



PROJECT INFORMATION FORMS (PIFs) AND THE REPORT REVIEW PROCESS

AN ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN ONTARIO



Project Information Forms (PIFs) and the Archaeological Report Review Process

**An Administrative Bulletin
for Archaeologists in Ontario**

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1 Overview

This bulletin contains information for archaeologists licensed by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (the ministry) about Project Information Forms (PIFs) and the ministry's archaeological report review process. It includes instructions on how to submit PIFs and reports to the ministry. The information in this bulletin will be helpful to any archaeologist licensed by the ministry who carries out any kind of archaeological project in Ontario.

It is the ministry's goal that the processes outlined in this bulletin will create a higher level of consistency and standardization in the submission and processing of PIFs and the filing and review of reports. These processes are intended to provide licensees with faster and more efficient service, improve program transparency and assist the ministry by:

- improving the protection, preservation and conservation of archaeological sites;
- supporting a high quality public record of archaeological fieldwork in Ontario;
- discharging the ministry's obligations as regulators under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and,
- ensuring appropriate accountability by the ministry and by licensed archaeologists.

1.1 Responsibilities of archaeologists licensed by the ministry

Under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*, all archaeologists licensed by the ministry, in addition to other responsibilities, must:

- file reports by report filing deadlines ([Section 2.7](#));
- file revised reports by revision filing deadlines ([Section 2.7](#)); and
- submit site forms as part of a complete project report package ([Section 3.1](#)).

Licensees who fail to meet these obligations will not be eligible to begin new fieldwork projects.

1.2 Responsibilities of consultant archaeologists

Although the information in this bulletin is applicable to all licensed archaeologists, the bulletin also contains information specific to archaeologists acting as consultants. Information specific to consultant archaeologists can be found in the text boxes throughout this bulletin and in Sections [2.9](#), [2.10](#), [3.4](#) and [4.8](#).

The ministry considers any licensee who enters into an agreement with a client to carry out or supervise archaeological fieldwork on behalf of the client, produce reports for or on behalf of the client and provide technical advice to the client to be a consultant archaeologist. Consultant archaeologists must hold a Professional licence and abide by its terms and conditions.

Under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*, consultant archaeologists must carry out archaeological activities in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011).

It is critical for consultant archaeologists to understand the obligations associated with holding a licence. Consultant archaeologists are personally responsible for all matters relating to their licence.

2 Project Information Forms (PIFs)

A Project Information Form (PIF) provides notification to the ministry that a licensee is about to undertake an archaeological project or new stage of archaeological assessment. Licensees must submit a completed PIF to the ministry before beginning any new archaeological project or new stage of archaeological assessment.

Information for consultant archaeologists

Consultant archaeologists must be in receipt of a PIF number assigned by the ministry before beginning fieldwork, (*Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists (2011)*, Section 7.1, Standard 1).

A completed PIF provides the ministry with important information about planned archaeological work including:

- the type of project being undertaken or stage of archaeological assessment;
- information about the location and timing of the work;
- a list of the licensed field directors that will be supervising fieldwork;
- the Borden numbers of any archaeological sites being investigated;
- information on other projects or stages of archaeological assessment related to the one described on the form; and
- for consultant archaeologists, contact information for the development proponent or client for whom the work is being carried out.

2.1 How PIFs are used by the ministry

The ministry uses PIFs to:

- track the archaeological fieldwork undertaken by licensed archaeologists in Ontario (by way of the PIF number the ministry assigns to the work);
- establish the due date for the report that will eventually be filed by the licensee with the ministry to document the project and inform the public record ([Section 2.7](#));
- forecast the volume of archaeological projects that will be undertaken in Ontario. This helps the ministry monitor archaeological activities and provide good customer service;
- contact development proponents and approval authorities. From time to time, it may be necessary for the ministry to discuss matters with development proponents and approval authorities in cases where issues arise over a specific project;
- generate statistics to inform the analysis of archaeological activity levels in the province.

Please note, it is the ministry's general practice not to review or comment on fieldwork information provided on the PIF. Receipt of a PIF number assigned by the ministry does not in any way guarantee ministry support for the planned fieldwork described on the PIF.

Information for consultant archaeologists

The ministry will indicate that it finds a licensee's strategy for planned fieldwork to be appropriate by means of a report review letter ([Section 4.4.1](#)) or by providing formal advice to the licensee before or during fieldwork ([Section 5](#)).

For example, if, at the end of a Stage 2 archaeological assessment report, a licensee recommends Stage 3 assessment, and the ministry finds the strategy for Stage 3 fieldwork, as detailed in the Stage 2 report recommendations, appropriate, the ministry's report review letter for the Stage 2 report will indicate that the recommendations meet the Standards and Guidelines (2011).

If the recommendations do not meet the Standards and Guidelines (2011), the licensee will receive a report review letter indicating that concerns have been identified with the recommendations ([Section 4.4.3](#)).

2.2 How to submit a PIF

The PIF is provided in Appendix A of this bulletin. A saveable electronic copy of the PIF is also available for download on the ministry's website at www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/archaeology/archaeology_forms.shtml. Instructions on how to fill out the PIF are provided on the form.

Information for consultant archaeologists

The standards that must be followed by consultant archaeologists when submitting PIFs to the ministry can be found in Section 7 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011).

Completed PIFs are to be submitted in one of the following ways:

- by email to PIFs@Ontario.ca
- by fax to 416-314-7175
- by mail to:
 - Project Information Forms
 - Culture Programs Unit
 - Programs and Services Branch
 - Ministry of Tourism and Culture
 - 401 Bay Street, Suite 1700
 - Toronto, Ontario
 - M7A 0A7

Regardless of the manner in which the PIF is submitted, it must be signed by the licensee responsible for the project or stage of archaeological assessment. Licensees are responsible for ensuring that the information on the PIF is complete and accurate. Having licensees sign their own PIFs ensures that they will be aware of all of the PIFs that are being filed under their licence as well as their associated licensing and reporting obligations.

