



---

# EVALUATION REPORT

2021-2024 CDM FRAMEWORK EXISTING BUILDING COMMISSIONING  
PROGRAM PY2023

---

Date: 12 July 2024

Prepared for: The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO)

Prepared by: EcoMetric Consulting, LLC and DNV Energy Insights USA Inc.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
E1. Program Description .....	1
E2. Evaluation Objectives .....	1
E3. Evaluation Approach Summary .....	1
E4. Summary of Results .....	2
E5. Key Findings and Recommendations .....	3
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.1 Program Description .....	6
1.2 Evaluation Objectives .....	6
<b>2 Methodology</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.3 Process Evaluation Approach .....	7
1.3.1 Research Questions .....	7
1.3.2 Data Collection .....	8
<b>3 Process Evaluation Results</b> .....	<b>9</b>
1.4 Results .....	9
1.4.1 Program Outreach and Participation Motivations .....	9
1.4.2 Program Participation Challenges .....	10
1.4.3 Program Experience (Including Persistence of Savings) .....	11
1.4.4 Barriers to Program Participation .....	12
1.4.5 Future Growth Opportunities .....	13
<b>4 Key Findings and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>A Appendix</b> .....	<b>16</b>
A.1 Data Collection Guides .....	16

## TABLES

Table 1: PY2023 EBCx Sample Frame .....	7
Table 2: Research Objectives Mapped to Questions in this Instrument .....	16
Table 3: Research Objectives Mapped to Questions in this Instrument .....	21

# Executive Summary

---

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) retained EcoMetric Consulting, LLC (EcoMetric) and subcontractor DNV Energy Insights USA Inc. (DNV), collectively referred to as the EcoMetric team, to evaluate the Existing Building Commissioning (EBCx) program in the 2021-2024 Conservation and Demand Management (CDM) Framework. This report details the methodologies, results, and recommendations from the process evaluation of EBCx for program year 2023 (PY2023).

## E1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

EBCx provides a whole-building approach to incentivizing energy efficiency improvements providing customers greater flexibility in measure selection. The program offers financial incentives to commercial building owners to hire qualified commissioning providers to undertake building recommissioning at their facilities, helping them realize energy savings from improved facility operations and maintenance (O&M) business practices. The program also provides pay-for-performance incentives for savings achieved through the implementation of these practices and savings persistence. The commissioning provider trains participants to engage in ongoing commissioning and integrate this process into their standard management practices.

## E2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of EcoMetric's evaluation of the EBCx Program were to:

- ▶ Monitor the overall effectiveness and comprehensiveness of key program elements.
- ▶ Analyze and make recommendations to improve the program.
- ▶ Determine customer motivations and experience.
- ▶ Identify improvements to program delivery procedures and protocols.

As the program is in the early stage of implementation, current EBCx projects are still underway and not yet ready for evaluation. EcoMetric will conduct the first impact evaluation and cost effectiveness analysis for the EBCx program as part of the PY2024 evaluation in the 2025 calendar year.

## E3. EVALUATION APPROACH SUMMARY

The EcoMetric team-based process evaluation findings on literature reviews and primary data from interviews with a wide range of program actors including IESO staff, program delivery vendor, and commissioning providers.

## E4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The section below summarizes the findings from the IESO program staff, program delivery vendor staff, and commissioning providers (CPs) in-depth interviews (IDIs).

### **Program Outreach and Participation Motivations**

Most CPs heard about the program through direct outreach conducted by the program delivery vendor, and all six CPs reported that the work completed through this program mirrors the work they do under normal operations. Thus, they reported “expanding network to offer services currently being provided” as the main motivation for participation.

The EcoMetric team’s literature review found few documents that CPs could use as marketing/outreach material for their clients on the IESO’s website such as program fact sheets, Practical Guide brochure and training materials.<sup>1</sup> IDIs revealed that CPs rarely use them.

Regarding client participation, most CPs believe clients participated in the EBCx program because of financial reasons, with two-thirds reporting that financial incentives motivated clients to participate.

### **Program Participation Challenges**

Most participants experienced glitches and stability issues with the tracking portal and encountered limited options for making custom modifications. In turn, they used their own internal tracking processes.

Fifty percent of CPs believe the incentive for the implementation phase of the program should be revisited. A few CPs reported that the current incentive rate can be in competition with measures incentivized at a much higher rate through the Retrofit Program.

### **Program Experience**

CPs value the inclusion of an incentive to encourage the persistence of savings. However, none of the CPs reported yet reaching this third stage of the program. Therefore, they did not share any specific insights on this subject.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://saveonenergy.ca/Training-and-Support/Commercial/Existing-building-commissioning>

Most program participants made extra energy efficiency improvements beyond measures incentivized by the program. The interviewees also pointed out that, among their clients, projects outside the scope of the program are moving forward.

