

Transition to ISO 14001:2015

Frequently Asked Questions

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The environmental management systems international standard ISO 14001 is undergoing its second revision. In this Q&A, Joy Keniston-Longrie, PE, REHS, NSF-ISR's Business Unit Manager of Environment, Health & Safety, shares revision progress and the expected impact of the revised standard on ISO/FDIS-14001:2015 Environmental Management System International Final Draft Standard. NSF-ISR is actively participated in the revision process.

Q1. *Why did the change become necessary?*

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) periodically updates each International Standard. The update of the Environmental Management Standard (EMS) ISO 14001:2015 is a result of several years' work with nations from around the world. Information submitted by over 110 ISO member countries providing over 5,000 comments regarding areas of improvement for the Environmental Management System provided the basis for the changes reflected in the Draft International Standard ISO/DIS 14001:2014 and Final Draft International Standard ISO/FDIS 14001:2015. Changes to ISO 14001 resulted primarily from 25 recommendations by the Future Challenges Study Group for Environmental Management Systems. We expect the main changes to include:

- Several requirements to better focus on improving environmental performance under the “plan, do, check and act” approach
- Life cycle thinking and value chain perspectives to support the identification and evaluation of environmental aspects
- A strategy for addressing the relationship between the core business of an organization and environmental management
- A more systematic approach to identifying, consulting and communicating with stakeholders on environmental issues
- A strategy for external communication beyond making the environmental policy available
- A requirement for actions to address risks and opportunities, including a new requirement that focuses on external environmental conditions such as extreme weather events

Q2. *When will the standard be released?*

There are six stages involved in developing and/or revising an international standard. The Draft International Standard (DIS) for Environmental Management Systems was released in July 2014 and is named: ISO/DIS 14001:2014, reflecting the date of the draft standard. The Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) for Environmental Management Systems, ISO/FDIS 14001:2015 was released on July 1, 2015. The final stage is the ‘publication’ of the revised standard. It is expected to be ‘published’ on September 16, 2015, at that point the proper nomenclature will be ISO 14001:2015.

Q3. *When will NSF receive accreditation to the new version?*

NSF-ISR continues to work closely with our accreditation body to ensure timely accreditation to ISO 14001:2015. We are working with our Accreditation Body to ensure a smooth and timely transition.



Q4. *Will there be additional costs at their recertification if they upgrade to the anticipated new revision of the standard?*

NSF will conduct transition audit activities during scheduled surveillance and recertification audits. When these are conducted, additional time will likely be required to insure all activities are reviewed for current and revised 14001 standard. If additional time is required as dictated by ANAB then additional costs will be incurred.

Q5. *How is NSF communicating the change to the current clients?*

We are/will be communicating changes to our current clients via multiple methods - emails, NSF-ISR website, e-newsletters, webinars, fact sheets, and on-site informational sessions and eventually through our auditors as well as other methods as appropriate. If there is a specific manner you would like to receive this information please contact Ryan Daly or Joy Keniston-Longrie and we will help facilitate this.

Q6. *When will NSF cease to conduct audits to the old version? (When other standards change versions NSF could conduct audits to the old and new version until the drop dead date was reached. Will this still be the case?)*

NSF-ISR is working with ANAB to finalize the transition plan for both ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 9001:2015. The goal is to have a similar consistent plan for the two International Standards. Once the plan is approved, the dates will be published and communicated to the various interested parties.

Q7. *Will the audit to the new version, current as well as new clients trigger additional audit time?*

NSF-ISR, along with all other Certification Bodies will be following the guidelines for audit time per the requirements of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and American National Accreditation Board (ANAB). It is anticipated that these guidelines will be updated when the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) is released. We anticipate having more definitive information on this topic in September/October 2015.

NSF-ISR will be conducting transition activities during routine surveillance, recertification audit or a special audit. Where transition audits are carried out in conjunction with schedule surveillance or recertification, additional time is likely to be required to ensure that all activities are covered for the existing and new standards.

Q8. *What is NSF-ISR's plan for clients that have ISO:14001, ISO:9001 and OHSAS:18001 integrated?*

Due to the fact the both ISO:14001 and ISO:9001 (Environmental Management Systems & Quality Management Systems) will implementing an updated International Standard beginning in 2015 along with the fact that the format for both of these standards will be consistent using the 'high level structure' for all International Standards, (i.e. same clause #'s for same topics) it is anticipated that the transition to an integrated approach will be made smoother for all involved. The International Organization for Standardization, in Geneva, Switzerland, has indicated that OHSAS-18001:2007 has targeted 2016 for the publication of the Final Draft International Standard, ISO/FDIS 45000:2016. Until that time any system that is integrated with Occupational Health and Safety will need to continue managing the integrated system using the applicable standards and formats. As more information is available NSF-ISR will be working with our clients to ensure a smooth transition to meet their business needs.