PIFs must be accompanied by all supporting documentation required as specified on the form. This includes a map clearly showing the geographic location of the archaeological project. The map may be a topographic map, a satellite photograph or road map; however, it must be detailed enough and at a sufficient scale (e.g., 1:10 000, 1:25 000) to clearly outline the project area or show the location of the archaeological site. If the form is being submitted by email, please submit the map as a JPEG, Microsoft Word or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file.

Other possible necessary supporting documentation may be requested by the ministry on a case-by-case basis.

2.3 When to submit a PIF

Licensees must submit a completed PIF to the ministry prior to the start of each archaeological fieldwork project or stage of archaeological assessment that they undertake.

Ontario Regulation 170/04 defines “archaeological fieldwork” to mean “any activity carried out on, above or under land or water for the purpose of obtaining and documenting data, recovering artifacts and remains or altering an archaeological site and includes monitoring, assessing, exploring, surveying, recovering and excavating”.

Based on this definition of fieldwork, below is a list of examples of activities for which licensees must submit PIFs and file reports. At this point in time, PIFs are only required for fieldwork projects that will be carried out on land.

A PIF is required:

- in any instance where any archaeological work will be carried out on any lands for any kind of archaeological project in Ontario;
- in any instance where a property will be entered and any of the fieldwork activities described in the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011) will be carried out;
- in any instance where a visit will be made to locations within or adjacent to a development project and new or additional information will be acquired that will affect the recommendations regarding archaeological resources or sites that may be or are present within the limits of that development project;
- for any work that will involve determining archaeological potential or building an inventory for an Archaeological Management Plan (AMP);

- for any work that will be done as part of a *Cemeteries Act* (or the *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act*, when proclaimed in force) investigation where that work will require the possession of an archaeological licence.

Information for consultant archaeologists

PIFs should not be filed for archaeological consulting work if a licensee is undertaking the following activities independently from any of the activities listed above:

- providing informal advice to clients on archaeological fieldwork strategies based on a desktop review of available information;
- providing informal advice to clients regarding mitigation options and alternatives for archaeological sites that will be affected by development projects;
- visiting a property in order to obtain information for the purpose of bidding on a contract for that project;
- where a licensee is employed by an approval authority (e.g., municipality, provincial ministry, government agency), making generalized desk top estimations of archaeological potential that determine whether or not an archaeological assessment will take place, but not carrying out a Stage 1 archaeological assessment to evaluate and determine archaeological potential.

Note: other activities, such as providing formal input into the development of an archaeological management plan, still require a PIF to be submitted and a report filed.

Several PIFs may need to be submitted for the archaeological assessment of a single property that is being developed. Depending on the circumstances of the development project, separate PIFs may need to be submitted for:

- each individual stage of archaeological assessment required before the development can proceed;
- different areas of the property being assessed, if they are being assessed at different times;
- Stage 3 and/or Stage 4 fieldwork at each archaeological site found on the property.

2.4 Combinations of fieldwork activities and archaeological assessment stages for which PIFs may be submitted

Information for consultant archaeologists

Consultant archaeologists may submit PIFs for:

- a single stage of archaeological assessment (e.g., Stage 1 or 2);
- Stages 1 and 2 combined;
- a single site at which Stage 3 will be carried out;
- a single site at which Stage 4 will be carried out.

PIFs will not be accepted that include Stage 3 or 4 work on more than one archaeological site. Also, with the exception of Stages 1 and 2, the ministry will not accept PIFs that include more than one stage of fieldwork. Other combinations of stages can be included in archaeological reports. For additional information on the ministry's reporting requirements, see [Section 3](#).

Licensees holding an Avocational or Applied Research licence may submit PIFs for any combination of fieldwork activities allowable under their class of licence. Please refer to the ministry's website at www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/archaeology/archaeology_licensing.shtml for a list of fieldwork activities allowable under Avocational, Applied Research and Professional licences.

2.5 How PIFs are processed by the ministry

As soon as the ministry receives a completed PIF from a licensee, the licensee will receive an automated email confirming the ministry's receipt of the PIF. The ministry will then respond to the PIF number request in one of the following ways:

- assign a PIF number to the project or stage of archaeological assessment and set a filing deadline for the report ([Section 2.7](#));
- provide a response stating that the PIF is being processed;
- provide a response stating that the ministry is unable to process the PIF.

Please note that the ministry will not process a PIF that is submitted more than 15 business days prior to the project start date as stated on the form. PIFs submitted earlier than this will be returned to the licensee with a request to submit the form at a later date. This is intended to ensure that the most up-to-date information available is provided on the PIF and reduce the possibility that changes to the PIF will be necessary.

Other reasons PIFs may not be processed include:

- the PIF is incomplete (e.g., missing information);
- the licensee submitting the PIF is not eligible to undertake new fieldwork projects or new stages of archaeological assessment because they have failed to meet the obligations under the terms and conditions of their licence (Sections [1.1](#) and [2.7](#)).

2.6 PIF numbers

By submitting a PIF to the ministry, the licensee requests a PIF number. Once a PIF has been processed, the ministry will assign a PIF number to the archaeological project or stage of assessment described on the form. The PIF number acts as a tracking number for the report that will eventually be filed to document the archaeological activities described on the form.

The PIF number is to be cited on all reports and correspondence relating to the archaeological work described on the form. By citing the PIF number, a licensee helps to ensure that their reporting obligations in relation to a given archaeological project are met as it allows the ministry to confirm that all reports related to the project have been filed by their due date ([Section 2.7](#)).

Please note: for archaeological consulting projects, the PIF number will apply only to the specific stage(s) of archaeological assessment described on the form. For non-consulting projects, the PIF number will apply only to the specific archaeological activities described on the form.

