



# SAFE Work Certified Guided Audit Tool and Maintenance Tool (19 or fewer employees)

## Auditor Handbook

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### Introduction

SAFE Work Certified is a voluntary program designed to support Manitoba employers and their workplaces in the development, implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement of robust safety and health management systems. Collaborative efforts between employers, worker representatives, certifying partners, labour and government will aim to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses, and promote a culture of safe work. The program recognizes employers and workplaces that achieve and maintain effective safety and health measures as being SAFE Work Certified.

The SAFE Work Certified Guided Audit Tool and Maintenance Tool uses a performance-based approach, which differs from most traditional and compliance based auditing practices. The purpose is to conduct an independent/objective review of the organization's safety and health management system to promote improvements. Performance-based auditing involves measuring an organization's actual performance against defined criteria and objectives. Using the evaluation points contained in this audit instrument, an auditor must determine whether the elements of an employer's safety and health management system meet the intent, and fulfill the principles of each element. The success of the audit will be dependent upon the auditor's ability to apply professional judgement in diverse situations when determining and reporting outcomes. At the time of the audit, the majority of the organization's regular workforce must be active.

### SAFE Work Manitoba

SAFE Work Manitoba is the public agency dedicated to the prevention of workplace injury and illness.

Working with partners in the safety community, SAFE Work Manitoba provides prevention education, safety programming, consulting and strategic direction to create a genuine culture of safety for all Manitobans.



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#### **Acknowledgements**

SAFE Work Manitoba, with the assistance of industry and labour stakeholders, representatives from certifying partners and government, developed the principles upon which this document is based. SAFE Work Manitoba appreciates their assistance, collective efforts and dedication to the creation of safer workplaces in Manitoba.

#### **Disclaimer**

The information presented in this publication is intended for general use and may not apply to every circumstance. It is not, and should not, be construed as legal advice, nor does it present a definitive guide to government legislation or relieve persons using this publication from their responsibilities under applicable legislation. SAFE Work Manitoba does not guarantee the accuracy of, nor assume liability for, the information presented in this publication. Individual advice and consulting is available from the certifying partners. The purpose of an audit does not include enforcing workplace safety and health legislative requirements and/or regulatory requirements. However, during the audit, it should be noted that any hazard which, in the judgement of the auditor, represents an imminent danger to the worker and is likely to result in serious injury, will be reported to the management of the company being audited, and may also be reported to the Workplace Safety and Health Branch.

#### **Key principles of performance auditing**

##### *Methodology*

This document may be used when performing a certification, re-certification, maintenance, verification or limited scope audit on an employer with 19 or fewer employees.

Before proceeding with the audit, ensure all information contained on the audit information sheet is complete.



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Auditors will use a combination of the following three techniques to perform the audit: D = document review, O = observations and I = interviews.

Documentation collection may involve multiple sources and locations and will often include both quantitative and qualitative data. Documents obtained should be justifiable in terms of sufficiency, validity, reliability, relevance, and reasonableness. Observations should be conducted in accordance with locations listed in the [Audit Requisition](#). Interviews should include a representative cross section of workers at various levels within the organization. Even though these steps constitute the performance audit methodology, a performance audit must also be based on the auditor's individual insight, training and experience.

#### *Objectives*

Contrary to the traditional prescriptive audit approach, performance-based auditing measures the effectiveness of performance in relation to the achievement of audit activity objectives. The aim of the performance audit is to evaluate the organization's safety performance and safety and health management systems in terms of impact and effectiveness, and to provide recommendations for continuous improvement.

#### **The three-step audit process:**

##### **1. Audit preparation**

The auditor should plan the audit to ensure the most economic, efficient, effective and timely manner for completion. Auditors should adhere to the information contained in the [Audit Requisition](#), which lists work locations to be audited. If it is determined that changes to audit locations are necessary, they must be discussed with the certifying partner prior to commencement.