The EcoMetric team found that program CPs were pleased with the program delivery vendor. One area identified for future growth includes updates to the program tracking portal for a better user experience.

### **Barriers to Program Participation**

Most of the CPs reported little to no challenges in becoming a commissioning provider. Two-thirds of the interviewed CPs needed to take classes to obtain the required CP certifications before participating in EBCx. The other interviewees were already certified.

CPs noted that staff turnover within their organization has led to the completion of fewer projects in the program. One interviewee indicated that their employees are leaving to work on similar programs offered through the federal government for a larger salary. The IESO program staff and program delivery vendor are aware of these staffing challenges.

Interviews with program staff from the IESO reveal that the program will not meet its savings goals. This is because the program launch happened 18 months later than expected. The EcoMetric team will monitor progress towards meeting the target savings goal closely during the PY2024 evaluation cycle.

### **Future Growth Opportunities**

CPs provided a variety of potential future improvements and/or growth for the EBCx program. Topics ranged from changes made to the M&V plan to more direct integration with energy managers (and programs targeted energy managers) to reducing the minimum energy consumed per year to expand program participation to smaller customers.

## **E5. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following section presents the key findings and recommendations for the PY2023 Process Evaluation.

**Finding 1:** Commissioning Providers (CPs) highlighted a poor user experience with the program portal developed and operated by the program delivery vendor. First, CPs find it hard to track participants through various program stages since application numbers change for each stage in the portal. Second, CPs note that the portal does not identify a building address or location when an

account number is entered. Third, CPs desire the ability to add more than one contact into the portal to receive updates and communication, so that there is more than a single point of contact.

**Recommendation 1:** Consider enhancing the portal to be more user friendly. At a minimum:

- 1) maintain a single application number for each participant through all program stages (if delineation by stage is necessary, add a letter identifier following a common application number),
- 2) enable finding building addresses after entering an account number, and
- 3) enable adding more than one contact person per organization.

**Finding 2:** CPs desire additional marketing materials based on localized and sector specific market research for customers. During the evaluation literature review, the few documents found on the Save on Energy website that allow CPs to share with customers were in the training section and did not include any IESO-specific market research or information about program performance nor energy-saving impacts for customers, beyond a generalized 5%-15% savings statement. Only one CP indicated that they shared the current program brochure with their customers. No one mentioned using the fact sheets. Two CPs reported developing their own marketing materials to pass along to their customers with additional information about the program. Three CPs reported not currently using any outreach material available on the IESO's website.

**Recommendation 2a:** Engage CPs to determine what program outreach/marketing materials would be the most useful to share with customers. Consider developing at least one handout targeted at program customers and share with CPs to supplement their outreach.

**Recommendation 2b:** Consider analyzing past program performance characteristics to strengthen metrics for new outreach materials. Illustrating savings for local peers will be more compelling than more generic statements. For example, determine that energy savings were found to be 5-10% on average for program participants in the healthcare sector in Northern Ontario and include this metric in outreach materials. Replacing the generalized sector fact sheets with IESO participant-specific real case studies as compelling stories become available would also strengthen the message.

**Finding 3:** The implementation phase of the EBCx program provides an incentive of \$0.03 per kWh of confirmed energy savings, subject to a maximum of 30% of the facility's annual electricity consumption calculated using the baseline model or \$50,000, whichever is lower. CPs note that they believe this incentive rate can be in competition with measures incentivized at a much higher rate through the Retrofit Program. The customer may decide to discontinue before the implementation phase to "shop" for different incentive programs for the best deal. This may lead to the program

being cost ineffective. The contractor describing this problem, however, believed that the EBCx incentive level was not unreasonable.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that two solutions be implemented to remedy this understanding:

- ▶ Investigate to ensure that the EBCx and custom retrofit programs are exclusive and ensure eligibility to participate is for one or the other.
- ▶ Educate CPs on the differences between the programs so that there is no overlap or slowing of implementation.

**Finding 4:** Some EBCx participants are taking energy saving actions beyond those in their commissioning action plans. However, those actions are as-yet to be completed.

**Recommendation 4:** Consider determining program spillover in future years.

## 1.1 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

EBCx provides a whole-building approach to incentivizing energy efficiency improvements providing customers greater flexibility in measure selection. The program offers financial incentives to commercial building owners to hire qualified commissioning providers to undertake building recommissioning at their facilities, helping them realize energy savings from improved facility operations and maintenance (O&M) business practices. The program also provides pay-for-performance incentives for savings achieved through the implementation of these practices and savings persistence. The commissioning provider trains participants to engage in ongoing commissioning and integrate this process into their standard management practices.