Information for consultant archaeologists

Consultant archaeologists must not begin fieldwork until they have received a PIF number from the ministry (*Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists*, Section 7.1, Standard 1). Beginning fieldwork before a PIF number has been received will constitute a failure to comply with the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists (2011)* and the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*.

2.7 Report filing deadlines

At the same time that the ministry assigns a PIF number to an archaeological project or stage of assessment it will also set a filing deadline for the report on the work described on the PIF. All fieldwork for the archaeological project described on the PIF must be completed and a report must be filed with the ministry before the report filing deadline has passed. The deadline will be provided to the licensee at the same time as the PIF number.

Information for consultant archaeologists

For Stage 1, 2 and 3 archaeological assessment reports: the report filing deadline is **12 months** from the day the PIF number is assigned.

For Stage 4 mitigation reports: the report filing deadline is **18 months** from the day the PIF number is assigned.

The report filing deadline is **12 months** from the day the PIF number is assigned for non-consulting projects involving:

- Site condition inspection
- Pedestrian survey
- Test pit survey
- Controlled surface pick-up
- Test unit excavation

The report filing deadline is **18 months** from the day the PIF number is assigned for non-consulting projects involving:

- Site excavation
- Field school
- Public archaeology

2.7.1 Meeting filing deadlines for reports

Licensees are required to file a complete project report package with the ministry by the report filing deadline in order to meet their obligations under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*. If a complete project report package has not been filed by the deadline, the licensee will have failed to meet their licence obligations and will not be eligible to begin new archaeological projects or stages of archaeological assessment.

If more time is needed to carry out fieldwork or prepare the report, the licensee should submit a completed Archaeological Report Due Date Extension Request Form to the ministry ([Section 2.8](#)). If fieldwork will not begin before the report filing deadline the licensee should cancel the PIF ([Section 2.12](#)) and submit a new one when the work is about to begin.

2.7.2 Meeting filing deadlines for revised reports

When the review of a report by the ministry has determined that the licensee has not met ministry requirements for fieldwork or reporting under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*, the licensee will receive a letter outlining the matters that are of

concern ([Section 4.4.3](#)). When a revised report is required, the ministry will automatically extend the original report filing deadline to provide the licensee time to prepare a revised report and/or carry out any additional fieldwork required. The review letter to the licensee will identify a new report filing deadline by which a revised report and any other supplementary documentation must be received by the ministry ([Section 4.4.3](#)). If a revised report has not been filed with the ministry before the deadline, the licensee will have failed to meet their obligations under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences* and will not be eligible to begin new archaeological projects or stages of archaeological assessment.

2.8 Obtaining an extension to a report filing deadline

The ministry recognizes that from time to time extenuating circumstances may arise that will interfere with a licensee's ability to file a report by the report filing deadline. In these cases, the ministry may grant an extension to the report filing deadline. Licensees who wish to obtain an extension may submit a request using the Archaeological Report Due Date Extension Request Form available on the ministry website at www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/archaeology/archaeology_forms.shtml. Please email the completed form to ArchaeologyReports@Ontario.ca.

Within five business days of receiving the request form the ministry will respond to the licensee in one of the following ways:

- grant the extension, issue a new filing deadline for the report and automatically extend the associated PIF;
- provide a response stating that the request is being considered;
- provide a response stating that the ministry is unable to grant the request along with a statement outlining the reason(s) the request could not be granted.

Decisions regarding the granting of extensions will be made at the discretion of the ministry. When determining whether there is a reasonable basis for granting an extension, the ministry may take into consideration factors such as:

- illness or injury of the licensee that directly affects their ability to produce a report;
- life events that affect their ability to produce a report on time (e.g. parental leave);
- circumstances beyond the licensee's control (e.g., on compassionate grounds, or in the event of theft, fire, flood, or a third party's having withheld data). If the circumstances that prompted the request for an extension involved the loss of data, the final report must document, in as much detail as possible, the archaeological fieldwork carried out and the events that led to the loss of data.
- projects where various factors, which are typical of certain stages of fieldwork or types of archaeological sites, result in practical obstacles to the completion of the project (e.g., the excavation of large archaeological sites, considering avoidance and protection, Aboriginal engagement);
- whether the licensee has overdue reports;

- other extensions of report filing deadlines that have been granted to the same licensee;
- other relevant issues.

When making a request, please provide appropriate documentation that supports the request (e.g., doctor's letter, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board report, police or fire marshal's report, statement of time required to address complicating factors, proposed work schedule).

Please note that all site forms related to the project or stage of archaeological assessment must be filed before an extension will be considered. A Site Update Form may be required upon project completion.

Information for consultant archaeologists

When requesting a reporting extension for a Stage 4 project, please note that a preliminary excavation report ([Section 3.4](#)) must have been filed for the project before an extension will be considered. For other stages of work, the ministry may require that interim reports be filed.

2.9 How to submit PIFs and Reports for very large or complex archaeological assessment projects

The information in this section applies to PIFs and reports submitted to the ministry by consultant archaeologists for archaeological assessment projects.

Some archaeological assessment projects may involve large areas, a number of landowners or multi-year project schedules (e.g., block plans or secondary plans, 400-series highways). The ministry has established a system for helping consultant archaeologists keep track of their large and complex projects.

To assist the licensee in the management of the project, the ministry will open a review file for the project that will facilitate the coordination of the multiple PIFs and multiple reports that are likely to be necessary for the project. Consultant archaeologists may send a request for a file number to ArchaeologyReports@Ontario.ca before any PIFs for the project are submitted. The file number should be cited on all PIFs, reports and correspondence submitted to the ministry for the project. Engaging in a discussion with the ministry about a large project may also assist in minimizing the number of PIFs and reports that will be necessary.