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#### ***Background information***

To complete a successful audit, it is important that the auditor obtain as much background information as possible about the organization. Initial contact should be made with the organization to set a date for the pre-audit meeting and request basic company information such as:

- an organizational chart
- a written description of the company's operations (or website link)
- all related WCB account numbers and classification codes
- size of the company
- any involved unions
- geographic dispersion
- regulations/legislation applicable to the operations
- any previous audits or action plans
- availability of the safety and health manual for the auditor for advance review (optional)
- prevalent language spoken within the organization
- specialized personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements/clearances/work site access requirements.

#### ***Audit Confirmation Letter***

After making initial contact with the company to schedule the pre-audit meeting, the auditor will send an [Audit Confirmation Letter](#) to the organization to confirm the details of conducting the audit.



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This will help ensure workers are going to be working at the locations indicated and also prevents the auditor from disrupting time-sensitive work. The audit confirmation letter should include:

- date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the audit
- reference to the audit document to be used
- number of personnel to be interviewed
- request for a person to be designated as the key contact(s) for the auditor while on site
- request for availability of quiet, comfortable areas for interviews
- request for availability of required safety and health documentation (safety and health manual, orientations, inspections, etc.).

#### ***Pre-audit meeting***

The purpose of the pre-audit meeting is for the auditor to introduce him or herself to the company, confirm agreement to the audit plan and ensure that all audit activities can be performed. The pre-audit meeting should be attended by a representative of the employer and worker representative or their designate. The following items should be addressed at the meeting:

- audit objective, purpose and scope
- audit process (documentation, observation and interviews)
- audit schedule
- audit sampling requirements
- audit tool to be used
- site familiarization



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- minimum performance standards
  - confirmation of the location of active work site(s) to be audited and the number of personnel at each location
  - basic and specialized personal protective equipment requirements
  - safety and health, emergency and security procedures
  - timeframe for completing the audit and communicating results
  - [Auditor Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct](#)
  - confidentiality requirements of the auditor
  - quality assurance review process
  - company questions or concerns.

In situations in which an employee of the organization is performing the maintenance audit, and is familiar with work locations and personnel, the pre-audit meeting items may be addressed at each work location prior to commencing audit activities instead of in a formal meeting. The maintenance auditor must also ensure that the pre-audit meeting items have been communicated to the worker representative.

#### ***Gather audit tools***

Prior to conducting the audit, the auditor must gather all tools that will be required to perform the audit. Some items may include:

- note paper and pens/pencils
- appropriate personal protective equipment
- copies of the applicable legislation/regulations
- a copy of the audit tool
- laptop computer or tablet.



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#### ***Site familiarization***

At each location to be audited, before conducting any on-site auditing activities, a knowledgeable company representative should accompany the auditor on a familiarization tour. This will allow the auditor an opportunity to observe the company's operations and enable the company to communicate pertinent information to the auditor. Some questions to consider may include:

- Will the site familiarization include a safety and health orientation for the auditor?
- Who is the key contact person and worker representative?
- Which managers/supervisors/workers/contractors will be affected by the audit?
- Are there any site-specific hazards or areas with limited or restricted access?

#### **2. Conducting the audit**

Audit examination work takes place on the basis of audit planning already undertaken. Audits should be performed with due care and with an objective state of mind. The auditor must possess knowledge of the subject matter and audit techniques.

Sufficient and appropriate audit information must be obtained to satisfy the audit objective and questions, to be able to draw conclusions and, if appropriate, to issue recommendations. The auditor will also require co-operation from the organization and its employees, as well as adequate time and resources for conducting the audit. Performance audits require significant judgment and interpretation from the auditor in evaluating the audit questions, due to the fact that audit findings are more persuasive ("points towards the conclusion that...") than conclusive ("right/wrong") in nature.



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Auditors should be resourceful, flexible and systematic in their search for sufficient information. They must also be receptive to alternative views and opinions, and seek data from different sources. Auditors should always try to be practical in their efforts to collect, interpret and analyze data.

There are four information gathering methods for evaluating the effectiveness of the safety and health management system:

- Documentation
- Observation
- Interview
- Assessment and perception surveys.

#### ***Document review***

For each question in the audit requiring verification using the documentation technique, the auditor must examine physical documents provided by the organization. The auditor may request copies of relevant documents be made available for further examination at a later time. The auditor should request, examine and score the most current documentation available, documents dated earlier than 12 months prior to the current date should not generally be accepted.

