

NABCB plan for verifying CB's transition to certification as per ISO 14001-2015

1. Certification Body shall submit the details of changes made in the wake of publication of ISO 14001: 2015, including the transition plan developed by 15 January 2016. This should cover broadly the following topics:

a. Revision in the CB's competence criteria for auditors and other staff involved in certification activity. How the competence has been achieved and demonstrated. In case through training, then clear identification of knowledge imparted and evaluated.

b. The changes made in CB's certification process and documented system for assessing organizations successful change over to ISO 14001: 2015. The changes in CB's auditing and decision making processes.

c. The CB's arrangements for communicating its transition plan to its clients. The CB's transition plan (timings) has to provide confidence that it will be able to handle its transition work load to ensure that all its existing clients switch over within the transition plan announced by IAF (3 years from 15 Sept 2015). The transition plan will also need to detail how the CB intends to handle new clients, the cut-off date after which it will cease to accept applications against ISO 14001: 2004, and how it plans to handle the clients which are audited and granted certification against the older version till the cut-off date.

d. The CB's arrangements for auditing conformance to the new standard. For example, will it be a single visit or a staged approach. In case it is decided to combine the audits for ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015, the requirements for such audits should be described. The time lines need to be specified, etc.

e. How the CB will ensure clients' ongoing conformance to ISO 14001:2004 through the transition process.

f. Action to be taken in respect of clients that have failed to complete the transition by the 3-year deadline for transition. For example, the level of audit necessary for certification to be reinstated.

2. NABCB to carry out an offsite desk review of the documents submitted and gaps, if any observed, to be informed and followed up during the onsite assessment. Onsite assessment to be generally timed with the next assessment due, either a surveillance assessment or renewal assessment. Additional man-day (1 for offsite DR + OA) to be charged to the CB. Since IAF has declared a 3 year transition policy from 15 Sept 2015 (date of publication of the revised standard), the above arrangement of timing the transition assessment with the normal assessment to continue till 15 Mar 2018. Thereafter, CBs who have not followed up on informing the changes and getting the changes assessed during normal onsite assessment, would be subject to a special assessment organized for the transition assessment. NABCB ATs would raise observations from 15 Sept 2016 and NCs from 15 Sept 2017 which would need to be closed before the deadline.

The CB will be allowed to issue ISO 14001 certificate as per 2015 version after submission of changed documents along with transition plan by CB and successful witnessing of client audit. However the document review may take place simultaneously with eth witness assessment.

3. NABCB will carry out witness assessments of the client audit (stage-2/ recertification /surveillance) of CB as per ISO 14001:2015.

The witnessed audits will need to be full system audits, specially planned to cover the organizations transition to ISO 14001: 2015. In other words the audits selected for witnessing must be of a client that has implemented ISO 14001: 2015. They will need to be sufficient to demonstrate the certification body's competence and process to audit in terms of the new standard, covering items such as the approach to risk management and organisational context, as well as the necessary audit planning and reporting activities. Should the witnessed assessment not be deemed suitable to demonstrate the above, then NABCB may require further witnessing to take place; such additional assessment is likely incur additional cost.

4. The CB shall spend audit time equal to recertification plus 0.5 man-day in case of transition during surveillance audit and 0.5 man-day additional in case of recertification audit. This additional 0.5 man-day is applicable to each scheme in case of integrated audit.

5. Following items will be considered by NABCB AT's while assessing transition, through offsite documentation review, onsite assessment and witness assessments as applicable:

- a. Adequacy of the transition plan drawn out by the CB to ensure smooth transition of its clients to the standard ISO 14001: 2015 and its implementation.
- b. Adequacy of the changes made by the CB in its documentation system (including procedures, format, etc) reflecting the changed requirements, to ensure effective transition and the implementation of the documented system.
- c. Demonstration of appropriate skills and knowledge, as identified by the CB, based on the requirements of ISO 14001:2015, including evaluation of achieved competence. Identification of competence criteria (Skills and knowledge) shall include all functions of the CB involved in certification activities with special emphasis on the following:
 - d.
 - i. Ability to audit the application of lifecycle based thinking by the certified client. Understanding of risk analysis techniques (FMEA etc.) will be necessary where required by the industry.
 - ii. Ability to verify the identified environmental aspects associated with procured goods and service, as well as actions to mitigate adverse risk or exploit beneficial opportunities are integrated in the operational planning of the environmental management system..
 - iii. Ensuring consistent lifecycle based thinking process based approach among its audit teams.
 - iv. Ability to verify the identified issues or changing circumstances related to the needs and expectations of interested parties (including regulatory requirements) and local, regional or global environmental conditions that can affect, or be affected by, the organization.
 - v. Ability to verify the identified continual improvement on environmental performance.
 - vi. Ability to analyse the identified proactive initiatives to protect the environment from harm & degradation, consistent with the context of the organization.
 - vii. Ability to plan audits based on the context of the organization, with more emphasis on stage 1 audit, during initial certification audits and recertification audits (when applicable), which is used to understand organisational context.
 - viii. Alignment of audit program to reflect the requirements of new standard.
 - ix. Understanding by auditors of internal and external factors, needs and expectations of related interested parties.
 - x. Recognition of organisational boundaries
 - xi. Time interval between stage 1 and stage 2 audits during initial certification audits and recertification audits (when applicable)
 - xii. The style of reporting and the information submitted to decision making

- e. While carrying out witness assessments, the additional areas to be covered would be:
 - i. Evidence of lifecycle thinking approach used.
 - ii. Instead of focus on documentation, focus should be on good techniques for interviewing and understanding the method of auditing an organization without a documented system or with a limited documented system. Also for establishing that the documentation of the organization is adequate from the point of view of the context of the organization.
 - iii. Planning and organising the audit to meet the requirements of the revised standard. Adequacy of sampling.
 - iv. Environmental risks are identified throughout the processes and in the context of the organization.
 - v. Selection of relevant interviewees to cover leadership.
 - vi. Understanding the implications of the new terminologies in the standard.
 - vii. Evidence of Interaction between audit team members which would be vital to effectiveness of the transition audit by the CB.