

Your route through Unpaid Variation Prevention

A sample report, built from invented answers, to show what yours will look like.

This report is based only on your answers, before we have seen any of your papers. It is not legal advice, and you should not rely on any date or time limit in it: check every date against your subcontract. Legal questions go to your solicitor.

Where you stand

Some recent changed work is not yet confirmed in writing. It may still be inside the time your subcontract gives to confirm it, so it comes before anything else in this report.

In your routine, the first thing to fix is the rules on change. Your answers suggest your team may not be working to your own subcontract's rules, which often differ from the standard form. Every confirmation depends on them: who it goes to, in what form and by when.

Your jobs also run on different subcontract forms, and each can name different people and time limits. A rule carried from one job to the next can send a confirmation to the wrong person, or too late.

Put together, your answers show the usual path to a refused variation. A direction comes by word of mouth or message, from someone who may not be allowed to instruct, and is not confirmed that day. The work gets done, but nothing on paper shows it was properly asked for.

Site staff take the directions and someone else prices them, with no up-to-date register between them. That is where changes fall through: site assumes the office knows, and the office never hears.

Most variations that go unpaid were lost on the day they were given. Nothing went on paper, or it went to the wrong person, too late. That day-to-day routine is what this service fixes.

Your team takes directions from whoever runs the site. An instruction from someone your subcontract does not allow to instruct is easier to refuse later, however real the work.

Your instructions come by WhatsApp or text as well as by word of mouth. A message is a record, but it may not be the form your subcontract names for instructions, and chats get lost when phones change.

Your daywork sheets often come back unsigned or late. A sheet signed at the time records the hours, plant and materials used. An unsigned one rests on your word alone.

Your register falls behind, or lives in one person's head. When that person is busy or away, nobody else can tell which changes are confirmed, priced or applied for.

Some changes are missed from your applications, or held back. Each month a change stays out, it is unpaid, and it gets harder to prove as memories fade.

What to do now

In order: the first ones cannot wait.

1. Confirm the recent changes in writing, soonest deadline first (today)

Why: While the time to confirm is open, a written confirmation can put a verbal instruction on paper. Once it closes, that chance may be gone.

How: List each change: who asked, what for, when and where. Check each date against your subcontract's time limit. Send one confirmation per change to the person your subcontract names, and keep the sent email. If you send us the instruction and the clause, we write the confirmation that day for you to send.

2. Put your subcontract's rules on change on one page

Why: A confirmation sent to the wrong person, in the wrong form or too late may not count. Every confirmation your team sends is only as good as the rules behind it.

How: Open each subcontract at its clauses on instructions, variations and valuation, and its schedule of amendments. Write down who may instruct, in what form, how and by when a verbal instruction is confirmed, and any notice or quotation a change needs. If the subcontract brings in the main contract's terms, check those too. Pin the page up where your site team works.

3. List the people whose instructions count

Why: An instruction from the right person is far harder to refuse. One from anyone else needs the right person to confirm it.

How: Find who your subcontract says may instruct changes, and any named representatives. Put their names, roles and email addresses on one list for each job. If anyone else gives a direction, your team asks a person on the list to confirm it in writing that day.

4. Save the messages that gave instructions, with their dates

Why: A message sent at the time can show who asked for what, and when. A chat lost with an old phone, or a screenshot with no date, cannot.

How: For each live job, export the WhatsApp chats with your main contractor's people, with their dates, and save them in the job folder. Do this each month, and whenever someone changes phone. Then confirm by email, the same day, each instruction that came by message.

5. Confirm every verbal instruction in writing the day it is given

Why: A confirmation sent the same day, to the right person, answers your main contractor if it later says a change was never instructed. One sent weeks later may be out of time.

How: Use one short template: the job, who asked, what for, when and where, and that you are treating it as a variation. Email it the same day to the person your subcontract names. Give the change a number and save the email in that change's file.

6. Raise each daywork sheet the same day, and put it up for signature

Why: A sheet signed at the time is strong evidence of the resources used. One raised weeks later, unsigned, is easy to refuse.