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Q9. *How do I find out more?*

NSF-ISR will post the most current information available on their website, www.nsf-isr.org. The draft version of ISO 14001:2015 may be available for purchase from our national member body, ANAB (American National Accreditation Body) at www.anab.org. ISO Timelines are subject to change – please check the NSF website for the latest information. You can also view an information sheet on the technical committee's page: www.committee.iso.org/sites/tc207sc1/home/projects/ongoing/iso-14001-revision.html.

Q10. *I heard that after the 2015 standard is published in September 2015 that companies not yet certified will have to be certified to the new standard. Our company is currently in the process of being certified. We have completed our baseline audit, but Stage 1 and 2 are scheduled for Sept/Oct. Since we've had our baseline audit and we've started the process, will we be okay for being certified to ISO 14001:2004? Or does the ENTIRE certification process have to be completed before the new one is published?*

It is fine to certify to ISO 14001:2004 initially, while bearing in mind you will need to transition to ISO 14001:2015 sometime during the three year transition period. Your organization will need to be in conformance with ISO 14001:2015 by the end of the three year transition period, if it is initially certified to ISO 14001:2004. NSF-ISR is encouraging existing and new clients to consider having this transition completed in 2017 or sooner.

Q11. *Is it ISO 14001:2014 or ISO 14001:2015?*

The International Organization for Standardizations uses letters and dates to reflect the specific document it is referring to. For the revision to the ISO 14001:2004 standard, they refer to the Draft International Standard as ISO/DIS 14001:2014. For the Final Draft International Standard, the nomenclature will be ISO/FDIS 14001:2015. When the revised standard is published in September 2015, the standard will be referred to as ISO 14001:2015. This helps with document control and clearly communicates to everyone which version of the document is being referred to. Hence, depending on the document, the letters preceding the 14001 will clarify whether it is Draft, Final Draft, or the actual Standard. The numbers after 14001 indicate what version is being referred (i.e. 1996 vs. 2004 vs. 2015 etc.).

Q12. *How long do you anticipate the 2015 standard will remain in effect?*

In general, the International Organization for Standardization attempts to review each standard approximately every 5 years. It has been 11 years since the current version of the Environmental Management System ISO 14001:2004 was updated. NSF-ISR anticipates that the ISO 14001:2015 will be in place for at least 5 years or longer before it is revised again.

Q13. *If by chance we do not receive the email with the presentation, will it be on the NSF site to download/view?*

The webinar will be available for free use from NSF-ISR website at www.nsf-isr.org on the ISO 14001 page in the Environmental Health & Safety section.

Q14. *Where can we get a copy of the published International Standard once it is issued?*

The Final Draft International Standard for Environmental Management Systems (ISO/FDIS 14001:2015) and the Published International Standard for Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001:2015) can be obtained from the International Organization for Standardization website at http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail?csnumber=60857.



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Q15. *If my recertification is in September 2016, will I have to have the new standard fully implemented?*

No. You may recertify to ISO 14001:2015 in September 2016, however, you must be in full conformance with ISO 14001:2015 by the end of the three-year transition period that has been established. We encourage each organization to consider their readiness and begin transitioning to the ISO 14001:2015 as soon as practicable. NFS-ISR will work with each client to ensure a tailored-made smooth transition to the revised Environmental Management Systems International Standard. NSF-ISR is encouraging all new and existing clients to target not later than 2017 as the year to bring your organization into full conformance with the new Environmental Management System ISO-14001:2015.

Q16. *If I have a recertification in 2017, will I have to recertify to the 2015 standard?*

It is very likely that if you recertify in 2017 that you should be re-certifying to the ISO 14001:2015 Standard. At this time a formal cut-off date for re-certifying to ISO 14001:2004 has been established, however, NSF-ISR is encouraging all clients to target 2017 as the year to be in full conformance with ISO 14001:2015. NFS-ISR will work with each client to ensure a tailored-made smooth transition to the revised Environmental Management Systems International Standard.

Q17. *How can NSF help a current ISO 14001:2004 organization to transition to the new standard? Training, guidance papers, etc...*

NSF-ISR can work with existing clients to assist them with a GAPS analysis to help them identify areas for improvement to meet the revised ISO 14001:2015 standard. NSF-ISR will be hosting free webinars throughout the transition period, as maintaining an updated webpage to assist our clients with the most up to date information is easily available and accessible. If you have specific requests please contact either Joy Keniston-Longrie, Environmental Health and Safety Business Unit Manager at jkenistonlongrie@nsf.org or Ryan Daly, Marketing Coordinator at rdaly@nsf.org and we will be happy to work with you in accordance with our Accreditation Body requirements.