Measures in EBCx include operational and maintenance changes, equipment repairs, and minor replacements with performance being rewarded at the same rate. With measure savings being calculated at the whole-building level for customers, the cost of implementing the program and administrative burden is greatly reduced.

## 1.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of EcoMetric's evaluation of the EBCx Program were to:

- ▶ Monitor the overall effectiveness and comprehensiveness of key program elements.
- ▶ Analyze and make recommendations to improve the program.
- ▶ Determine customer motivations and experience.
- ▶ Identify improvements to program delivery procedures and protocols.
- ▶

As the program is in the early stage of implementation, current EBCx projects are still underway and not yet ready for evaluation. EcoMetric will conduct the first impact evaluation and cost effectiveness analysis for the EBCx program as part of the PY2024 evaluation in the 2025 calendar year. This report contains the process evaluation results for the EBCx program in PY2023.



### 1.3 Process Evaluation Approach

In the PY2023 evaluation, the EcoMetric team conducted a compact process evaluation by conducting a literature review and collecting primary data from IESO program staff, implementation staff, and up to six commissioning providers. For the literature review, the EcoMetric team reviewed online materials (including webpages detailing information about the program) as well as other program materials provided by the IESO program staff and implementation staff (e.g., the EBCx program user reporting workbook). In-depth interviews (IDIs) for all primary data collected were conducted via phone or video calls by the EcoMetric team. Table 1 shows the total number of IDIs conducted.

*Table 1: PY2023 EBCx Sample Frame*

Component	Population	Completed
IESO Program Staff	1	1
Implementation Staff	2	2 <sup>2</sup>
Commissioning Providers	15	6

#### 1.3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following a discussion of the evaluation and the EBCx program with the IESO team, the EcoMetric team developed these PY2023 research questions:

- ▶ Is the IESO on track to meet savings goals for this program within the current framework?
- ▶ Is the program encouraging ongoing metering, periodic customer reporting of setpoint status, or other activities that maintain the persistence of savings?
- ▶ What are the challenges related to the program? The following will be asked: 1) applications being submitted by only 2-3 providers, despite there being 41 providers in the network (including the reasons for choosing to not apply), and 2) the performance of the program delivery vendor including their key performance indicators.
- ▶ How effective are program delivery vendor operations?

<sup>2</sup> One group interview was conducted with two members of the program implementation staff.

- ▶ What are the commissioning provider motivations and barriers to participating in the EBCx program?
- ▶ How is the commissioning providers' program experience?
- ▶ Where are the opportunities to improve the delivery of EBCx?
- ▶ How can the IESO increase participation?

## 1.3.2 DATA COLLECTION

### 1.3.2.1 IESO and Program Delivery Vendor Staff

The EcoMetric team conducted one interview with the IESO EBCx program lead. Additionally, the EcoMetric team conducted one separate group interview with the program manager and technical lead of the program delivery vendor team. Both interviews focused on topics relating to the research questions such as program design, marketing and outreach to commissioning providers, the commissioning provider agreement process, tracking and providing required documentation, QA/QC practices, and challenges and barriers for commissioning providers and participants to be involved with the EBCx program.

### 1.3.2.2 Commissioning Providers

The EcoMetric team conducted interviews with up to six commissioning providers. Outreach to potential respondents was conducted in order from the most active to the least active commissioning providers from the list of contacts provided by the program team. These interviews gathered information on working with participants and their motivation to participate, how easy it was for them to navigate the application process, the usability of resources, motivations behind efficiency behaviours and investment, future upgrade plans, and how well program activities are addressing their needs.

## 1.4 RESULTS

Findings from the IESO program staff, program delivery vendor staff, and commissioning providers (CPs) IDs are included in this section.

### 1.4.1 PROGRAM OUTREACH AND PARTICIPATION MOTIVATIONS

**Most CPs heard about the program through direct outreach.** Four of six interviewees reported hearing about the program through word of mouth or direct outreach from the program delivery vendor. One additional respondent reported knowing about the program after seeing it on the IESO website. The final interviewee did not recall how they heard about the program.

**Expanding network to offer services currently being provided was the main motivation for CP participation.** All six CPs reported that the work completed through this program is what they already do for their normal operations. The complementary nature of this program with current operations, and an ability to offer their existing or new clients an incentive alongside their standard offerings, is said to provide a good business development opportunity. Two-thirds (four out of six) of interviewees reported that the program either increased the number of clients they serve or the amount of sales executed with existing clients.