How: Fill in the sheet on the day: the gang, the hours, the plant, the materials, and why the work cannot be measured. Hand it to your main contractor's site manager that day. If they will not sign, say so in an

email the same day and keep the sheet. Check your subcontract for any time limit on handing sheets in.

7. Keep one variation register for each job, updated the day a change arrives

Why: A register shows at a glance which changes are confirmed, priced, applied for and paid. It also lets someone else pick up the job when the usual person is away.

How: One line per change: its number, the date, who asked and what for. Then the confirmation sent, your price, the application it went in and what was paid. Give each change its own file and cost code. Keep the register where more than one person can see it.

8. Check each application against your list of changes before it goes

Why: A change that is confirmed but never applied for is still unpaid. Once it is in an application, your main contractor has to say in its notices what it will pay for it and why.

How: Before each application goes, tick every change on your register against it. Give each change its own line, with the instruction reference, your figure and the records behind it. Note any change left out, and why.

9. Agree how each change passes from site to whoever prices it

Why: A change the site team confirms but never passes on does not reach the register or the application, so it is never paid.

How: Choose one place every confirmation goes, such as a shared inbox or folder, and who checks it each week. Site staff confirm and record; your QS or office registers, prices and applies.

10. Keep every instruction, message and confirmation exactly as it arrived or went

Why: When a change is disputed months later, it turns on who asked for what, and when. An original email or message keeps its date and time; a retyped note or an undated screenshot may not.

How: Make one folder for each variation on each job. Save the instruction, your confirmation, any drawing and every reply in it as the original emails. Do not retype them, and do not edit or rename the attachments.

What to gather

Everything the work is built from. Copies are fine: send what you have and we will tell you what is missing.

- **The subcontract.** A complete PDF or scan, with the instruction, variation and valuation clauses, the amendment schedule and any conditions it refers to, all in full.

Where to find it: The commercial folder or the order email holds the signed copy. If it refers to other conditions, send whatever documents you were given.

- **Recent live directions.** A handful is enough, forwarded as the original emails and messages with dates and attachments intact.

Where to find it: The site team's inboxes and phones: the messages from your main contractor's people telling you to do something.

- **Any confirmations already issued.** As issued, with their dates, and any replies they received.

Where to find it: Usually the sent items of whoever writes them, or the site instruction file.

- **The variation register as it stands.** Sent exactly as it is kept, even if it is one surveyor's

spreadsheet or nothing at all.

Where to find it: Your quantity surveyor's working folder, the commercial drive, or the last application's variation schedule.

- **The site records.** The diaries, day sheets and photographs that captured recent directions, as they are kept, not retyped.

Where to find it: The site office and the site manager's phone, mostly.

- **Your last two applications.** With their variation schedules and your main contractor's Payment Notices, as sent and received.

Where to find it: The commercial folder, or the email trail with your main contractor's quantity surveyor.

Why Quantsurv

You can do a good deal of this yourself, and the steps above show how. If you would rather have it done for you, or want the notices checked before you act, this is the work we do.

- **Specialists in exactly this.** We work only for subcontractors, on the claims and disputes that cost them money. Behind it: 10 years on the commercial side of construction, and £100m+ of construction projects worked on.
- **A fixed fee, agreed first.** We never bill by the hour. Fixed fee for set-up and the live month, agreed before work starts. Optional monthly checks have a fixed fee agreed first. Pause between jobs or stop at month-end. If the work runs over, the cost is ours, not yours.
- **Fast where it matters.** Ten working days. A fixed fee also gives us every reason to finish quickly.

How Unpaid Variation Prevention would run for you

The whole service, step by step. Where your answers decide a route, it is shown under the step it belongs to.

Step 01 You tell us how change arrives on your jobs

One call on your jobs, your subcontracts and how instructions reach your site team today. The first conversation is free and commits you to nothing.

