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Council on Accreditation

*Steps for Producing an Electronic
Response to your Pre-Commission Report
(PCR) on CD-Rom or USB Flash Drive*



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Welcome

The Pre-Commission Report (PCR) is designed to speed up your accreditation process by focusing on the standards that your Peer Review Team rated out and that **must** be implemented for you to become accredited. The report contains the following (see example below):

- A list of the standards rated out, and the ratings you received;
- The reasons given by the Peer Review Team for their rating;
- Recommendations from COA that may be used as a guide to demonstrate implementation; and,
- An additional column on the right side of your PCR, where your Organization Response will be attached.

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Pre-Commission Review Report

Sample Organization
Anytown, US

7777

Date: December 18, 2007
Response Due Date: February 29, 2008

Standard	Rating	Standard Fundamentals	Peer Team Non-Compliance Reason(s)	COA Recommendations	Organization Response
FIN 1.	2				
FIN 2.	3		The agency does not have an audit committee, management reviews are limited and all financial duties are invested with one staff member without significant oversight.	Provide a copy of dated governing body minutes at which the establishment of an audit committee was discussed and approved. Document evidence of attendance; bracket/highlight sections of the minutes that are relevant; and write Standard number in the right margin. Provide a copy of	Detail information provided

Page 1 Sec 1 1/3 At 5.1" Ln 14 Col 10 REC TRK EXT OVR English (U.S)



These instructions will guide you on how to submit the response electronically. The documentation you submit to demonstrate implementation will be reviewed by the Accreditation Commission. Please note that the Commission will *not* have a copy of your Self-Study document.

Our policy requires that you submit your response to the report within thirty (30) or forty-five (45) business days. *If for any reason you do not intend to submit a response to your PCR, you must notify COA in writing.*

Thank you for submitting your response electronically. We look forward to joining you and your entire organization in celebrating your accreditation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Richard', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Richard Klarberg
President and CEO



Introduction

This document will provide instructions for creating the appropriate format for an electronic submission as well as using tools to facilitate this process. You can also check the Solutions Database on COA's Standards website at www.coastandards.org for more information on how to submit an electronic response to your PCR.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact the Commission Department at 866.262.8088.



Hardware/Software Needs:

To create an electronic response to your PCR, an organization will need at least some or all of the following software/hardware:

- a. Microsoft Office (2003 and higher) <http://www.microsoft.com/office/>
- b. [Writeable CD \(CD-R\)](#) or an [USB Flash Drive](#)
- c. [Scanner](#) and scanning software *or* the organization may have a copy center scan documents for the self-study and save them for the organization using the appropriate formats listed below
- d. Software for burning [CDs](#) or

It is also acceptable for an organization to use Adobe [Acrobat](#) 7.0 <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/main.html> or a similar type of software that can produce PDF documents; however, COA does not require an organization to purchase Adobe in order to complete its self-study, unless the organization wishes to “print to PDF” as a way to lock the document.

NOTE: For reasons of compatibility and consistency, organizations should only use the COA-approved software listed above. Appropriate document extensions include: [PDF](#), [DOC](#), [XLS](#), and [PPT](#). Organizations may also save documents as HTML files or common picture files such as JPG.



Steps for Producing the Electronic Response to your PCR

Step 1 – Gathering Your Organization Response

- a. Compile all responses to recommendations for your PCR and save this documentation in an “Organization Response” folder – which you create – on your hard drive or network drive (See *COA’s Recommendations* on your PCR.)
- b. Use only COA-approved formats to save documents including Microsoft Office ([Word](#), [Excel](#), and [PowerPoint](#)) and [Adobe Acrobat](#).
- c. Submit only relevant documentation (e.g., if a standard asks for something specific, and it is found in a larger document such as the bylaws, DO NOT send the entire document containing the bylaws; only send the specific pages from the bylaws that address the requirements of the standard.).
- d. For any multiple-page piece of documentation, please bracket the relevant sections and list the specific standard reference next to the bracket.

