

## S3 – Opening Statement

### Health & Safety Auditing

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#### The purpose of safety audits

Safety audits are distinct from the periodic safety inspections. Their primary function is to ensure that safety systems are functioning as they should and that policies, procedures and arrangements are performing as planned. Safety audits examine the control and management systems in place, much as is done for finance, quality and environment. Audits should aim to assess:

- The organisation
- Planning arrangements, and
- High hazard/risk activities.

The final audit report should contain recommendations and an action that identifies:

- The remedial action required
  - Who is responsible for ensuring that they are carried out, and
  - Contains a timetable for implementation.
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#### Types of safety audit

Several different types are available depending on whether the audit is targeted at the strategic (compliance) audit, tactical (behavioural) audit or is bespoke to the operation. Each approach requires information gathering from individuals, documents and personal inspections.

The advantages are numerous and far outweigh the costs involved:

- They will allow you to control your health and safety risks more effectively
- They will help promote a safety culture
- They can be proactive, measuring your performance against pre-set standards
- They can be preventative as they do not rely on reactive measures such as accident/incident statistics
- They allow numerical quantification of health and safety performance improvements
- Measuring reality against theory allows effective assessment of the success of your health and safety management system
- Demonstrates your commitment to health and safety (both internally and externally), and
- Will help you meet your statutory health and safety obligations, internal organisational standards and established rules/industry standards.



## S3 – Health & Safety Auditing

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### What is this?

This is a written procedure which covers the preparation, undertaking and reporting of health and safety audits.

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### The person responsible for implementing this procedure is:

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### Types of health and safety audit

There are many types of audit, but the following is a list that applies to health and safety:

- A basic health and safety 'health check' audit
  - A full legal compliance and management system audit
  - A behavioural safety audit
  - A combination of the above audits tailored to the individual needs of the business operations.
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### Who is responsible?

The person responsible for implementing this procedure must ensure that:

- A competent person is identified to undertake the audits
- A decision is made on the type of audit that is required for the workplace
- He/she arranges/organises suitable dates and locations for the audit(s)
- All site personnel are aware of the forthcoming audit and they are encouraged to be honest
- All relevant health and safety documentation is available for the auditor to evaluate
- He/she assists the auditor with any information they require
- He/she does not obstruct or mislead the auditor in any way which may alter the findings of the audit
- He/she acknowledges the findings of the audit and develops an action plan to rectify the issues identified, and
- Communicates the findings of the audit to senior management and where appropriate the workforce.



## Audit scores

The findings and recommendations of any health and safety audit should be transferred onto an action plan. The timescale to rectify any recommendation will depend on the severity of the issue. All recommendations are normally categorised thus:

- A — Breach of current legislation. Work to stop. To be rectified immediately.
  - B — Non-conformance with internal procedures. To be rectified as soon as possible.
  - C — Observation only. Rectify when reasonably practicable.
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## How often should an audit be undertaken?

It is advisable that any health and safety audit should be carried out at a minimum of once per year at each site. It is at the discretion of the responsible manager to decide if he/she feels a more frequent audit is required.

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## Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