Step 02 We confirm the scope and the fixed fee in writing

We set out which jobs the routine covers and who on your team will run it. We confirm the timetable and the fixed fee for the set-up and the live month.

What you get: A written scope, timetable and fixed fee

- **If you want it across the business:** we build one routine on your usual subcontract terms, then map each live job's own rules onto it.

Step 03 You decide whether to go ahead

Nothing starts until you have agreed the scope and the fee in writing.

Step 04 You send us the paperwork

The list below lets us build the routine from what your subcontract requires and what your people already record.

Step 05 We map your subcontract's rules on change

Who may instruct, in what form, how and when to confirm, any notice a variation needs and how changes are valued. We set them down on one page your site and commercial teams can pin up.

What you get: A one-page map of your subcontract's rules on change

- **If your jobs run on different subcontract forms:** each form gets its own one-page map, and the routine points each job to the right one.

Step 06 We compare how you work now with what the subcontract requires

We trace a sample of recent directions, from the emails, messages, diaries and day sheets, to a confirmation and a register line. That shows where instructions are being lost today.

What you get: A written note of where instructions are being lost, with any confirmation due now ready to send

- **If an instruction is still inside its confirmation period:** we write the confirmation that day, in the form your subcontract requires, for you to send.
- **If the register is empty or out of date:** we rebuild it from the site records. Every rebuilt line is marked as rebuilt, with its date and sources.

Step 07 We design the routine around your team

We build the authority list, the confirmation template and the variation register, with a status on every line. We add a file and cost code per variation, a diary of confirmation and notice dates, and the monthly check against your application.

What you get: The authority list, confirmation template, variation register and diary, built for your jobs

- **If instructions reach your team by WhatsApp or text:** the confirmation starts there: a same-day email confirming the message, with the original saved to the variation file.
- **If your subcontract allows daywork:** daywork sheets are raised and put up for signature the same day, with a note of why the work cannot be measured.

Step 08 We set it up with your team and walk them through it

We load the register and templates onto your systems. Then we take your site managers, supervisors and surveyor through them, so each person knows what to do when a direction arrives.

What you get: The routine set up on your systems, and a team that knows who does what

- **Where the people who take directions are not the people who price them:** each gets their own part: site staff confirm and record, and your surveyor registers, prices and applies.

Step 09 You run it on a live month

Your people confirm each instruction and register each change themselves, in your name and on your systems. We are alongside to answer questions as they come up.

- **If your main contractor will not sign a daywork sheet or answer a confirmation:** your team records that in writing the same day, and the register shows the item as disputed.

Step 10 We check the month against the subcontract

We trace every direction the month produced to a confirmation and a register line, and check the register against the application. Anything unconfirmed is flagged while there is still time to confirm it.

What you get: A written check of the live month, with the corrections it needs

Step 11 We hand over the routine in writing

We correct whatever the live month showed does not work. Then we hand over the written routine and take anyone new through it, so it survives a busy week and a change of staff.

What you get: The written routine, corrected after the live month

Step 12 You decide whether we keep checking each month

Your team runs the routine from here. The Ongoing monthly check is your choice. It pauses between jobs without being cancelled, and you can stop it at the end of any month.

Step 13 We hand over a routine your team runs

You receive a one-page guide to your subcontract's variation rules, with written-confirmation templates and a register following changes through to payment. We train your team and test the routine over a live month.

Your path through the questions

The questions you answered, in order, as the page drew them. Your answers are in yellow, with the line running through them.

Which is closest to where you are now?

Nothing has gone wrong yet; we want every change on paper

We have lost variations before, and want it to stop

Variations on a live job are being refused or left unpaid now

Our subcontract is NEC, and changes go through compensation events

Does the time to confirm an instruction, or to give notice of a change, run out this week?