Q18. *You mentioned that the new standard will state that the need for an EMS rep could be eliminated. That doesn't mean that if it is not eliminated you would be out of standard, correct?*

Correct. The newly released Final Draft Standard (ISO/FDIS 14001:2015) states in clause, A.5.3, "The specific roles and responsibilities identified in 5.3 may be assigned to an individual, sometimes referred to as the 'management representative', shared by several individuals, or assigned to a member of top management." This language provides more clarification than the ISO/DIS 14001:2014 regarding 'management representative'. It is important to note that both the DIS and FDIS put emphasis on the important role leadership plays in an organization; including commitment and active support of environmental management systems in their organization; and ensuring that the environment is considered in strategic, tactical and operational actions and decisions throughout the organization as part of their regular business practices.

Q19. *How do we obtain a copy of the ISO/FDIS 14001:2015 standard or the PUBLISHED ISO14001:2015 standard?*

The Draft International Standard (DIS), the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS) and the Published Standard can all be obtained from the International Organization for Standardization website once they are available at http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail?csnumber=60857.

Q20. *We are brand new and seeking first time registration by Feb 2016, we will be starting this process in July. Do we have to certify to 2015 or 2004 based on our timeline?*

Organizations looking for first-time ISO 14001 certification are encouraged to certify to ISO 14001:2015 after its publication. This does not preclude an organization certifying to ISO 14001 for the first time to certify to ISO 14001:2004 initially, however, all organizations must be in conformance with ISO 14001:2015 by the end of the three year transition period from when the revised standard ISO 14001:2015 is published (September 2015). NSF-ISR will work with new clients during this transition timeframe to develop a tailor-made approach to your organizational needs.

Q21. *How does this ISO change relate to the RC version of 14001? What will be the impact on RCMS & RC-14001 Standards due to new version of ISO 14001 standard? Any update from ACC or ANAB in this regard?*

Any reference to ISO 14001:2015 will need to be met, however at this point in time neither the American Chemistry Council nor the International Organization for Standardization have issued any specific guidance associated with RC or RCMS 14001. The American Chemistry Council indicates it will be releasing an updated version of RC-14001 in September 2015 once the Final Draft International Standard ISO/FDIS 14001:2015 is released. When this information becomes available, NSF-ISR will communicate this information to our clients and will post the information on the NSF-ISR webpage.

Q22. *When will OHSAS 18001 be updated?*

The current Occupational Health and Safety, OHSAS 18001:2007 is proposed to become a new International Standard know as ISO 45001. As of March 2015, the proposed standard reached Step 4 (2nd Committee Stage Draft) of 6 steps. The current timeline posted on the International Organization for Standardization indicates they are projecting to have a Draft International Standard ISO/DIS 45001:2015 by October 2015 and are projecting to be in the approval stage with the Final Draft International Standard ISO/FDIS out in May 2016 and a project date of October 2016 for publication of the new Occupational Health and Safety International Standard, ISO 45001:2016.

Q23. *How does objectivity and impartiality is viewed in this standard regarding the internal auditors?*

The intent of objectivity and impartiality remains unchanged for internal auditors. Specific comparison of language from the standards are as follows:

ISO 14001:2004 clause, 4.5.5.b states: "Selection of auditors and conduct of audits shall ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process".

ISO/DIS 14001:2014 clause 9.2.2.c states, "The organization shall select auditors and conduct audits to ensue objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process."

ISO/FDIS 14001:2014 clause 9.2.2 states, "select auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process."



Q24. Who is participating in the 14001 revision process?

An ISO working group, ISO TC 207/SC 1/WG 5, is working on the revision. WG 5 is made up of representatives from national standards bodies (NSBs, also referred to as national member bodies), industry, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the sciences, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders.

As ISO 14001 has been adopted by over 300,000 certified users in about 160 countries worldwide, global interest is high, resulting in active participation of many NSBs who represent ISO in their country, including:

- ANSI (American National Standards Institute)
- SCC (Standards Council of Canada)
- DIN (German Institute for Standardization)
- BSI (British Standards Institution)
- About 20 other NSBs from developed and developing countries

Q25. Will the format of the standard document change?

Yes, the format of the document will change. ISO 14001 will be reformatted to follow ISO's high-level structure (HLS), which allows better integration of multiple management system standards by providing identical text, common terms and core definitions. Each standard will also include discipline-specific information.

ISO 9001 will also be reformatted to HLS. ISO 14001, ISO 9001 and other management system standards will follow this structure:

1. Scope
2. Normative references
3. Terms and definitions
4. Context of the organization
5. Leadership
6. Planning
7. Support
8. Operation
9. Performance evaluation
10. Improvement