Documentation review is the process of reviewing the safety and health manual and other safety records (e.g., orientations, workplace inspections, safety meeting minutes). The auditor should examine documents that describe the organization's policies and procedures to verify completeness of the written safety and health management system. This may also assist auditors with interviewee selection and identify some key points to confirm during work site observations. Safety and health records are typically checked for completeness, including: dates, locations, frequency, agenda items, signatures, senior management review and revision dates. The types of documents obtained should be relevant and support the auditor's judgment and conclusions regarding the audit questions.



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The review of a particular document may raise additional questions that require further examination by the auditor. This will provide the auditor with an opportunity to verify actions taken during the interview process. For example, if an investigation report revealed workers were not following safe work procedures, the auditor should:

- review the organization's safe work procedures to ensure a procedure exists
- note the date of creation, date of review or revision and content of the procedure
- examine training records or safety meeting minutes to verify workers have been trained in the safe work procedure
- observe the work site to ensure the procedure is made readily available to workers
- interview affected supervisors and workers to ensure they have received training and understand developed safe work procedures
- observe work activities to ensure safe work procedures are being followed.

Documents that should be reviewed will include, but not limited to:

- company safety and health manual (policies and procedures)
- hazard and risk assessments
- safe work procedures
- safety data sheets
- investigation reports
- workplace inspections
- emergency response plans
- audit action plans
- safety meeting minutes
- orientation and training records
- incident (frequency/severity) statistics
- records of safety violations.



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When reviewing documentation, auditors should always give the employer an opportunity to locate a document that may not be in its assigned location at the time of the audit. Daily log books, diaries and journals can provide acceptable verification that specific processes or activities are being completed.

If a document cannot be produced, or if it does not meet the criteria, points should not be awarded.

#### ***Work observations***

The purpose of performing work observations is to gain an understanding of the operation, confirm the information that was gathered during the documentation review and to make a comparison with information provided during the interview process. This is not a detailed inspection. The auditor should observe general site conditions, as well as the levels of conformance to policies, procedures and applicable legislation. Items that should be noted include: general site conditions, housekeeping, signage, appropriate posting of information, and availability of protective/emergency equipment and personnel. During work observations, the auditor may select interviewees based on the tasks being performed.

Prior to conducting work observations, the auditor may need to attend a site orientation, receive specialized instruction, wear appropriate personal protective equipment and review applicable legislation. Should an employer fail to address these issues prior to allowing the audit to proceed, the auditor should make note and comment.

If the auditor observes work activities that may pose imminent danger, he or she should immediately inform the supervisor in charge. As a result, at the auditor's discretion, the audit may be concluded or postponed.

Auditors should be aware that people may perform differently when they are being observed. Auditors should follow the schedule outlined in the audit requisition. Although, the auditor may also request additional work locations be added in order to be confident in awarding points.

- The auditor must indicate either a score for each observation question for each work location audited, or explain why a question may not be applicable.



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- 'N/A' - the question is not applicable - The auditor may choose to mark the entire question "N/A" if the question is not applicable to all work locations audited. Alternatively, the auditor also has the option to indicate N/A for individual observation questions that may not be applicable at a particular work location audited.

#### ***Interviews***

It is essential that auditors interview a representative sample of the organization's total workforce including the owner, supervisors, worker safety representatives, workers and contractors. Questions specific to each of these groups are included in the audit document. If the auditor decides to interview contractors, the worker interview questionnaire should be used to record their response. Interviews may also be used to confirm documentation and site observation findings. Interview questions must be designed to verify that the systems and activities related to the audit have been implemented, understood, and followed by all personnel.

Interviews must be conducted on a one-on-one basis in a private location free from distractions. You must ensure that you follow proper protocol and advise all participants at the onset that all of the information disclosed during an interview will remain strictly confidential. While time management is important, the auditor should ensure enough time is allotted to verify understanding.

Auditors should begin the interview with an informal discussion surrounding the interviewee's work activities. Although the interview questionnaires have been scripted, these discussions may prompt the auditor to ask additional open-ended questions to determine the interviewee's understanding of the organization's policies, processes and procedures.