2.10 Amending recommendations made in a previous report

The information in this section applies to consultant archaeologists carrying out archaeological assessment projects.

When undertaking later stages of fieldwork the ministry expects licensees to follow the recommendations set out in the associated report(s) on earlier stages of work. For example, if a licensee plans to undertake a Stage 3 archaeological assessment for a project that was begun by a different licensee, the ministry expects the new licensee to review and follow the recommendations made in the earlier Stage 1 and 2 reports, except where the recommendations do not meet the Standards and Guidelines.

Where a licensee wants to depart from the approach for archaeological fieldwork that was previously recommended, the licensee must provide a letter or email to the Archaeology Licensing Coordinator outlining the rationale for the change in approach and a description of the new approach. This letter should be submitted before or along with the PIF for the fieldwork. If the ministry is concerned with the new approach to fieldwork outlined, an Archaeology Review Officer will contact the licensee directly to discuss the matter.

If the ministry is not notified and fieldwork is undertaken that departs from previous recommendations, the licensee runs the risk of not meeting the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*, including, the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists (2011)*.

2.11 How to make changes to a PIF after a PIF number has been assigned to the project

Once a PIF has been submitted and if substantive changes to an archaeological project are planned that will result in the eventual report on the fieldwork not matching the information provided on the PIF, a revision to the PIF should be arranged. Examples where revisions to a PIF should be made include:

- changes to the boundaries of the geographic area or property being investigated;
- change of the planned fieldwork start date;
- instances where the development proponent has changed or the proponent's contact information has changed.

To arrange a revision to a PIF, please send an email to PIFs@Ontario.ca outlining the reason for the revision. Note that the report filing deadline will remain the same for the revised PIF.

Revisions such as adding archaeological assessment stages or changing the responsible licensee cannot be made. For those situations, a new PIF needs to be submitted.

2.12 How to cancel a PIF number

A PIF number may be cancelled only when no archaeological fieldwork has been carried out for the project under that PIF number. If fieldwork has begun, which includes any part of the area and/or any of the activities described on the PIF, a report must be filed

for the fieldwork that was carried out. In order to arrange the cancellation of a PIF, send a cancellation request to PIFs@Ontario.ca.

2.13 How to report on additional fieldwork after a report for the project has been entered into the register

Once a report has been filed with the ministry under a PIF number and entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports, the ministry will not accept further fieldwork or reporting carried out under that PIF number. A new PIF must be submitted for any additional fieldwork and the new fieldwork should be reported on in a new report.

3 Archaeological Reports

Archaeological reports filed with the ministry by licensed archaeologists document the archaeological work carried out in Ontario. As a term and condition of their licence, archaeologists must file a report with the ministry upon completion of each archaeological project or stage of archaeological assessment that they undertake.

The ministry reviews archaeological reports filed by licensees to ensure that Ontario's archaeological sites are properly conserved and protected. The ministry does this by making sure that archaeologists have met the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting including, for archaeological assessments, the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011) or the 1993 *Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines*.

Information for consultant archaeologists

Standards are the basic technical process and reporting requirements for conducting archaeological assessments. Standards may be:

- specific to a particular stage of archaeological assessment;
- general in nature and related to any stage of fieldwork and reporting;
- specific to the type of archaeological site being assessed;
- requirements to carry out alternative strategies under special conditions.

For advice on how to best approach situations not covered by the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011), see [Section 5](#).

Reports are reviewed to confirm that they:

- recommend appropriate outcomes for any archaeological resources or sites identified;
- are clear in their documentation of fieldwork, including field conditions, survey and excavation activities, and artifacts and cultural features;
- are consistent in their internal logic; and
- are clear in their language.

Reports that meet the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting are entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports.

3.1 How to file a report

Archaeological reports are filed with the ministry as part of a project report package. A complete package includes:

- a cover letter;
- one full-colour hard copy of the archaeological report;
- all relevant supplementary documentation (e.g., maps, development project map);

- all relevant site forms (i.e., Site Record and/or Site Update Forms);
- a separate file on CD of each of the following:
 - cover letter;
 - report;
 - supplementary documentation.

Please see Appendix B for instructions on acceptable electronic file formats and file naming conventions.

The purpose of the cover letter is to provide a summary of the project report package, including a list of site forms and any supplementary documentation included in the package. It also contains confidential information ministry staff may need to review the report (e.g., archaeological site locations).

Information for consultant archaeologists

Development project maps need only be submitted once for an archaeological assessment project. If the development map was provided when the Stage 1 or Stage 1 and 2 project report package was filed, it does not need to be resubmitted as part of any Stage 3 or Stage 4 package, unless the details of the map have changed in the time between submissions.

The ministry does not screen reports for information that might be considered confidential or sensitive, such as personal information as defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*, before entering them into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports. It is the licensee's responsibility to ensure that the reports do not contain confidential information. Confidential information should be restricted to the cover letter or filed as supplementary documentation. Cover letters and supplementary documentation are not entered into the register. However, as these items will be retained by the ministry, they may be subject to provisions under *FIPPA* that provide a right of access to certain information records in the custody or control of the ministry.

Information for consultant archaeologists

For details on the required contents and organization of project report packages for archaeological assessment reports and further information on *FIPPA*, see Section 7 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists (2011)*.

All project report packages, revised report packages, preliminary excavation reports and related correspondence are to be submitted to the ministry's Toronto office. Please note that reports submitted to regional offices will not be logged as received. All items should be addressed to:

Archaeology Reports
Culture Programs Unit
Programs & Services Branch
Ministry of Tourism and Culture
401 Bay Street, Suite 1700
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0A7

The email address ArchaeologyReports@Ontario.ca is also available for correspondence related to archaeological reports. Correspondence sent to this address will be logged as received and forwarded to the appropriate ministry staff person.