Yes

No

Not sure

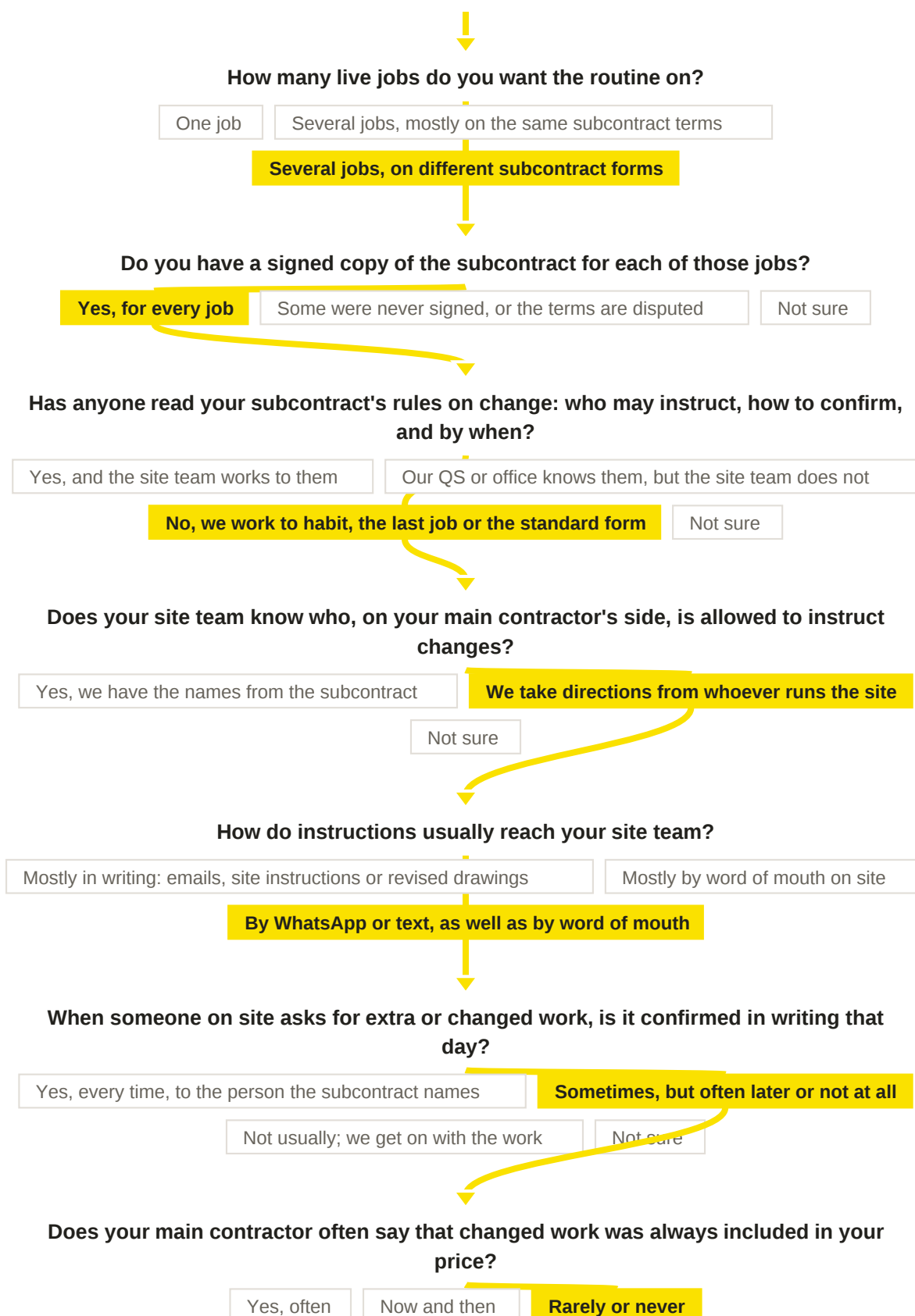
Is there changed work on a live job right now that nobody has confirmed in writing?