Step 2 – Redacting Information

- a. In preparing your response, be certain to avoid the use of any reference that will reveal your organization’s identity. All descriptive markers must be redacted or deleted. These include the organization’s name, program names, logos, letterheads, and the last names of all personnel and board members. Also, the city, county, state, zip code, area code, and any other word or image that will prevent the organization from remaining anonymous must be redacted.

NOTE: Your failure to redact some or all identifying information will be deemed as a waiver of your right to confidentiality.

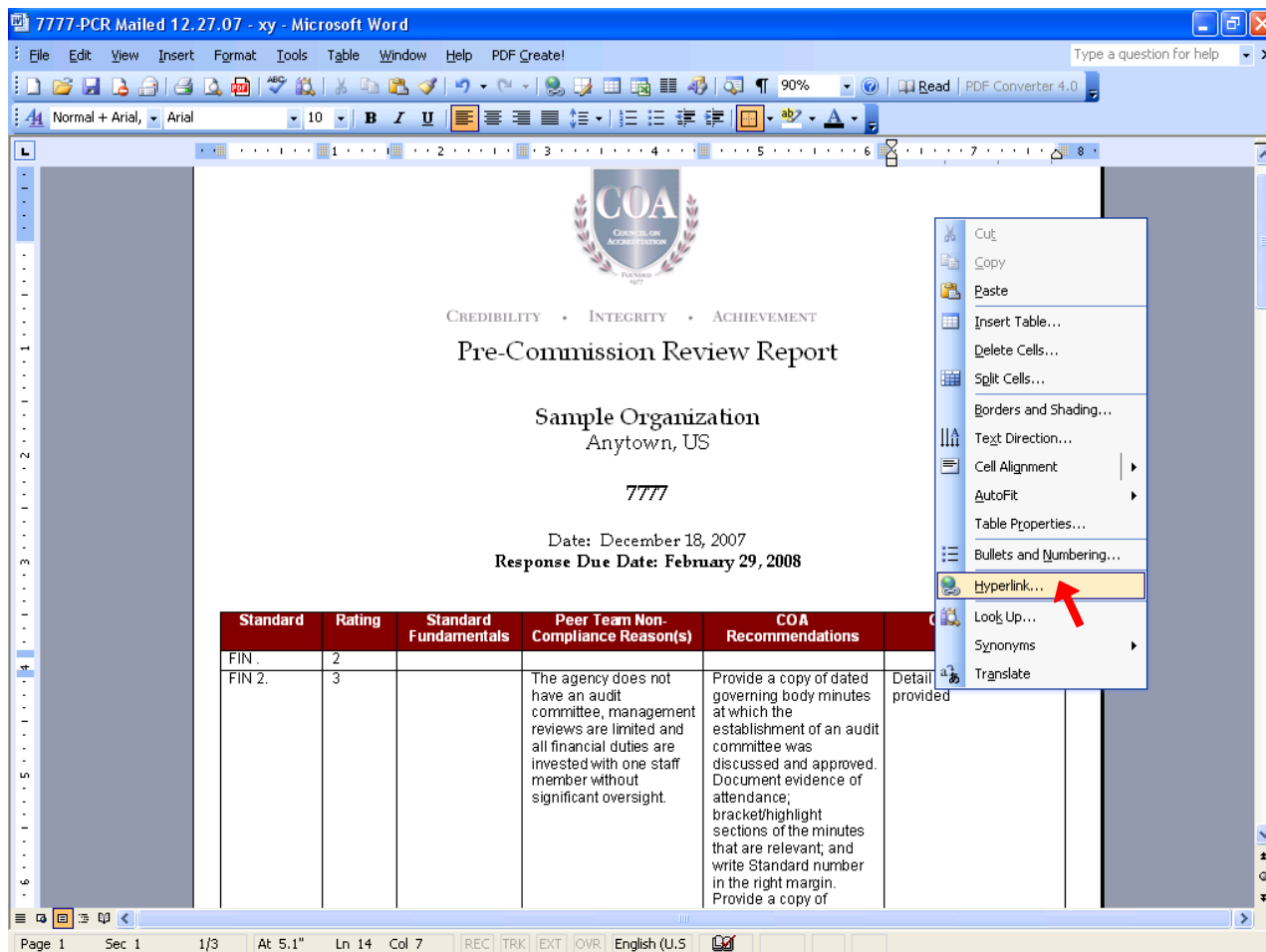
Step 3 – Preparing the Response

- a. COA has created an additional column on your PCR called “Organization Response.” In the row for the applicable standard and under the column labeled “Organization Response,” type the name(s) of all documentation that you are submitting as evidence.
- b. Select the name of each document and create a hyperlink to the appropriate evidence (see instructions below for linking). Repeat this for all documentation.