Reports submitted by parties other than the licensee (e.g., development proponents, approval authorities) will not be reviewed by the ministry. The ministry will inform the party that submitted the report that reports must be filed by the licensee in order to be reviewed.

For all correspondence, including mail, faxes and emails received by the ministry, the ministry will meet Ontario Public Service common service standards, unless alternative deadlines have been set in advance. According to these service standards, all mail, fax or e-mail will be answered within 15 business days of receipt.

If the correspondence is meant for a specific staff person, clearly indicate that person's name on the correspondence or in the email.

3.2 How reports filed with the ministry are processed

When a licensee submits a project report package, the ministry will do a preliminary check of the package to determine if it is complete (i.e., all parts of the package have been submitted). Within 10 business days of a report package being received by the ministry, the licensee will receive an email informing them that the package has been found to be either complete or incomplete.

If the package is complete, the ministry will:

- log the report as having been received;
- enter information about the report into the ministry's computer database;
- assign the report to an Archaeology Review Officer for review.

If the package is incomplete, the ministry will:

- return the package to the licensee with a note that identifies the missing pieces.

The ministry will not hold incomplete packages.

Information for consultant archaeologists

The ministry uses an Archaeological Assessment Project Report Package Submission Checklist to check packages filed by consultant archaeologists for completeness. Consultant archaeologists are encouraged to review this checklist prior to submitting report packages to the ministry to ensure that they are complete. A copy of the checklist is provided in Appendix C of this bulletin

3.3 How to ensure a report filing deadline is met

A report filing deadline is only considered met when a complete project report package has been filed with the ministry (i.e., the package has successfully passed the ministry's preliminary check for completeness, [Section 3.2](#)). If a complete package has not been filed by the report filing deadline, the licensee will have failed to meet their reporting obligations under the terms and conditions of their licence.

In order to ensure that a report is logged as having been filed with the ministry by the report filing deadline, licensees should submit their project report package at least 10 business days in advance of the filing deadline to allow time for the completeness check to be undertaken by the ministry.

3.4 Preliminary Excavation Reports

This section contains information for consultant archaeologists.

Consultant archaeologists may submit preliminary excavation reports to the ministry to accommodate the need for a development project to proceed when all fieldwork for an archaeological site is complete and while the full Stage 4 project report is being prepared.

Upon review of a preliminary excavation report that meets the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011), the ministry can issue a letter stating that there are no further concerns related to an archaeological site. However, the full project report must be filed with the ministry by the report filing deadline assigned to the report in order for the licensee to meet their obligations under the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*.

When submitting a preliminary excavation report to the ministry, provide one full colour hard copy of the report accompanied by a cover letter and all relevant supplementary documentation (e.g., maps, development project map). Also provide a copy of each of these items on CD. See Sections 7.11.7 and 7.11.8 of the *Standards and Guidelines for*

Consultant Archaeologists (2011) for the standards related to preliminary excavation reports and their content. Follow the instructions for submitting preliminary excavation reports in [Section 3.1](#) of this bulletin. The ministry will process and review these reports in a priority manner.

4 Archaeological Report Review

Archaeological reports filed with the ministry by licensed archaeologists are reviewed by Archaeology Review Officers (AROs) for both form and content and to ensure that the archaeological work described in the report meets the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting. This review is carried out in accordance with the ministry's mandate to administer the *Ontario Heritage Act* and includes review against any applicable standards and guidelines. AROs are trained archaeologists, with field experience and extensive knowledge of the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the ministry's *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011).

In carrying out a review, AROs may choose to refer to and consult any source of information or documentation that is deemed relevant to the archaeological project. This may include checking: previous reporting of work on and/or near the project area, the ministry's archaeological sites database, other databases that the ministry may maintain, historical archives, available mapping and aerial photography.

To ensure consistency of reviews, AROs adhere to standardized procedures for reviewing reports and providing comments to licensees. The comments are based on compliance with the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*, including, for archaeological assessment reports, the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011) and the 1993 Archaeological Assessment Technical Guidelines. The ministry's report review process emphasizes consistency and transparency. This will be accomplished by setting clear expectations, standardizing internal operational processes and standardizing communications with licensees, development proponents and approval authorities.

4.1 Role of the licensee in the report review process

Licensees can help to streamline the report review process by:

- using the Archaeological Assessment Project Report Package Submission Checklist (Appendix C) to ensure that their packages are complete with all relevant information, including all required supplementary documentation prior to submission;
- consulting an ARO where uncertainties arise or if there are difficult decisions to be made, before or during archaeological fieldwork ([Section 5](#)); and
- including a sufficient level of detail in reports, including the rationale to support decisions made.

Information for consultant archaeologists

Consultant archaeologists can ensure that their client's development schedules are met by:

- filing report packages with enough lead time to accommodate both the ministry's preliminary check for completeness and the ARO review within their client's schedules; and
- keeping their clients informed of report filing deadlines and the ministry's review process and timelines.

4.2 Priority of ministry report reviews

The ministry has developed a system of prioritizing report reviews to ensure that archaeological assessment reports for development projects with tight timelines receive a timely review. Ministry resources are concentrated on the review of these priority reports. When determining priority review status the ministry considers both the risk to resources of cultural heritage value or interest as well as pressures on development proponents to obtain development approvals.

The ministry's order of report review priority is as follows:

1. archaeological projects considered to be part of broader government priorities (e.g., Renewable Energy Approvals (REAs));
2. expedited reviews as requested by licensees ([Section 4.3](#));
3. stage 3 archaeological assessment reports;
4. all other reports in chronological order based on the date by which a complete project report package was received.

Refer to the ministry's website for a current list of projects that are considered to be government priorities. If a licensee knows that a report they are filing with the ministry is associated with a government priority they should request an expedited review of the report ([Section 4.3](#)).