Auditors should strive to maintain professional relationships with all stakeholders involved, promote a free and frank flow of information and be respectful of confidentiality requirements. The communication process between the auditor and auditee begins at the planning stage of the audit and continues throughout the audit process as different findings, arguments and perspectives are assessed. Where critical audit findings are made while conducting the audit, they should



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be appropriately communicated to the organization. Auditors should not communicate to third parties, neither in writing nor orally, any information they obtain in the course of the audit.

The auditor must indicate either a positive or negative response for each question, or explain why a question may be not applicable. The auditor must interview an owner, a worker safety representative, a minimum of two workers and, if present within the organization, a supervisor. If the auditor interviews a contractor, the number of contractors interviewed should be reported in the executive summary report.

At the top of the interview questionnaires for owners, supervisors, worker representatives and workers, the auditor must indicate the total number interviewed. At the top of the worker representative and worker interview questionnaires the auditor must also indicate how many interviewed are 'contractors' and how many interviewed are 'vulnerable'.

To record interview responses on the interview questionnaires, the auditor should use the drop down menu as follows:

- 'P' = positive response, non-contractor, non-vulnerable worker
- 'PC' = positive response, contractor
- 'PV' = positive response, vulnerable
- 'PCV' = positive response, contractor, vulnerable
- 'N' = negative response
- 'N/A' - the question is not applicable - **In the event the auditor marks a question "N/A", it will apply to all interviewees for that question. It is not possible for the auditor to mark individual responses as "N/A."**

Interview discussions are confidential. Names of the interviewees should not be recorded. Any supplementary notes made by the auditor during interviews should be destroyed upon completion of the audit. Audit reports should never quote names of individuals involved in the audit.



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#### ***Vulnerable worker observation component***

A vulnerable worker observation component has been integrated into both the worker representative and worker interview questionnaires. If vulnerable workers are employed at the workplace, the auditor must determine whether the safety program addresses their needs. Evaluation criteria may include, but not be limited to: the availability of safety resources, information and training in alternate languages or universal pictures posted in the workplace to assist in communicating required information. If no vulnerable workers are present in the workplace, this question can be marked "N/A". If vulnerable workers are interviewed, the auditor should indicate "pv" or "n" based on the availability of identified supports. If non-vulnerable workers are interviewed, the question should be answered based on their recognition, understanding and/or involvement in supporting vulnerable workers. For non-vulnerable workers, the auditor should indicate "p" or "n" based on their answer.

#### ***Worker observation component***

A worker observation component has been integrated into both the worker representative and worker interview questionnaires to further support performance-based auditing practices. The worker observation component will allow the auditor to directly observe and evaluate the effectiveness of hazard management and training practices within the organization. The auditor should select one or more tasks performed by the worker, and ask them to demonstrate and/or explain their understanding of the task. The auditor should evaluate the worker's performance or demonstration in accordance with the criteria outlined in the evaluation component. The auditor should also provide a brief description of the tasks observed during the evaluation in the comments. If the worker satisfactorily demonstrates competency and/or understanding of the task, the auditor should indicate "p", however, if competency and/or understanding was not demonstrated, the auditor should indicate "n". If any of the three components are marked "N/A," the auditor must provide an explanation in the comments section.



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#### ***Interview sample size***

Auditors should conduct the number of interviews stated in the [Audit Requisition](#) and/or the [Audit Confirmation Letter](#), however, the auditor has the ability to conduct additional interviews as deemed necessary to verify implementation of the safety and health management system and ensure confidence in the consistency of results. Deviation from the sample size is permitted, providing the auditor stipulates reasons for the deviation. It is crucial that a representative sample of the workforce is selected and interviewed. The sample must represent all the aspects of the business and its operations (e.g., each shift, multiple locations, new or vulnerable workers, experienced workers, journeypersons, apprentices, remote areas of work, etc.). To provide enough data to validate the findings, a minimum of three worker interviews (including the worker representative) should be conducted.