HOW TO CREATE A HYPERLINK: To create a hyperlink in Microsoft [Word](#), select the text for which you would like to create a hyperlink. Choose the Insert Hyperlink command (or press **Crt+K**). Select an icon in the “Link to” column that represents the type of hyperlink you want to create (e.g., existing file or webpage, place in this document, create new document or e-mail address). Next, specify the location of the document that you want to link to by browsing for a file, webpage or



bookmark. Once you've located the document, click OK. [Word](#) will then create a hyperlink for the text.



c. Repeat Step 3 for all standards listed on your PCR.

NOTE: You do not need to submit a separate table of contents for the Pre-Commission Report. The report, itself, *is* the table of contents. Commissioners will access information on your PCR by clicking on the hyperlinks that you've created in the Organization Response column.

Step 5 – Creating your Electronic Response (CD or USB Flash Drive)

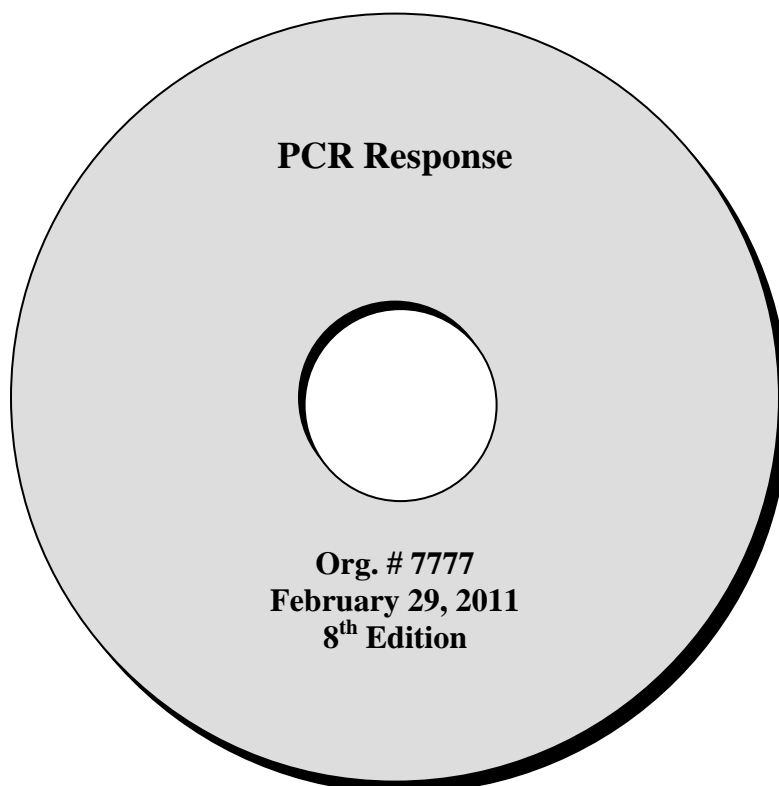
Burning and Labeling the CD:

Follow the instructions for the software that you are using to burn the [CD](#). Ensure that all relevant files and folders are included on the [CD](#). The following should be included:

