



ISAB Mandatory Document: Determination of Audit Time of Quality, Environmental, and Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems

Document Reference	Original Issue Date	Application Date
ISAB MD 5:2023 (Issue 4, Version 3)	14 June 2023	07 May 2020

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.

Accreditation reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited CABs are competent to carry out the work they undertake within their scope of accreditation.

ABs that are members of ISAB and their accredited CABs are required to comply with appropriate international standards and ISAB mandatory documents for the consistent application of those standards.

0. INTRODUCTION

This document is mandatory for the consistent application of the relevant clauses of ISO/IEC 17021-1 for audits of quality, environmental and occupational health and safety management systems. All clauses of ISO/IEC 17021-1 continue to apply and this document does not supersede any of the requirements in that standard.

The correct determination of the audit time for an initial audit (Stage 1 plus Stage 2) is an integral part of the application review for any client organization. This document provides mandatory provisions and guidance for CABs to develop their own processes for determining the amount of time required for the auditing of clients of differing sizes and complexity over a broad spectrum of activities.



1. DEFINITIONS

- **1.1 Management Systems Certification Scheme:** Conformity assessment system related to management systems to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and processes apply.
- **1.6 Audit Time:** Time needed to plan and accomplish a complete and effective audit of the client organization's management system.
- **1.8 Audit Day:** The duration of an audit day is normally 8 hours and may or may not include a lunch break depending upon local legislation.
- **1.9 Effective Number of Personnel:** The effective number of personnel consists of all personnel (permanent, temporary, and part-time) involved within the scope of certification including those working on each shift.
- **1.10 Risk Category (QMS only):** For QMS, provisions are based on three categories (high, medium, low) dependent on the risks posed by failure of the product or service.
- **1.11 Complexity Category (EMS only):** Based on five primary complexity categories of the nature, number and gravity of environmental aspects.
- **1.12 Complexity Category (OH&SMS only):** Based on three primary complexity categories based on the nature, number and severity of OH&S risks.

8. FACTORS FOR ADJUSTMENTS OF AUDIT TIME

The additional factors that shall be considered include but are not limited to:

- **Increase in audit time:** Complicated logistics involving more than one building; staff speaking in more than one language; high degree of regulation (e.g. food, drugs, aerospace); highly complex processes.
- **Increase for EMS only:** Higher sensitivity of receiving environment; indirect aspects necessitating increase in audit time; risks of environmental accidents.
- **Increase for OH&SMS only:** Rate of accidents and occupational diseases higher than average; members of the public present on the site; dangerous substances present in large quantities.
- **Decrease in audit time:** Client is not "design responsible"; very small site; maturity of management system; high level of automation; prior knowledge of the client management system.



ANNEX A - QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (QMS)

Table QMS 1: Relationship between Effective Number of Personnel and Audit Time

Effective Number of Personnel	Audit Time (Days)	Effective Number of Personnel	Audit Time (Days)
1-5	1.5	626-875	12
6-10	2	876-1175	13
11-15	2.5	1176-1550	14
16-25	3	1551-2025	15
26-45	4	2026-2675	16

ANNEX B - ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (EMS)

Table EMS 1: Complexity and Audit Time (Sample)

Personnel	High (Days)	Med (Days)	Low (Days)	Lim (Days)
1-5	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
6-10	3.5	3	3	3
11-15	4.5	3.5	3	3
16-25	5.5	4.5	3.5	3



ANNEX C - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (OH&SMS)

**Table OH&SMS 1: Complexity Category of OH&S Risk and Audit Time
(Sample)**

Personnel	High (Days)	Med (Days)	Low (Days)
1-5	3	2.5	2.5
6-10	3.5	3	3
11-15	4.5	3.5	3.5