



NQA Guidance for ISO 14001:2004

Quotation Process

The quotation was prepared based on information the organization provided and by using the IAF Guidance to ISO/IEC Guide 66. This document considers the number of employees and the complexity of the business when determining the appropriate amount of audit time. When you returned both the signed quotation and registration agreement the scheduling process began.

Scheduling

A Customer Support Representative (CSR) will contact you to arrange a mutually agreed upon schedule. The CSR will serve as your main point of contact and will set up the Stage One, Stage Two and Surveillance activities.

Stage One- Readiness Review

The readiness review is an on-site audit to determine if the organization is ready for the Stage Two audit. Non-conformances that are raised during the Stage One audit should be addressed prior to beginning the Stage Two audit. The main objective of the Stage One audit will be to provide a focus for planning the Stage Two audit by reviewing:

- EMS documentation including procedures,
- a description of the organization and its on-site processes (scope),
- a review of the determination of aspects and impacts and their significance,
- continual improvement process,
- overview of applicable regulations,
- internal audit program,
- nonconformities, corrective and preventive action,
- management reviews,



- records of EMS communication

Stage Two- Assessment

The objectives of the Stage Two audit to confirm the organization adheres to its own policies, objectives and procedures. Additionally the audit will confirm that the EMS conforms to the requirements of 14001:2004 and is achieving the organization's policy objectives. To accomplish this, the audit will address the implementation of all the elements of the standard as well as:

- identification of aspects and determination of significance,
- procedures to ensure compliance with legal and other requirements,
- objectives and targets,
- monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing against the objectives and targets,
- identification of nonconformities and completion of corrective/preventive actions,
- internal auditing and management review,
- management responsibility for the environmental policy,
- links between policy, environmental aspects and impacts, objectives and targets, responsibilities, programs, procedures, data, internal audit and review

Certificate Issuance

Certificates will be issued based on the recommendations of the auditor and normally take approximately four weeks. In the event a non-conformance is raised, the organization will need to take steps to ensure that the finding has been addressed and the plan/evidence submitted to NQA. NQA may need to plan a subsequent visit to close out certain findings based on the issues raised.



Surveillance Audits

NQA will conduct surveillance audits based on an agreed upon schedule (either once or twice a year). The purpose of the surveillance audit is to ensure that the EMS is continuing to conform to both the organizations and the 14001:2004 requirements. During each surveillance audit the following will be looked at:

- internal audits,
- management review,
- corrective/preventive action,
- communications from external parties,
- changes to the documented system
- objectives, targets and programs,
- evaluation of compliance,
- continuous improvements,
- previous NQA audit findings

NQA will also select additional elements to ensure that the entire EMS has been audited during a three year period.

Recertification Audit

NQA will conduct a recertification audit every three years. This activity will at a minimum follow the process conducted during the Stage Two audit and will review the past implementation and continuing maintenance of the EMS.