**CPs rarely, if at all, use current marketing/outreach material provided on the program website.** CPs reported that there is limited material available on the website directed towards their customers. Further, they did not believe that the available material focused on the key information sought by their customers. During the EcoMetric team's literature review, it was found that only one document on the program website (the program brochure) provides marketing/outreach material directly for clients. Only one interviewee stated that they share the brochure provided on the program website with their clients. Three interviewees said they do not use any marketing/outreach material when speaking with their clients. Two interviewees noted that their organizations have created their own materials regarding the program that they share with their clients to advertise the program.

---

*"We put together a 1 pager for ourselves to pitch the program to clients that cuts down to what the client is interested in – what we are doing in the building and what they could earn."*

---

One CP noted that, for the marketing/outreach material to better meet their needs, they would like to see more market research presented in a sectoral manner about program performance and the energy-saving impact on customers.

**Most CPs (four out of six) believe the primary motivation for their clients to participate in the EBCx program is financial.** Sixty-six percent of CPs note that cost savings because of decreased energy usage and incentives are what driving clients to participate in this program. Two interviewees believe that customers desire better awareness of their systems and choose to engage in continuous improvement for their processes.

#### 1.4.2 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION CHALLENGES

**Most participants reported issues using the program tracking portal run by the program delivery vendor and deferred to using their own internal processes for tracking.** Five of six interviewees indicated using their own internal tracking processes instead of the tracking portal provided by the program delivery vendor. Only one interviewee said they are relying on the portal. Interviewees reported a variety of issues and provided suggestions for improvement. First, respondents noted that the tracking portal provides a different application number for various phases. CPs find it hard to track projects as they proceed through different phases when the application numbers change and recommended keeping the application numbers consistent throughout the program phases.

---

*"I don't know why we have two different application numbers for two different steps. It would be easier to have 1 number for the whole process."*

---

Additionally, interviewees noted that they believe the portal is simply a web-based application from Microsoft. They believe this has contributed to glitches, stability issues, and limited the ability to make custom modifications. For example, they cannot see the building address when pulling up an application number within the portal. Finally, interviewees noted that there is only room to include one contact per CP organization within the portal. CPs indicated a desire to add more than one contact so that communication from the program delivery vendor is sent to more than one stakeholder at the organization.

**Fifty percent of interviewees noted that the incentive for the implementation phase of the program should be re-visited.** This finding is not surprising, as interviews with the IESO program staff and the program delivery vendor revealed that CPs have been asking questions about whether incentive rates might be revisited in the future. Three CPs noted that the current incentive rate (\$0.03

per kWh of confirmed energy savings, subject to a maximum of 30% of the facility's annual electricity consumption calculated using the baseline model or \$50,000, whichever is lower) can be in competition with measures incentivized at a much higher rate through the Retrofit Program. This is not only an inefficient use of the program's funding, but it also slows implementation, as the customer may stop before implementation to "shop" for different incentive programs offering the best deal. While CPs do not find the current incentive amount unreasonable, they voiced concern about competition between programs and what they offer their clients.

#### 1.4.3 PROGRAM EXPERIENCE (INCLUDING PERSISTENCE OF SAVINGS)

**CPs value inclusion of an incentive to encourage persistence of savings but are not yet in that phase.** None of the six interviewed CPs reported reaching the third stage of the program (persistence) yet. As such, they did not have specific insights to share on the persistence of savings. However, three of six interviewees noted that they appreciated this third program stage being offered in conjunction with an additional incentive. Two interviewees noted that an increased incentive offered during this stage might further incentivize program participants to complete full program participation.

**Most program participants completed additional energy efficiency upgrades/improvements beyond measures incentivized in the program.** Four of six interviewees noted that, among their clients, projects that were outside the scope of this program identified during the investigation stage are moving forward. One CP noted that, for the most part, this program helps to implement low- or no-cost projects. However, they still identified larger capital projects that could be completed during the investigation phase (e.g., elevator motor modifications). This CP noted that two buildings are now actively working on larger projects outside the scope of the EBCx program.

---

*"When we put together our energy conservation measures, we always do low cost/no cost [for this program] but also bigger projects for capital spending...two buildings have made changes based on that."*

---

They did not state whether or not incentives were being sought through other programs. If not, they represent potential attributable non-overlap spillover worth pursuing next year.

**Program CPs are generally satisfied with the program delivery vendor.** All six respondents noted that they were somewhat or very satisfied in their interactions with the program delivery vendor. The

one area highlighted for future growth includes updates to the program tracking portal, described above in Section 3.1.2.

