



ISAB Mandatory Document for the Application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 for Audits of Integrated Management Systems

Document Reference	Issue Date	Application Date
ISAB MD 11:2023 (Issue 3)	12 September 2023	12 September 2023

The International Standards & Accreditation Board (ISAB) facilitates trade and supports industry and regulators by operating a worldwide mutual recognition arrangement among Accreditation Bodies (ABs) in order that the results issued by Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) accredited by ISAB members can be accepted globally.

This document is mandatory for the consistent application of clause 9.1.6 of ISO/IEC 17021-1 by certification bodies (CBs) for planning and delivery of audits of Integrated Management Systems (IMS).

0. INTRODUCTION

- **0.1.** This document provides requirements for the application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 for the planning and delivery of audits of IMS and, if appropriate, the certification of an organization's management system(s) against two or more sets of audit criteria/standards. All clauses of ISO/IEC 17021-1 continue to apply and this document does not supersede any of the requirements in that standard.
- **0.2.** This document may be applicable to sector-specific/scheme standards unless specifically prohibited by the sector-specific/scheme standard.
- **0.3.** It shall be noted that the annex at the end of this document is also part of the requirements and shall be read as such.



1. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions apply:

- **1.1 Audit of Integrated Management System:** An audit of an organization's management system against two or more sets of audit criteria/standards conducted at the same time.
- **1.2 Integrated Management System:** A single management system managing multiple aspects of organizational performance to meet the requirements of more than one management standard, at a given level of integration (1.3). A management system may range from a combined system adding separate management systems for each set of audit criteria/standard, to an Integrated Management System, sharing in single system documentation, management system elements, and responsibilities.
- **1.3 Level of Integration:** The level to which an organization uses one single management system to manage multiple aspects of organizational performance to meet the requirements of more than one management system standard. Integration relates to the management system being able to integrate documentation, appropriate management system elements and responsibilities in relation to two or more sets of audit criteria/standards.

2. APPLICATION

2.1 The CB shall ensure that:

- i. In establishing the audit program the level of integration of the management system(s) is considered.
- ii. Audit plans cover all areas and activities applicable to each management system standard/specification covered by the scope of the audit and are addressed by competent auditor(s).
- iii. The audit team as a whole shall satisfy the competence requirements, established by the CB, for each technical area, as relevant for each management system standard/specification covered by the scope of the audit of an IMS.
- iv. The audit shall be managed by a team leader, competent in at least one of the audited standards/specifications.
- v. Sufficient time is allocated to accomplish a complete and effective audit of the organization's management system for the management system standards/specifications covered by the scope of the audit.

2.1.1 To determine the audit time for an audit of an IMS covering two or more management



INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION BOARD

system standards/specifications, e.g. A + B + C, the CB shall:

- i. Calculate the required audit time for each management system standard/specification separately (applying all relevant factors provided for by the relevant application documents and/or scheme rules for each standard, e.g. ISAB MD5, ISO 22003-1, ISO/IEC 27006).
- ii. Calculate the starting point T for the duration of the audit of the IMS by adding the sum of the individual parts (e.g. $T = A + B + C$).
- iii. Adjust the starting point figure by taking into account factors that may increase or reduce (see Annex 1) the time required for the audit.

The factors for reduction shall include but are not limited to:

- a. The extent to which the organization's management system is integrated.
- b. The ability of the organization's personnel to respond to questions concerning more than one management systems standard.
- c. The availability of auditor(s) competent to audit more than one management system standard/specification.

The factors for increases shall include but are not limited to:

- a. The complexity of the audit of an IMS compared with single management system audits.
- iv. Inform the client that the duration of an IMS audit based on the declared level of integration of the organisation's management system may be subject to adjustment on the basis of confirming the level of integration at stage one and subsequent audits.

2.1.2 Audit of an IMS could result in increased time, but where it results in reduction, it shall not exceed 20% from the starting point T (2.1.1 ii).

2.1.3 The starting point figure and justification for increase or reduction shall be documented.

2.2 Existing application documents (e.g. ISAB Mandatory Documents) relating to audits of management systems standards/specifications need to be considered when developing audit program and audit plans for an IMS.

2.3 All applicable requirements of each management system standard/specification relevant to the scope of the IMS shall be audited.

2.4 Audit reports can be integrated or separate, with respect to the management systems audited. Each finding raised in an integrated report shall be traceable to the applicable management system standard(s)/specification(s).

2.5 The CB shall consider the impact that a nonconformity found for one of the management system standard(s)/specification(s) has on the compliance with the other management system standard(s)/specification(s).



3. INITIAL AUDIT AND CERTIFICATION

3.1 Client Application: This shall include information relating to the level of integration, including the level of integration of documents, management system elements and responsibilities.

3.2 Stage One Audit: During a Stage One Audit, the audit team shall confirm the level of integration of the IMS. The CB shall review and modify, as necessary, the audit duration that was based on information provided at the application stage.

4. SURVEILLANCE AND RECERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The CB shall confirm that the level of integration remains unchanged throughout the certification cycle to ensure that the established audit durations are still applicable.

5. SUSPENSION, REDUCTION, WITHDRAWAL

If certification to one or more management system standard(s)/specification(s) is subject to suspension, reduction or withdrawal the CB shall investigate the impact of this on the certification to other management system standard(s)/specification(s).

ANNEX 1 - REDUCTION OF AUDIT TIME

The reduction in integrated audit duration has a relationship based on two key axes:

- **Vertical axis (Level of Integration %):** The level of integration of an organization's management system, which should include a consideration of the auditee's ability to respond to multi-aspect questions. An Integrated Management System results when an organization uses one single management system to manage multiple aspects of organizational performance. It is characterized by (but not limited to):
 1. An integrated documentation set, including work instructions to a good level of development, as appropriate.
 2. Management Reviews that consider the overall business strategy and plan.
 3. An integrated approach to internal audits.



INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION BOARD

4. An integrated approach to policy and objectives.
 5. An integrated approach to systems processes.
 6. An integrated approach to improvement mechanisms (corrective and preventive action; measurement and continual improvement).
 7. Integrated management support and responsibilities.
- **Horizontal axis (Ability to perform combined audit %):** The extent, given as a ratio to be multiplied by a factor of 100 in order to achieve the extent given as percentage, to which individual audit team members are qualified:

Formula: $100 * [(X1 - 1) + (X2 - 1) + (X3 - 1) + \dots + (Xn - 1)] / Z(Y - 1)$

Where:

X1, 2, 3...n is the number of standards for which an auditor is qualified relevant for the scope of the integrated audit;

Y is the number of management system standards to be covered by integrated audit;

Z is the number of auditors.

Example Calculation:

An integrated audit team of three auditors covering three different management system standards. One auditor is qualified for all three standards; one auditor is qualified for two of the standards and the other auditor is qualified for one standard.

The percentage figure to be used for the horizontal axis is:

$$100 * ((3-1) + (2-1) + (1-1)) / 3(3-1) = 50\%$$

Due to available competence of each auditor to more than one set of audit criteria/standards, efficiencies are gained and go into the calculation of the possible reduction of time in the formula above. These include:

1. Time saved due to one opening and one closing meeting.
2. Time saved as one integrated audit report is produced.
3. Time saved in optimized logistics.
4. Time saved in auditor team meetings.
5. Time saved auditing common elements simultaneously, e.g. document control.