Revised reports will be reviewed in the same order of priority that is applied to original reports. For example, revised reports of projects considered to be government priorities will be reviewed before other reports. If an expedited review is required for a revised report, please submit a new request for the review of the revised report even if the review of the original report was expedited.

4.3 Requests for the expedited review of a report

As part of the ministry's commitment to good customer service, expedited reviews of reports may be granted to licensees where it can be demonstrated by the licensee that the proponent or approval authority for the development project is facing a critical impending

deadline or if the archaeological project is associated with a development project that is considered to be part of a broader government priority.

Requests for expedited reviews of reports are to be submitted to the ministry by the licensee using the Expedited Report Review Request Form available on the ministry's website at www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/archaeology/archaeology_forms.shtml. Requests may be submitted in one of the following ways:

- by email to ArchaeologyReports@Ontario.ca
- as part of the project report package
- by fax to 416-314-7175
- by mail to:

Expedited Report Review Request
Culture Programs Unit
Programs & Services Branch
Ministry of Tourism and Culture
401 Bay Street, Suite 1700
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0A7

In order to consider a request, the ministry must also be in receipt of a complete project report package (i.e., the report package has successfully passed the ministry's preliminary check for completeness).

The Expedited Report Review Request Form requires licensees to provide:

- a detailed statement of the necessity for an expedited review, including supporting documentation;
- the date by which a review is requested (allow a minimum of 20 business days for an expedited review to be completed);
- identifying information for the project report package including the relevant PIF number(s).

If an expedited review is required for a revised report, submit a new request for the review of the revised report even if the review of the original report was expedited.

When making a decision as to whether or not to grant the request, the ministry may consider the following:

- the rationale provided for an expedited review;
- documentation, provided by the licensee, from the approval authority or other concerned parties regarding the need to meet a development project deadline;
- ministry report review priorities; and,

- the length of time since the submission of the complete project report package.

The ministry will complete its review of a request and provide the licensee with a written response within five business days. The response will state whether the request has been accepted and, if so, the estimated date by which a review will be provided.

4.4 Report review letters

When the ministry has completed the review of a report, the licensee will receive a report review letter from the ministry. The letter will let the licensee know whether or not the report meets ministry requirements including, for archaeological assessment reports, the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011).

There are four general types of report review letters provided by the ministry. These are:

- letters indicating that the report meets ministry requirements and has been entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports ([Section 4.4.1](#));
- letters providing comments to development proponents ([Section 4.4.2](#));
- letters where concerns are identified that need to be addressed before the report can be entered into the register ([Section 4.4.3](#));
- letters notifying the licensee that a report has not met ministry requirements.

4.4.1 Letters indicating that a report has met ministry requirements

When the ministry review of a report has determined that the licensee has met the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences* and that the report meets ministry requirements including, the licensee will receive a standardized letter informing them that the report has been entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports.

For archaeological assessment reports, if applicable, the letter may also indicate that the ministry concurs with the licensee's recommendation that there are no further concerns for impacts to archaeological sites for the property that has been assessed.

The ministry's letter will further cite the recommendations made by the licensee with regard to:

- further archaeological fieldwork;
- further actions to be taken in regard to a specific archaeological site; or
- the fact that there are no further concerns for a specified archaeological site(s), as per Section 48 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Information for consultant archaeologists

This letter will quote the recommendations made in the report and will be copied to both the development proponent and the approval authority for the development project. It is therefore important that the cover letter of the project report package include the current email address for the approval authority and development proponent as required by Section 7.4 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists* (2011).

Also, since recommendations made in the report are directly quoted in the letter, it is necessary for reports to provide complete, appropriate and detailed recommendations that meet ministry requirements. This is critical for minimizing the risk of negative outcomes to archaeological sites. The ministry will not paraphrase, summarize or otherwise alter the recommendations when preparing the letter.

4.4.2 Letters providing comments to development proponents

For certain development processes (e.g., renewable energy projects), the ministry will issue a standardized letter to the development proponent that provides ministry comments on the archaeological assessment conducted in advance of the development project as documented in the assessment report(s).

These letters may apply to one or more reports related to the overall archaeological assessment for the development project. These letters act as notification that the report(s) has been reviewed by the ministry and that the ministry has deemed the recommendations in the report(s) appropriate in regard to the status of archaeological sites present within the property and any additional assessment or mitigation work required. The letter will directly quote the recommendations from the report(s) (see [Section 4.4.1](#) for instructions on preparing recommendations).

For example, as part of a Renewable Energy Approval (REA) process under the *Green Energy Act*, a comments letter will be provided to the development proponent at the completion of the Stage 2 archaeological assessment, or Stage 1 when no Stage 2 is required. This letter, along with a copy of the assessment report will then be submitted to the approval authority by the development proponent as part of the REA application. Additional comments letters will be provided for subsequent stages of fieldwork (Stage 3 and/or 4) if this work is required.

All comments letters provided to a development proponent will be copied to the licensee who carried out the archaeological assessment for their records. This letter will be followed by a second letter to the licensee indicating that ministry requirements for fieldwork and reporting have been met. This letter, issued to the licensee, will be copied to the approval authority and/or proponent, as appropriate ([Section 4.4.1](#)).

4.4.3 Letters where concerns are identified

When the ministry's review of an archaeological report has determined that fieldwork or reporting does not meet ministry requirements, the licensee will receive a letter outlining the matters that are of concern. These matters will need to be addressed before the ministry can complete its review of the report and enter it into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports. The letter may request:

- additional fieldwork;
- additional reporting;
- clarification of the information provided;
- other revisions to bring the report into conformity with ministry requirements.

The letter will identify a deadline by which the licensee must file a revised report and any other supplementary documentation required ([Section 4.5](#)). Due dates for revised reports will depend on the nature of the additional work required (e.g., additional fieldwork versus simple reporting revisions). If a revised report is not filed with the ministry before the deadline, the licensee will have failed to meet their reporting obligations ([Section 2.7](#)) and the review of the report will be terminated ([Sections 4.4.4](#) and [4.5](#)). Licensees may resubmit the report package once concerns have been addressed.