**Overall, CPs are satisfied with the program.** All six respondents noted that they were, overall, satisfied with the program and their participation.

#### 1.4.4 BARRIERS TO PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

**Limited barriers were reported by CPs to initiate program participation.** Five of six interviewees said they did not have any challenges in becoming a CP. One interviewee noted some difficulty with their legal department accepting the terms & conditions in the program agreement.

**Two-thirds of CPs had the necessary credentials before program participation.** Only two of six interviewees reported needing to take classes and obtain the required CP certifications before learning about the EBCx program. The other four interviewees were already certified before learning about the program.

**CPs are facing turnover in their organizations, leading to fewer projects being completed in the program.** Fifty percent (three of six) interviewees noted that staff turnover within their organization has been problematic recently. One interviewee provided additional insight as to why they believe they are facing such drastic turnover – employees are leaving to work on similar programs offered through the federal government. The interviewee noted that poaching is taking place, and their employees are being offered large salary increases due to the money available to work on federal programs.

---

*“We have a lot of poaching to work on federal government programs and they are being offered huge salary jumps. When the federal government puts a lot of money on projects it creates a lot of demand and there are only so many people out there who can do this work.”*

---

The IESO program staff and program delivery vendor are aware that CPs are “strapped for resources.”

**Interviews with program staff from the IESO project reveal that this program will not meet the savings goal targets.** This is because the program launch happened 18 months later than expected. While the EcoMetric team did not complete an impact evaluation this year, concern from program staff indicates that progress towards meeting the target savings goal is a topic to be monitored during the PY2024 evaluation cycle.

#### 1.4.5 FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

**CPs provided a variety of potential future improvements and/or growth for the EBCx program.**

Two interviewees desired to see changes made to the M&V plan – especially for smaller measures. They noted that it is more expensive to create an M&V plan for smaller measures than the benefit provided by the incentive through the program. One interviewee noted that they would like to see more direct integration with Energy Managers (EMs) and programs targeting EMs. They believe that EMs would have an interest in participating in this program and might be a source of leads. Finally, one interviewee noted that reducing the minimum energy consumed per year criteria would allow them to expand program participation among their smaller clients.

**Finding 1:** Commissioning Providers (CPs) highlighted a poor user experience with the program portal developed and operated by the program delivery vendor. First, CPs find it hard to track participants through various program stages since application numbers change for each stage in the portal. Second, CPs note that the portal does not identify a building address or location when an account number is entered. Third, CPs desire the ability to add more than one contact into the portal to receive updates and communication, so that there is more than a single point of contact.

**Recommendation 1:** Consider enhancing the portal to be more user friendly. At a minimum:

- 1) maintain a single application number for each participant through all program stages (if delineation by stage is necessary, add a letter identifier following a common application number),
- 2) enable finding building addresses after entering an account number, and
- 3) enable adding more than one contact person per organization.

**Finding 2:** CPs desire additional marketing materials based on localized and sector specific market research for customers. During the evaluation literature review, the few documents found on the Save on Energy website that allow CPs to share with customers were in the training section and did not include any IESO-specific market research or information about program performance nor energy-saving impacts for customers, beyond a generalized 5%-15% savings statement. Only one CP indicated that they shared the current program brochure with their customers. No one mentioned using the fact sheets. Two CPs reported developing their own marketing materials to pass along to their customers with additional information about the program. Three CPs reported not currently using any outreach material available on the IESO's website.

**Recommendation 2a:** Engage CPs to determine what program outreach/marketing materials would be the most useful to share with customers. Consider developing at least one handout targeted at program customers and share with CPs to supplement their outreach.

**Recommendation 2b:** Consider analyzing past program performance characteristics to strengthen metrics for new outreach materials. Illustrating savings for local peers will be more compelling than more generic statements. For example, determine that energy savings were found to be 5-10% on average for program participants in the healthcare sector in Northern Ontario and include this metric in outreach materials. Replacing the generalized sector fact sheets with IESO participant-specific real case studies as compelling stories become available would also strengthen the message.



**Finding 3:** The implementation phase of the EBCx program provides an incentive of \$0.03 per kWh of confirmed energy savings, subject to a maximum of 30% of the facility's annual electricity consumption calculated using the baseline model or \$50,000, whichever is lower. CPs note that they believe this incentive rate can be in competition with measures incentivized at a much higher rate through the Retrofit Program. The customer may decide to discontinue before the implementation phase to “shop” for different incentive programs for the best deal. This may lead to the program being cost ineffective. The contractor describing this problem, however, believed that the EBCx incentive level was not unreasonable.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that two solutions be implemented to remedy this understanding:

- ▶ Investigate to ensure that the EBCx and custom retrofit programs are exclusive and ensure eligibility to participate is for one or the other.
- ▶ Educate CPs on the differences between the programs so that there is no overlap or slowing of implementation.

