

ISO 14001:2004

Requirements and changes from 14001:1996

1. Overview

The Environmental Management System (EMS) standard ISO 14001:1996 has been revised. The New International Standard, ISO 14001:2004 was published on November 15, 2004.

The ISO rules require that standards are reviewed every 5 years, and this work has been undertaken by the ISO Technical Committee 207, Sub-Committee 1, with work initiated back in 2000. At a relatively early stage the Committee decided that given the relatively new nature of the standard, environmental management system implementation and certification, the revisions to the standard would be limited to:

- Enhancing compatibility between ISO 14001 and ISO 9001:2000 and
- Improving the clarity of ISO14001 based on experience to date without resulting in additional or diminished requirements in comparison to ISO 14001:1996.

Consequently the changes in ISO 14001:2004 should not require significant additional work for organizations, and any changes required should be able to be assessed as part of the ongoing certification audits. The key changes are summarized below in Section 5.

2. What do I need to do if I am working toward my initial certification?

For clients seeking initial certification of an environmental management system (EMS), the best approach is to develop the EMS on the basis of the latest version of the new ISO 14001.

As discussed above and reiterated here, a well implemented EMS should meet the key requirements of both versions, since the fundamental requirements remain the same.

3. If I already have a certified environmental system, what should I do?

For most organizations, the revisions will require you to carry out some effective review of system documentation and processes, verify ongoing compliance in those areas subject to change and clarification, and make minor changes as necessary to align your current EMS to the new 2004 standard.

4. Transition of existing EMS Certificates

The transition period for all EMS certified companies ends May 15, 2006. After this date, the only valid accredited certificates for EMS will be those issued against the new 2004 version of the standard. Since the changes to the standard are relatively minor the assessment against the new version of ISO 14001 will be undertaken as part of the ongoing certification audit activities. The transition can be performed either during a re-certification audit or surveillance audit as agreed with the client. However, it is important that the client notify SRI at least three months prior to the planned event to ensure the appropriate forms and information is available.

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Any issues that may arise can be discussed with SRI, and if there is any need to review changes and assess compliance to the new version this can be arranged, either through pre assessment or by adding time to scheduled audits.

5. Key Changes in the standard

The key changes to ISO 14001 are summarized in the table below.

Section	Changes
3. Definitions	7 new terms (audit, document, procedure, record, nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action) defined are primarily for harmonization and compatibility with ISO 9001:2000.
4.1 General requirements	More explicit on: 1. The need to demonstrate continual improvement of the EMS. 2. The need for the organizations to clearly define the scope of the EMS.
4.3.1 Environmental aspects	More explicit on: 1. Inclusion of planned or new developments and new or modified activities, products and services within the aspects process (this was formerly under Clause 4.3.4). 2. Clear requirement for the information from the aspect process to be documented. 3. Significant aspects shall be considered when establishing and maintaining/developing the EMS in general and as a basis to set the Environmental objectives.
4.3.2 Legal and other requirements	More explicit on: 1. Determining the applicability of legal/other requirements to an organization's environmental aspects. 2. Ensuring that environmental legal and other environmental requirements to which the organization subscribes are considered in developing, implementing and maintaining the EMS.
4.3.3 Objectives, targets and program(s)	1. More explicit to address that objectives and targets shall be consistent with commitment to continual improvement. 2. Text under former Clause 4.3.4 on programs has been merged into this clause.
4.4.1 Resources, roles, responsibility and authority	New version requires that management provides resources for establishing, implementing, maintaining and improving the EMS and not only for implementation and control of the EMS.

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4.4.2 Competence, training and awareness	The new version is more explicit in using the term 'persons working for, or on behalf of the organization', which could include contractors, temporary staff, etc. and not only own employees or members as specified in the 1996 version.
4.4.3 Communication	The new version states that the organization shall establish (a) method(s) for external communication about its significant aspects, if it has decided to communicate such. (proactive communication, not only responding to communication from interested parties).
4.4.4 Documentation	The new version is more explicit on documentation needed to be included in an EMS (more aligned to ISO 9001:2000). Requires inclusion of description of the scope of the EMS in the system documentation.
4.4.5 Control of documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Closer alignment to ISO 9001:2000 in terms of clausal structure. 2. More explicit requirement to control documents of external origin. 3. The term document is now clearly defined and is the same as for ISO 9001:2000
4.5.1 Monitoring and measurements	The new version no longer requires a "documented procedure," but note that the clause does require the organization to document information required to monitor performance, applicable operational controls and conformity with objectives and targets.
4.5.2 Evaluation of compliance	Evaluation of compliance includes both legal environmental requirements and other requirements to which an organization subscribes. This is a new Clause created from the last paragraph of 4.5.1 of the 1996 version, in order to make the requirement more visible. There is no requirement for a documented procedure, but the organization is required to keep records of the evaluation.
4.5.3 Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action	<p>This clause has been reworded for clarity. The new version more clearly requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation and determination of causes related to actual Non conformities to avoid their recurrence. - Procedures for dealing with potential nonconformities and for evaluating need for implementation of preventive action(s). - Review of the effectiveness of the actions taken.
4.5.4 Control of records	In this clause the new version no longer lists the specific records required as records from training, audit results and

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	<p>reviews. Where records are explicitly required this is now included under the respective clause. The new version is wider in interpretation of needed records as it addresses the need for records to demonstrate conformity with requirements of its EMS and of the Standard.</p>
4.5.5 Internal Audit	<p>This clause has been reworded for clarity, but also note that Annex A refers to the standard ISO 19011:2002 for guidance.</p>
4.6 Management review	<p>The new version has been harmonized with ISO 9001:2000, with a more detailed list of agenda/content for Management Review. The input to management review shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) results of internal audits and evaluations of compliance with legal requirements and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes; b) communication(s) from external interested parties, including complaints; c) the environmental performance of the organization; d) the extent to which objectives and targets have been met; e) status of corrective and preventive actions; f) follow-up actions from previous management reviews; g) changing circumstances including developments in legal and other requirements related to its environmental aspects; and h) Recommendations for improvement.
ANNEX A	<p>The guidance in Annex A has been improved for some of the clauses and provides useful and detailed guidance, including reference to ISO 14004 and ISO 19011.</p>