4.4.4 Reports that do not meet ministry requirements

Where the ministry's review of a report has determined that a report does not meet ministry requirements, the ministry will terminate its review and inform the licensee with a letter. The project report package will be returned to the licensee. Licensees may resubmit the report package once they have addressed ministry concerns.

Reasons that a report review may be terminated include:

- incompetent or destructive fieldwork;
- incomplete or inadequate documentation of fieldwork activities.

The review of a report may be terminated when the ministry has determined that there is no possibility of additional fieldwork, reporting or other revisions being able to resolve the substantive concerns that have been identified with the licensee's fieldwork or reporting.

4.5 How to Submit a Revised Report

When the ministry's review of a report has resulted in a letter outlining matters which are of concern ([Section 4.4.3](#)), a complete revised report addressing the concerns outlined must be filed by the deadline specified in the letter.

All parts of the project report package must be re-filed except for maps, site forms or other supplementary documentation unless the concerns raised in the ministry's review letter require a change to these items.

If an expedited review of the revised report is needed, ensure that a request for an expedited review is submitted to the ministry ([Section 4.3](#)).

If, after a revised report is reviewed, concerns remain with its content, the ministry may consult the licensee to determine if the matter can be resolved through one further round of report revisions. If the matter cannot be resolved, it may be determined that the report does not meet ministry requirements and the ministry's review of the report may be terminated ([Section 4.4.4](#)).

If a licensee fails to meet the filing deadline for a revised report, or proactively arrange for an extension of the deadline, the ministry will terminate its review of the report and return the project report package to the licensee. Licensees may resubmit the report package once they have addressed ministry concerns.

4.6 The Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports

Section 65.1 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* provides for a register of archaeological reports. Reports filed with the ministry by licensed archaeologists after April 28, 2005, and found to meet ministry requirements for fieldwork and reporting, are entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports.

Reports that meet the ministry's requirements for fieldwork and reporting are entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports and form the public record of archaeology in Ontario. The ministry does not guarantee the accuracy, completeness or quality of reports entered into the register. It is the responsibility of the licensee who submitted the report to ensure that it is accurate and complete.

Reports in the register are available to the public. Requests to view reports may be sent to ArchaeologicalRegister@Ontario.ca. In order to protect sensitive archaeological sites, any documents containing site location information (such as the project report package cover letter and supplementary documentation) will not be made available to the public.

4.7 Disposition of the project report package

Once a report has been entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports, the items submitted to the ministry as part of the project report package will be processed in the following way:

- the hard copy of the report will be retained in the ministry's project review file;

- the copy of the report on CD will be kept on file to eventually populate the electronic register of archaeological reports currently under development;
- the information from the site forms will be entered into the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database.

The following items will be retained in the ministry's project review file in addition to the report:

- one hard copy of any earlier versions of the report;
- all related project report package cover letters;
- all supplementary documentation;
- all related site forms;
- all related correspondence.

Any other duplicate materials will be destroyed (e.g., extra copies of development plans).

When the review of a report has been terminated because it has been determined that the report does not meet ministry requirements, the project report package will be returned to the licensee. An electronic copy of the report will be retained by the ministry as a record of the review. Reports that do not meet ministry requirements will not be entered into the register. Should a review of the report be required in future a new project report package, complete with all required revisions, must be submitted.

4.8 Archaeological Assessment Report Content

The information in this section applies to archaeological assessment reports filed by consultant archaeologists.

4.8.1 Combinations of assessment stages that may be included in reports

Archaeological assessment reports may be submitted for any combination of Stages 1, 2 and 3. Each Stage 4 mitigation project must be reported separately.

It is important to note that multiple PIF numbers may be applied to one report (with the exception of Stage 4 PIF numbers) but the same PIF number may not be applied to multiple reports.

Please also note that because each licensee is responsible for the work carried out under their licence, Stages 1, 2 and 3 may be combined into a single report only if the same licensee carried out all stages.

4.8.2 Reporting on assessments that involve the work of more than one licensee

Development proponents may hire several licensees to complete a single stage of archaeological assessment (e.g., different licensees assess different areas of the property). Although archaeological reports may summarize the work of other licensees involved in an assessment, each licensee who submitted a PIF for the assessment is responsible for filing a report on their work to the ministry in accordance with the *Terms and Conditions for Archaeological Licences*.

4.8.3 Cumulative and overlapping reporting

In order to assist the ministry in its timely review of archaeological reports, reports filed with the ministry should not include information that covers matters that were dealt with in reports on earlier stages of work. The information provided in previous reports may be briefly summarized in the section of the report that provides the archaeological context. However, the content of previous reports should not be repeated in reports on later stages of the project.

Re-submission of previously submitted information will not be accepted regardless of the rationale, including requests from development proponents, clients or other stakeholders for a different report. To clarify, as examples, reports that include the following should not be submitted:

- a Stage 3 assessment report that repeats the content of the preceding Stage 1 and 2 reports in addition to Stage 3 information;
- a Stage 1-3 assessment report that is a revision of the Stage 1-2 report to include the Stage 3 information;
- reports that contain overlapping information.

5 How to Obtain Advice from the Ministry

Prior to and during fieldwork, analysis and report production, licensees may consult an ARO for advice on whether a proposed course of action will be deemed appropriate by the ministry. Requests for advice must be made in writing and sent to Archaeology@Ontario.ca.

The ministry will only provide formal advice based on certain conditions:

- the project for which advice is being requested is specified (at an absolute minimum, accurate location information for the project must be provided);
- hypothetical situations will not be considered.