**Finding 4:** Some EBCx participants are taking energy saving actions beyond those in their commissioning action plans. However, those actions are as-yet to be completed.

**Recommendation 4:** Consider determining program spillover in future years.

## A.1 Data Collection Guides

### A.1.1 IESO's EBCx Program Staff Interview Guide

#### INSTRUMENT OVERVIEW

**Objective:** The Evaluation Team will interview IESO EBCx program staff, as well as a third-party EBCx implementation lead. The purpose of these interviews is to obtain a more detailed understanding of 1) how the EBCx program is promoted and communicated to commissioning providers and potential participant organizations and 2) what challenges staff are facing in scaling the EBCx program in the 2021-2024 Conservation and Demand Management (CDM) Framework.

Table 2 documents the research objectives and associated questions.

**Anticipated timing (interview length):** 45 minutes – 1 hour

**Method of data collection:** Phone interview

*Table 2: Research Objectives Mapped to Questions in this Instrument*

Research Objectives	Questions
Is the IESO on track to meet savings goals for this program within the current framework? Is the program encouraging ongoing metering, periodic customer reporting of setpoint status, or other activities which maintain the persistence of savings?	Q2 - Q3
What are the challenges related to the program? We will inquire about: 1) applications being submitted by only 2-3 providers, despite there being 41 providers in the network (including the reasons for choosing to not apply), and 2) the performance of the program delivery vendor including their key performance indicators and effectiveness of program delivery vendor operations.	Q3 - Q8
How is the commissioning provider program experience, including the agreement process and tracking and providing required documentation? What are the commissioning provider motivations and barriers to participating in the EBCx program? What marketing and outreach is provided to commissioning providers?	Q9 - Q12
What are the opportunities to improve the delivery of EBCx? What are current QA/QC practices?	Q13 - Q15, Q17
How can the IESO increase participation?	Q16

## Interview

[INTERVIEWER: Send an email introducing yourself, explaining the purpose of the interview, and scheduling a time for the interview.]

### EMAIL INTRODUCTION

[INTERVIEWER ADAPT EMAIL IF NEEDED]

Subject: EBCx program discussion

Hi [INPUT CONTACT NAME],

As you may already be aware, we are starting the evaluation of the Existing Building Commissioning Program (EBCx) Program.

We would like to speak to you about your role in the EBCx program and opportunities for continued program growth. We expect our discussion to take 45 minutes to an hour.

Please let us know when it would be a good time to talk. Below is my availability for the next two weeks:

[OFFER SEVERAL TIME SLOTS FOR THE INTERVIEW]

Respectfully Yours,

[INTERVIEWER NAME, TITLE, AND COMPANY SIGNATURE]

### INTERVIEW

Today, we'll be discussing your role in the IESO Existing Building Commissioning (EBCx) program and opportunities for continued program growth. Your comments are confidential. If I ask you about areas you don't know about, please feel free to tell me that and we will move on. Also, if you want to refer me to specific documents to answer any of my questions, that's great – I'm happy to look things up if I know where to get the information.

I would like to record this interview for my note-taking purposes. Do I have your permission?

### Roles and Responsibilities [ASK ALL]

Q1. Can you briefly describe your role in the EBCx program and provide your current job title?

## **Savings Goals and Key Metrics [Ask All Unless Otherwise Noted]**

First, I would like to ask you about savings expectations and metrics.

Q2. *[Ask IESO staff only]* We see that the forecasted energy savings are 71,307 MWh and the forecasted demand savings are 21.67 MW. Do you have any concerns towards meeting that goal?

- a. We know there is a persistence phase of the program. What is the program doing to encourage and maintain the persistence of savings? (Probes: ongoing metering, periodic customer reporting of setpoint status, or other activities)

Q3. *[Ask IESO staff only]* How are those savings being tracked?

- a. Have there been any challenges in tracking savings thus far? (Probes: data protocols/processes, reporting procedures)

Q4. Besides savings, what other key metrics are you tracking to indicate program success?

- a. If any, what are your goals for those metrics?
- b. If there are goals, are you on track to meet those goals? Why or why not?

## **Program Design [Ask All]**

Next, I would like to ask you about program design related to EBCx.