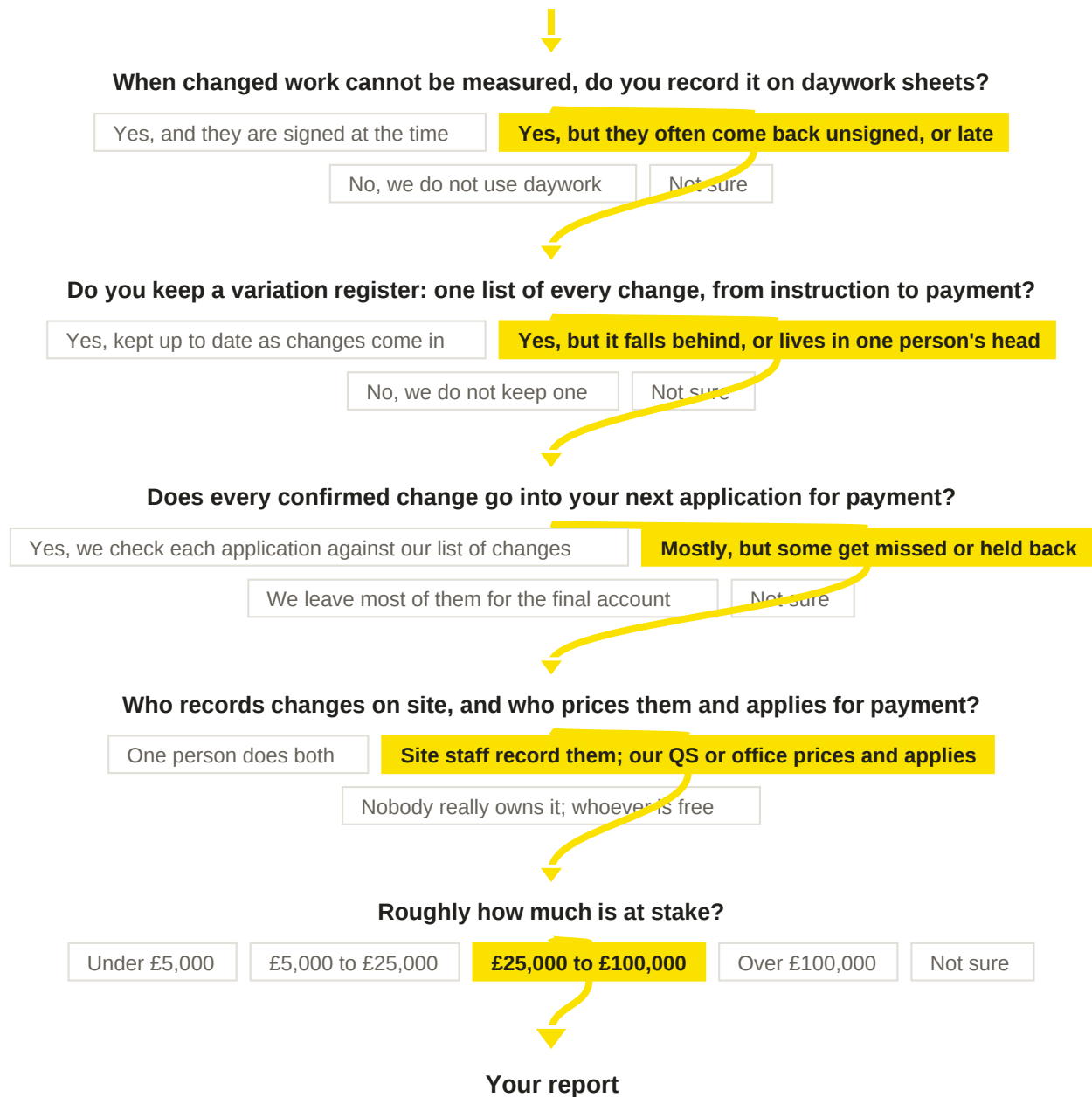
Yes, from the last few days or weeks

Yes, including some from months ago

No, all changed work is confirmed in writing

Not sure





Next step

The first conversation is free and commits you to nothing. Reply to the email this report came with, or email contact@quantsurv.com, and we will already have your answers.