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## SUBMITTALS

Submittals can include product data and samples, but the focus of this section will be on the most common submittal, shop drawings. In general, however, the comments below will apply to most submittals.

### Contractor's responsibility

No matter what happens during the review process, the contractor is still obliged to comply with the contract documents. It is very important that the contractor review and stamp drawings produced by subcontractors before they are sent to the design professional. There is no overlap in the responsibilities between the design professional and contractor.

If the design professional reviews drawings that lack the contractor's approval, it may later appear that the design professional's approval related to all aspects of the shop drawings, including those for which the contractor was responsible. The contractor and the contractor alone is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of shop drawings.

### Design professional's responsibility

The design professional reviews shop drawings to compare the information they contain with the information and design concept expressed in the contract documents. The design professional should not review information that is not required to determine compliance with the information in the contract documents, but at the same time it should advise the contractor and client that no responsibility is assumed for the accuracy of the information. The design professional should feel confident that the contract between the client and contractor defines the nature of responsibility for shop drawing review.

Design professionals can usually request the shop drawings they want to review, and there is no predetermined list that design professionals are required to review for each type of project. There is no obligation to review submittals that have not been requested.

When drawings are determined to have deviated from the requirements of the contract documents, they should be returned to the contractor to be corrected. When the reviewer spots an apparent error in a drawing that is beyond the scope of the review, it should be pointed out to the contractor, without any attempt to correct the information.

### Handling drawings creates responsibilities

It is reasonable that design professionals only request those shop drawings that, in their professional opinion, are needed since any affirmative action taken in response to a shop drawing submittal is likely to be construed as 'approval' in the eyes of the law. If a firm has not asked for a shop drawing, but one is provided, and the firm takes the opportunity to examine and return the submittal to the contractor with no objections noted, it is likely that the firm will be held to have approved the shop drawing. Deal promptly with requests to review shop drawings and other submittals.

## Stamps

One example of an appropriate shop drawing stamp disclaimer is the following:

*Reviewed only as to general conformity with the following project requirements: (state project requirements).  
The design professional does not warrant or represent that the information on the shop drawing is either accurate or complete. Sole responsibility for correct design, details and dimensions shall remain with the party submitting the drawing. Prime consultant's firm name: \_\_\_\_\_  
By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_*

Shop drawing stamp disclaimers are not magic words. The wording should express the concept that it is the contractor's responsibility to provide shop drawings and other submittals called for so that the design professional has the opportunity to determine if the contractor understands the contract documents. It is not the purpose of shop drawing review to assure that the contractor is meeting the requirements of the contract documents.

## Record or 'as-built' drawings

Sample language for record drawings stamp is as follows:

*The information contained on this drawing, other than changes made by (name of firm), originated from sources other than the design professional and (name of firm) does not warrant or represent that such information is accurate or represents the original design as contained in the contract documents.*

Many clients want a set of updated drawings or plans and specifications after work is completed, reflecting the changes actually made during the course of construction as compared to the original contract documents. To accomplish this, the design professional needs to know how the changes were recorded, who recorded the changes and what the changes really show. Many details are left up to the contractor, provided the end result is the one the contract documents called for, and the contractor is in the best position to record those changes.

- ✓ The contractor provides as-built information and the design professional provides record drawings
- ✓ Design professionals should produce record drawings, unless they have carried out periodic field reviews
- ✓ The record drawings reflect the information certified by the contractor and the limited observations of the design professional

## Formal procedures

The design professional must have a practical, organized and well-enforced system of document and drawing management. Submittals should come from the contractor on a scheduled basis so the design professional can anticipate the workload and assign the appropriate personnel to the task. The system should identify and reject drawings that are not called for or have not been reviewed by the subcontractor.