Q5. We see that there are three phases to the EBCx program with three different incentives. (If needed: an investigation phase, with a \$0.06/sqft incentive up to \$50,000 and up to 75% of costs to hire a commissioning provider (CP) to prepare an investigation report, an implementation phase, with a \$0.03/kWh incentive of claimed energy savings, and a persistence phase (\$0.03/kWh of confirmed persistent energy savings). Have these different incentive amounts been successful?

Q6. An anticipated outcome of the program is engagement with hard-to-reach customers. Is this outcome on track? Please elaborate.

Q7. Another anticipated outcome of the program is spillover opportunity for other Save on Energy programs. Have you noticed participants engaging with other programs in addition to EBCx?

- a. If yes, what programs?

## **Program Implementation [Ask All Unless Noted Otherwise]**

My next set of questions relate to implementation of the EBCx program.

Q8. We learned that CLEAResult is largely responsible as a turnkey service provider for EBCx. Are there any program processes where CLEAResult is not responsible? (Probes: application processing, incentive fulfillment, call center, marketing/recruitment, and technical review of savings)

- a. *[Ask IESO staff only]* What issues, if any, has the IESO experienced with CLEAResult's delivery of the EBCx program?

Q9. How, recently, has the EBCx been marketed to commissioning providers?

- a. Are there any new methods of marketing or promotion that you are planning soon?
- b. What concerns, if any, do you have about EBCx promotion or communication with potential commissioning providers?

Q10. What concerns, if any, have you heard from commissioning providers regarding their agreement process?

Q11. What concerns, if any, have you heard from commissioning providers about providing required program documentation?

## **EBCx Program Processes [Ask All]**

My final set of questions relate to current EBCx program processes.

Q12. We have learned that applications were submitted by only 2-3 providers despite there being 41 providers in the network. Why do you think there have not been more applications submitted? (Probe: have you heard about challenges faced by commissioning providers who have not submitted applications)

- a. Have there been any challenges with received applications? (Probes: errors, if any were rejected and why, if there have been delays in approving the applications)

Q13. How many projects are currently being undertaken in the program?

- a. What concerns, if any, do you have with this initial participation in the EBCx program?
- b. What barriers or challenges are there to further participation in EBCx?

Q14. Has there been technical review of any EBCx projects?

- a. If yes, please describe current QA/QC practices.
- b. Have there been any challenges in completing technical review?

Q15. Have any EBCx participants received incentives?

- a. If yes, have there been any challenges with incentive fulfillment?

### **Wrap-up [Ask All]**

Q16. Besides what we have already discussed, do you see any opportunities to increase participation in the EBCx program?

Q17. What would you like to learn from the program evaluation?

## **A.1.2 IESO's EBCx Commissioning Providers Interview Guide**

### **Instrument Overview**

**Objective:** The Evaluation Team will interview up to six commissioning providers for the IESO's EBCx program. The purpose of these interviews is to obtain a more detailed understanding of how the EBCx program is promoted and communicated to commissioning providers and potential participant organizations, obtain information on working with participants and their motivation to participate, and learn how well program activities are addressing their needs.

Table 3 documents the research objectives and associated questions.

**Anticipated timing (interview length):** 45 minutes – 1 hour

**Method of data collection:** Phone interview

Table 3: Research Objectives Mapped to Questions in this Instrument

Research Objectives	Questions
What are current program QA/QC practices? Is the program encouraging ongoing metering, periodic customer reporting of setpoint status, or other activities which maintain the persistence of savings?	Q6, Q7
What are challenges related to the program? We will inquire about: 1) applications being submitted by only 2-3 providers, despite there being 41 providers in the network (including the reasons for choosing to not apply), and 2) the performance of the program delivery vendor including their key performance indicators and effectiveness of program delivery vendor operations.	Q8, Q9
How is the commissioning provider program experience, including the agreement process and tracking and providing required documentation? How well are program activities addressing commissioning provider needs?	Q4, Q5, Q11
What are the commissioning provider motivations and barriers to participating in the EBCx program? What marketing and outreach is provided to commissioning providers?	Q2, Q3
What are the opportunities to improve the delivery of EBCx? How usable are program resources?	Q10, Q17
What are the customer motivations behind their energy efficiency behaviors and investments? Do customers have future upgrade plans?	Q15, Q16
How is the customer program experience? How can the IESO increase program participation?	Q12, Q13, Q14, Q16

## Interview

[INTERVIEWER: Send an email introducing yourself, explaining the purpose of the interview, and scheduling a time for the interview.]

### EMAIL INTRODUCTION

[INTERVIEWER ADAPT EMAIL IF NEEDED]

Subject: EBCx program discussion

Hi [INPUT CONTACT NAME],

DNV is conducting research on behalf of the IESO to evaluate the Existing Building Commissioning Program (EBCx) Program.