- “Organization Response” folder
- Pre-Commission Report (with the appropriate responses and hyperlinks created)
- READ ME FIRST file

After burning the [CD](#), verify that all links on your PCR work and link to the appropriate documents. Label the [CD](#) with the following information (see example below):

- PCR Response
- Organization ID Number
- Date of Submission
- Standards under which you are being accredited (e.g., 8th Edition; Focused; Public; Canadian)



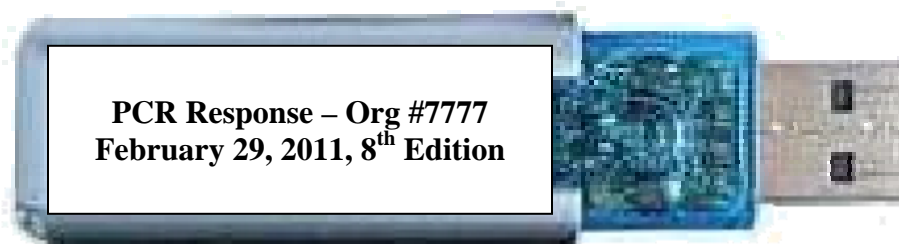
Putting your PCR onto a USB Flash Drive:

Insert your [USB Flash Drive](#) into a [USB port](#). A window should automatically open on your desktop. If not, open your hard drive and double click the USB Flash Drive (the letter of the drive varies from computer to computer). Drag or copy your PCR folders and files to the USB drive. Ensure that all relevant files and folders are included. The following should be included:

- “Organization Response” folder
- Pre-Commission Report (with the appropriate responses and hyperlinks created)
- READ ME FIRST file

Save the required folders and documents on the USB Flash Drive in the Organization Response folder. Verify that all links on your PCR work and link to the appropriate documents. Label the [USB Flash Drive](#) with the following information (see example below):

- Response to your PCR
- Organization ID Number
- Date of Submission
- Standards under which you are being accredited (e.g., 8th Edition; Focused; Public; Canadian)





Step 6 – Sending the Electronic Response to your PCR

Once the response is complete, send **two (2) copies** to COA by the due date listed on your Welcome Letter to the following address:

Council on Accreditation
c/o Pre-Commission Review Department
120 Wall Street, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10005

Glossary of Electronic Terms

Acrobat: A product from *Adobe Systems, Inc.*, for manipulating documents stored in Portable Document Format. Acrobat provides a platform-independent means of creating, viewing, and printing documents.

Compact disk/compact disc (CD): A small optical disk on which data such as music, text, or graphic images can be digitally encoded.

CD Burner: A device which shoots a laser and writes data on a compact disc, allowing a user to store, retrieve, and read documents in digital format.

Compact disc read only memory (CD-ROM): A compact disc that functions as read-only memory.

Compact disc recordable (CD-R): A compact disc on which you can write only once and thereafter is read-only.

Microsoft Excel (XLS): A spreadsheet program from Microsoft, part of their *Microsoft Office* suite of productivity tools and one of the most widely used spreadsheets.

Microsoft Word (DOC): A popular word processor, part of the *Microsoft Office* suite.

Portable Document Format (PDF): The native file format for *Adobe Systems' Acrobat*. PDF is the file format for representing documents in a manner that is independent of the original application software, hardware, and operating system used to create those documents. A PDF file can describe documents containing any combination of text, graphics, and images in a device-independent and resolution-independent format. These documents can be one page or thousands of pages, very simple or extremely complex, with a rich use of fonts, graphics, color, and images.

PowerPoint (PPT): A *Microsoft* application for creating presentations, speeches, slides, etc.

Scanner: A device that allows a finely focused beam of light to move in a systematic pattern over (a surface) in order to reproduce and subsequently transmit a digital image.

USB Flash Drive: A portable data storage device that transfer data through a USB (Universal Serial Bus) port. It is also called a Jump Drive. See example to the right.



USB Port: A port in which USB device can communicate with and transfer data to your computer. See example to the right.