#### ***Work site debrief***

Upon completion of audit activities at each work location, the auditor should communicate a general overview of observations, concerns and recommendations to the supervisor in charge. The auditor should not reference particular individuals or mention names of workers who may have been observed in violation of the company's policies or procedures, rather, they should provide general comments (e.g., not all workers were observed to be wearing their required personal protective equipment). The auditor should also state that specific comments and recommendations will be contained in the executive summary report which will be forwarded to the certifying partner and/or the owner upon completion of the audit.

### **3. Reporting audit conclusions**

The auditor's report will use a three-tiered reporting system which includes: a score summary percentage for each audit element, comments on the results of the safety culture survey and an executive summary report outlining the organization's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and the auditor's recommendations.



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Certification and re-certification will be determined based on the final scores in each of the 14 elements, the overall score and completion of the safety culture element. In order to receive a passing grade on a certification or recertification audit, a minimum score of at least 50 percent in each audit element and 70 percent overall is required.

Maintenance audits and action plan must be completed and submitted to the certifying partner. Although overall scores for each element are calculated and reported on the score summary sheet, the achievement of a "minimum standard" is not required.

#### ***Document and observation questions***

All questions appearing in the document and observation sections of the audit must be scored by the auditor or marked N/A. For any questions marked N/A, the final score will be automatically adjusted. Final scores will be calculated from the total possible points less those questions marked "N/A".

#### ***Safety culture questions***

Worker perceptions are a helpful tool to examine how well a safety and health system is functioning, or not functioning. Safety culture surveys can help to identify gaps in the safety and health system and provide opportunities for improvement. Understanding attitudes of workers and their perception of the employer's commitment to safety and health can reveal information that may not be easily assessed through documentation or observation. While this section is not scored, it must be assessed. Organizations will benefit from the auditor's assessment and comments in this section and should analyze and interpret the information as a leading-indicator measure, tracking tool, or to begin conversations to



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effect required improvements. Once the auditor has answered and provided comment for all questions, the score summary sheet will automatically indicate "complete."

The Safety Culture element uses three distinct measurement tools, requiring the auditor's assessment and comment:

1. **Safety Culture Assessment (SCA)\*** - published by the Institute for Work & Health(IWH). Using the measurement scale provided for each of the twelve statements, the auditor must determine the percentage of time each practice takes place within the organization as a whole. For the purpose of this survey, an audit means a formal process of evaluating and reporting on how the organization manages safety and health in accordance with a recognized standard (e.g., CSA, OHSAS, ISO) or a professional safety and health audit. "Regular" means that an audit is repeated at regular intervals (e.g., once every year or once every two years). The SCA results will be used by SAFE Work Manitoba as part of a baseline assessment when companies enter into a certification program and to track changes and evolutions in certified organizations.
2. **Safety Perceptions** - The auditor must comment not only on workers' perceptions of the organization's commitment to safety and health, but also on any other observed methods used by the organization to demonstrate their commitment and to promote a positive culture. (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.). Where there are negative responses, or responses that are inconsistent with overall audit findings, the auditor should provide a recommendation to improve safety culture.

\*Adapted from the Organizational Performance Metric created by the Institute for Work & Health (IWH) and used with their permission. The IWH-OPM is published by the Institute for Work & Health and licensed by IWH and is available at: <http://www.iwh.on.ca/iwh-opm>. This work is licensed by IWH under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivatives 4.0 International License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>. It may be used and shared as long as IWH is credited as the source, the questionnaire is not modified, and the questionnaire is used for non-commercial purposes. If you wish to modify and/or use the questionnaire for commercial purposes, please contact [ip@iwh.on.ca](mailto:ip@iwh.on.ca).



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3. **Culture of Safety Maturity** - This tool is used to indicate what place an organization holds on the culture of safety and health spectrum. Upon completion of audit activities, the auditor must indicate his or her assessment of the organization's overall performance as either: **Generative** - safety and health programming is fully integrated as a priority into all aspects of business operations, **Proactive** - safety and health programming is driven by leaders and values that drive continuous improvements, **Calculative** - safety and health programming is driven by managing hazards, or **Reactive** - safety and health programming is driven by responses to incidents.

