

Technical building survey (element 2)

The technical building survey covers both fabric and systems observation.

Level 2: Survey of controls and user-interfaces

Cost: ₹	Time: ⌚⌚	Skills: 🙌🙌
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This task assesses the usability of controls and user interfaces from the perception of the evaluator.

Potential tools needed:

- Pen and paper for notes
- Drawings and documentation referencing system integration
- Camera

How: Evaluators can assess the usability of controls based on a number of criteria including:

- Clarity of purpose;
- Intuitive switching;
- Labelling and annotation;
- Ease of use;
- Indication of system response;
- Degree of fine control.

A method is well described in the following (free online) source:

- BORDASS, B., LEAMAN, A. & BUNN, R. 2007. [Controls for End Users: A guide for good design and implementations](#), In: ASSOCIATION, B. C. I. (ed.).

Timing: The survey is unique in that it is fairly simple and can be performed at any point in the POE/BPE process. It is, however, highly recommended to perform this task during the as-built evaluation stage so that:

- If problems or insufficiencies are detected they could be potentially rectified before the user occupies the building.
- The findings will provide a foundation on which to ask user specific questions about their perception of control and use of controls.

This task can be performed during the early occupancy or in-use stage along with the user if it is not possible to complete it before the users occupy the building.

Potential barriers: Whilst this can provide a relatively objective review of the usability of the controls, it does not necessarily reflect the ability and understanding of different occupants in relation to the controls. It must also be noted that the assessors are likely to have some level of expertise and as such their assessment of the controls are likely to be influenced by this.