The ARO may request further information before providing advice, including:

- status of work completed to date;
- an up-to-date map of the most recent results and description of the findings to date;
- reasons for seeking advice on the archaeological fieldwork;
- descriptions, photographs or images of fieldwork or fieldwork conditions;
- descriptions, photographs or images of diagnostic material recovered;
- indication of the preferred next steps.

In providing advice to licensees, the ministry will:

- provide advice based only on the information provided;
- keep all requests for advice confidential;
- provide a follow-up summary by email of the discussion and the actions agreed upon.

Any advice provided by the ministry must only be considered valid to the degree that the information provided by the licensee is accurate. It is recognized that the licensee may not, at the time of inquiry, possess the amount of information that will eventually be produced by the archaeological work.

The ministry will strive to provide a response to a request for advice in a timely manner. Response time may vary depending on the nature and complexity of the question. It may not be possible to provide an appropriate response immediately. This should be taken into account with regard to meeting any report filing deadlines. Any advice provided should be considered to be applicable only to the project in question and not as a precedent for other projects.

Contact us: If you have any questions or concerns about the information contained in this bulletin, please send them to Archaeology@Ontario.ca.

Glossary

aboriginal Engagement

Involving Aboriginal communities in each stage of an archaeological project, to the extent and in the manner that best suits their interests and the needs of the project.

approval authority

In the land use and development context, this includes any public body (e.g., municipality, conservation authority, provincial agency, ministry) that has the authority to regulate and approve development *projects* that fall under its mandate and jurisdiction (e.g., *Planning Act*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, *Aggregate Resources Act*).

archaeological assessment

For a defined project area or property, a *survey* undertaken by a licensed archaeologist within those areas determined to have *archaeological potential* in order to identify *archaeological sites*, followed by evaluation of their *cultural heritage value or interest*, and determination of their characteristics. Based on this information, recommendations are made regarding the need for mitigation of impacts and the appropriate means for mitigating those impacts.

archaeological project

Any aspect of the archaeological assessment (Stages 1-4), including background study, property survey, archaeological site assessment, mitigation and reporting.

archaeological potential

The likelihood that the property contains archaeological resources.

archaeological resources

Objects, materials and physical features identified by licensed archaeologists as possibly possessing cultural heritage value or interest. Analysis by the licensed archaeologist determines whether those objects, materials and physical features meet the definition of an archaeological site under the Ontario Heritage Act. In various planning and development contexts, the term may refer to any or all of archaeological potential, artifacts and archaeological sites.

archaeological site

Defined in Ontario regulation as “any property that contains an artifact or any other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest”.

archaeological survey

The process followed in order to make initial identifications of archaeological sites. This may consist of pedestrian survey of ploughed fields, test pitting, the use of mechanical equipment in specific deeply buried or urbanized situations, or remote sensing.

ARO

Archaeology Review Officer

avocational archaeologist

A person who carries out archaeological studies and fieldwork for no pay. In Ontario, this person requires an Avocational licence issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture to carry out fieldwork.

avoidance

The process by which alterations to an archaeological site are prevented during the short-term time period during which development activities are undertaken.

consultant archaeologist

Defined in Ontario regulation as “an archaeologist who enters into an agreement with a client to carry out or supervise archaeological fieldwork on behalf of the client, produce reports for or on behalf of the client and provide technical advice to the client”. In Ontario, these people also are

required to hold a valid professional archaeological licence issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

cultural heritage value or interest

For the purposes of the Ontario Heritage Act and its regulations, archaeological resources that possess cultural heritage value or interest are protected as archaeological sites under Section 48 of the act. Where analysis of documented artifacts and physical features at a given location meets the criteria stated in the Standards and Guidelines, that location is protected as an archaeological site and further archaeological assessment may be required.

development proponent

An entity, consisting of individuals, private corporations or government bodies, that is undertaking a development project.

FIPPA

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

GEA

Green Energy Act

guideline

In the context of the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists*, an optional instruction or good practice. Consultant archaeologists can carry out the stated activity if they want to or if circumstances indicate the practice is an acceptable alternative to the standard. Generally uses the word “may”.

in writing

By letter or e-mail. All ministry surface and e-mail addresses can be found through the telephone directory link from the main government web page, www.infogo.gov.on.ca. E-mail addresses mostly follow the Firstname.Lastname@ontario.ca format.

licensee

A person holding an archaeological licence.

MTC

Ministry of Tourism and Culture

Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports

The collection of reports on licensed archaeological fieldwork in Ontario, as prescribed by Section 65 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

professional archaeologist

In Ontario, a person holding a professional licence. Often someone carrying out archaeology as a consultant or an academic. Significantly, the licence allows the holder to completely excavate archaeological sites.

project area

The lands to be impacted by the project, e.g.: the area of a development application under the Planning Act; the area to be licensed under the Aggregate Resources Act; the area subject to physical alteration as a result of the activities associated with the project. This may comprise one or several properties, and these properties may or may not be adjoining. However, all the properties must be part of one project that is being undertaken by one proponent.

Project Information Form (PIF)

The form archaeological licence-holders must submit to the Ministry of Tourism and Culture upon deciding to carry out fieldwork (formerly called a CIF, or Contract Information Form.).

property (S&G)

A piece of land with a defined boundary and an owner. See *project area*.

protection (S&G)

Measures put in place to ensure that alterations to an archaeological site will be prevented over the long-term period following the completion of a development project.

stakeholder (S&G)

Anyone with an interest in the property or archaeological site in question.

standard

In the context of the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists*, a mandatory instruction or practice that the reader is required to carry out if they are doing the stated activity. Uses the words “must” or “should”.

PRP

Project Report Package

project report package

the information package to be submitted to the Ministry of Tourism and Culture for each archaeological project undertaken by a licensee. This package includes a cover letter, a report, a copy of the report on CD and supplementary documentation.

REA

Renewable Energy Act