We would like to speak to you about your role in the EBCx program and opportunities for continued program growth. We expect our discussion to take 45 minutes to an hour.

Please let us know when it would be a good time to talk. Below is my availability for the next two weeks:

[OFFER SEVERAL TIME SLOTS FOR THE INTERVIEW]

Respectfully Yours,

[INTERVIEWER NAME, TITLE, AND COMPANY SIGNATURE]

## INTERVIEW

Today, we'll be discussing your role in the IESO Existing Building Commissioning (EBCx) program and opportunities for continued program growth. Your comments are confidential. If I ask you about areas you don't know about, please feel free to tell me that and we will move on. Also, if you want to refer me to specific documents to answer any of my questions, that's great – I'm happy to look things up if I know where to get the information.

I would like to record this interview for my note-taking purposes. Do I have your permission?

### **Roles and Responsibilities [ASK ALL]**

- Q1. Can you briefly describe your role in the EBCx program and provide your current job title?  
(Probe for commissioning providers: confirm the interviewee has knowledge of program projects before proceeding with the discussion; if not, obtain information for more appropriate party at organization)

### **Program Experience**

First, I would like to ask you about your experience with the EBCx program.

- Q2. How did you first hear about the EBCx program? (Probes: The IESO staff, vendor staff, another commissioning provider, program participant, web search, word of mouth)
- Q3. What motivated you to be affiliated with the EBCx program as a commissioning provider?  
(Probes: expand network of customers, wanted more work, wanted jobs with a better profit margin)
- Q4. How easy or challenging was it for you to become a commissioning provider for the EBCx program? (Probe: the agreement process)
- a. [If they say it was not easy:] What was the most challenging step in becoming a commissioning provider?



- b. Did you already have the required commissioning provider certifications before learning about the EBCx program, or did desire to join the program prompt you to earn certification?

Q5. What tracking systems are in place for you to record and provide required documentation like program participation/project status/energy savings?

- a. [If they name at least one tracking system:] How, if at all, could this/these tracking system(s) be improved?

Q6. What, if any, processes are in place for quality assurance/quality control checks of data from completed projects?

Q7. How, if at all, is the program encouraging ongoing metering, periodic customer reporting of setpoints status, or other activities which will help savings persist over time?

- a. [If they say no/minimal encouragement:] What do you think the program can do to encourage the persistence of savings?
- b. [If they name ways the program is providing encouragement:] Is there anything else you think the program can do to encourage the persistence of savings?

Q8. What, if any, barriers prevent you from completing more projects for the EBCx program? (Probe: are there inefficiencies in program delivery)

Q9. How satisfied or dissatisfied have you been in your collaboration with the program vendor, CLEAResult?

- a. [If they are not satisfied:] What has been the most challenging aspect of working with the vendor, CLEAResult?

Q10. What, if any, program resources do you use? (Probes: marketing/outreach material, training provided by the program, installation or monitoring tools provided by the program)

- a. [If they use at least one program resource:] Do you have any suggestions on how the IESO could improve the resource(s)?

Q11. Overall, how well are the program activities addressing your needs as a commissioning provider?

- a. [If not well:] Do you have any suggestions for how the program could be improved to better meet your needs?

- b. Has being a program qualified contractor impacted your sales in terms of the number of customers, depth of activity per site, or both? (Probe: by how much?)

## **Customer Experience**

Next, I would like to ask you about the customer experience of the EBCx program.

- Q12. Can you describe the participation process in the program from the customer's perspective, from first contact through rebate payment (or program completion)?
- Q13. At what stage of customer participation do you typically get involved?
- Q14. In your opinion, what is the main motivation for customers to participate in the EBCx program? (Probe: incentives)
- Q15. In your opinion, what is the main motivation behind customers completing energy efficiency investments? (Probes: corporate sustainability goals, reducing energy usage, decreasing energy bills/costs)
- Q16. Have any participants completed additional energy efficiency upgrades or improvements beyond the measures incentivized in the program?
  - a. If yes, what upgrades/improvements?
  - b. If no, have any customers indicated having any future upgrade/improvement project plans they will complete in the next year?

## **Wrap-Up/Future Opportunities**

My final set of questions relate to future growth opportunities for the EBCx program.

- Q17. Besides what we have already discussed, do you see any opportunities to improve the delivery of the EBCx program?
- Q18. Finally, besides what we have already discussed, do you see any opportunities to increase participation in the EBCx program?

Those are all the questions I have. Unless you have any questions for me or additional feedback, we are finished. Please feel free to reach out via email or phone if you think of anything we did not cover during our discussion today.