicable, the violation type source is recorded in this form.
- c. The "Authorizing Officer" form involves the creation of a letter which must be digitally signed-off by an Officer, to confirm that the market participant is familiar with the self-certification process, and has undertaken a process of analysis and assessment to determine its compliance with all reliability standards applicable to its functional entities.
- d. market participants may volunteer to complete an advanced self-certification on standards that are identified on the ARS Advanced self-certification list. In this case RSAWs and evidence should be provided to the AESO for assessment. These files should be attached to the self-certification using the Communication Channel in the Portal.



The completed Initiate form, Applicable Standards form, and Officer's Certificate, plus any additional/supportive information or documentation deemed as necessary must be submitted by the market participant to the AESO as the self-certification letter.

The letter must include a compliance assessment of all effective reliability standards requirements pertaining to its functional entities during the self-certification period.

## **4.5 SELF-CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT**

The AESO conducts an assessment of the self-certification letter. This process consists of two mandatory steps, the administrative assessment, and the technical assessment. The advanced self-certification assessment is contingent on the market participant participating in the advanced self-certification.

### **4.5.1 Administrative Assessment**

The administrative assessment verifies if the submission is complete and correctly follows the process.

The focus of this evaluation is to ensure that the market participant self-certifies for all reliability standards requirements applicable to its functional entities for the self-certification period.

The administrative assessment includes, but it is not limited to, the checking of:

- a. The submission of the mandatory forms, and
- b. The completeness of the information provided in the letter such as legal name, contact name, functional entities selection, officer information, and officer signature.

### **4.5.2 Deficient Submittals**

In case the administrative review of the self-certification letter determines that the letter is deficient, the AESO notifies the market participant that the submission is administratively deficient.

The notification is submitted via Communication Channel in the Portal to the primary compliance contact provided in the registration form. The notification identifies the self-certification letter and presents the specific areas of deficiency. The AESO will move the Portal workflow back to the initiate form to allow the market participants to make the necessary changes.

The market participant has five business days from the day of the notification, to submit a revised self-certification letter.

If the revised self-certification letter is deficient, the market participant is notified through the same process as above that the submission will be treated as a suspected non-compliance event. Failure to submit the revised self-certification letter will also be treated as suspected non-compliance.

### **4.5.3 Technical Assessment**

The AESO conducts a technical assessment, to evaluate the compliance assessment provided in the self-certification letter, and when appropriate, to follow up on all non-compliance certifications.

The technical assessment is only conducted on administratively compliant submissions of the self-certification letter.

The AESO may require that the market participant provide the evidence used in its self-certification or any additional data, information, or evidence necessary to assess the compliance status provided in the self-certification letter.



The data, information, and evidence requests are made following the process defined in the ISO rule 103.12 and the Compliance Monitoring Program.

#### **4.5.4 Advanced Self-Certification Assessment**

The AESO conducts an assessment on standards and requirements which have identified in the ARS Advanced Self-Certification list and are selected by the market participants for assessment in the advanced self-certification.

The AESO will review the evidence submitted by the market participant using the assessment steps outlined in the applicable RSAW to verify that the evidence submitted demonstrates compliance with the reliability standard(s). RSAWs are guidelines only and do not limit the scope of the assessment.

If the submitted evidence is assessed and deemed as incomplete or inadequate, the AESO will inform the contact of the market participant and give five business days' notice for the market participant to provide additional information adequate to support compliance.

Where the additional information has been requested and has not been provided to the AESO, or if the additional information submission does not support compliance to the applicable Alberta reliability standard(s) or requirement(s), the AESO will utilize the evidence available to make their assessment and note the insufficiency of evidence. This may be considered a suspected contravention and noted for referral to the MSA.

Where additional information requested has not been received by the AESO within the requested time frame, the additional information submitted outside the negotiated timing or outside of the requested timeframe may not be assessed and may be treated as a suspected contravention.

The RSAW template will be used to document the compliance monitoring findings during the assessment of evidence submitted by the market participant. The completed RSAW will identify the compliance evidence submitted by the market participant obtained using information requests, document the assessment findings made by the AESO, and identify areas within the submitted evidence which support the conclusions reached or identify where no evidence was received.

#### **4.5.5 ASC Information Request**

The AESO will prepare an ASC Information Request consistent with ISO rule Section 103.12(4) based on the assessment findings documented in the completed RSAW.

The AESO will provide the market participant with ten business days to review and submit their comments, if any, in writing to the AESO before the AESO finalizes its decision. In the event the market participant is unable to provide their comments within the noted timeline, the market participant may request an extension of the due date for consideration. The request should be made in writing and include the new proposed timeline for submission and the justification for the request. The AESO will work with the market participant to ensure a fair and consistent submission process. The AESO will finalize its decision within ten business days of receipt of the market participant's comments. If suspected contravention(s) is/are identified, a referral will be made to the MSA and the market participant will receive be notified of the referral. Otherwise, the market participant will receive a Notification of Assessment Closure from the AESO.

#### **4.5.6 Referral**

All suspected non-compliance events identified during the administrative, technical assessments of the self-certification letter or a finding found during the advanced self-certification assessment is referred by the AESO to the MSA.

The AESO notifies the market participant when a suspected non-compliance event is identified during the self-certification process and is referred to the MSA.

The referral process follows the steps and deadlines defined in ISO rule 103.12. The AESO will notify the market participant when a suspected contravention is referred to the MSA in accordance with ISO rule 103.12.11. The copy of the formal referral to the MSA will be issued to the officer of the entity as listed on the market participant's registration form or to the senior officer (e.g., Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer) of the market participant where a registration form has invalid information, or the registration form has not been submitted to the AESO.

## 5. Related Documents and Revision History

### 5.1 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Documents referenced in this guide can be found by clicking on the following website page links:

- [Alberta Reliability Standards Compliance Monitoring Program](#)
- [ARS Compliance Portal Guide](#)
- [ARS Advanced Self-Certification List](#)
- [Consolidated Authoritative Document Glossary](#)

### 5.2 REVISION HISTORY

This document is a AESO information document and guide, and not a AESO authoritative document. Revisions to this document may be made from time to time by the AESO Compliance group. market participants will be notified of revisions through the AESO Stakeholder Newsletter.

Revision	Date	Comments
1.0	December 1, 2009	Initial version of the Self-Certification Guideline
2.0	December 18, 2012	Updated to incorporate major revisions of the template
2.1	October 30, 2013	Updated ISO Rule 12 references
3.0	October 20, 2021	Major revisions to incorporate Portal and Advanced Self-Certification
3.0	September 13, 2022	Changes to reflect ARS Enhancement Initiative