#### ***Awarding points***

Both the SAFE Work Certified Guided Audit Tool and Maintenance Tool require the auditor to award points for each question, with the exception of the safety culture element. Every question has clear scoring instructions that describe how to verify the answers and determine if points should be awarded. Partial points are not allowable. Auditors must either award full points or zero for each question.

Each question must be accompanied by comments that describe the factors considered to reach the conclusion. (e.g., what document was reviewed and where it was found). While it is important to record where deficiencies are found, it is equally important to record where the organization has exceeded the standard. This will aid in future audits and provide justification for the audit score. In some cases, it is not possible to provide a simple yes or no answer to a question. In these cases professional judgement is required. Justification for the points awarded must be provided in the comments section that corresponds to the appropriate question. Recommendations are required for each question when full points are not awarded. These recommendations must indicate how the company can improve its program. The notes and recommendations will form the basis for the audit report. It is up to the auditor to develop recommendations which are appropriate to the audit question, as well as to the organization.



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Recommendations should follow the SMART principle:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Timely

Questions requiring verification through the documentation technique must be assigned either a point value, zero, or be reflected as "N/A". Questions requiring a review of multiple samples of the same document must be considered on a 'majority rules' basis for awarding points, (e.g., if the auditor reviews five completed investigation reports and three are satisfactorily completed while two are found to be incomplete, full points would be awarded for the question. For these instances, the auditor must also provide a comment noting that full conformance was not met and encouraging attention be focused on the elements found to be incomplete.).

Questions may be deemed 'N/A' if they do not apply to a particular organization. Auditors must provide justification in the comments section for each question marked "N/A".

#### **Score summary**

The score summary provides percentage scores for each element contained in the audit. These percentages incorporate the results of points awarded based on documentation, observations and interviews. Documentation and observation questions combined constitute 50 per cent of the overall audit score, while interviews constitute the remaining 50 per cent.



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#### Executive summary report

Upon completion of the audit, the auditor must prepare an executive summary report. This is an important part of the audit and should address the positive and negative findings in the audit. The auditor should describe the circumstances and context to arrive at a specific conclusion, rather than provide a standardized statement. The executive summary should also outline the overall recommendations arising from the audit. The findings should clearly reflect the intent of the audit questions. Each audit question must be answered. If N/A is selected for a question, an explanation will need to be provided.

Recommendations, where provided, should be presented in a logical, knowledge-based and rational manner, and be based on competent and relevant audit findings. They should be practical, add value and address the audit objective and questions. They should provide accessible, concise, and up-to-date information, which the organization can use to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their safety and health management system. Effective audit reports are those that are reader-based and well structured, and use unambiguous language. They should present findings objectively and fairly. The organization should be able to develop an action plan based on the findings and recommendations of the audit report.

The executive summary for the audit report should include:

- an introduction and summary of the organization's operations
- a thank you to the organization for their efforts and assistance during the audit
- pre-audit meeting summary
- audit process summary
- summary of the close-out meeting, noting the employer and worker representatives and others in attendance
- justification for interview sample, observations and questions marked "N/A"
- scoring summary
- strengths and opportunities for improvement



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- recommendations on how to improve the safety management system
  - overall findings and recommendations

Any limitations to the audit, such as restrictive regulations, or limitations concerning access to information or reporting requirements, should be disclosed in the executive summary report. The report should also disclose the standards that were followed and audit criteria applied in carrying out the performance audit.

#### **Quality assurance**

Prior to submission of a completed audit to the certifying partner, the auditor must ensure all sections of the audit are completed and that the auditor's executive summary report is accurate and free from errors and omissions.

Upon receipt of the audit, the certifying partner will conduct a quality assurance review and inform the auditor of the results or any required corrections. If there are any issues with the completed audit, it will be returned to the auditor for corrections/changes. The auditor must then make the revisions in accordance with the certifying partner's quality assurance and ensure that all corrections are completed within the allotted time period.

This system will incorporate processes for supervision and monitoring of quality, quality assurance, and peer reviews. This will assist in obtaining reasonable assurance that the audit has been conducted in accordance with professional standards and regulatory and legal requirements, and that the reports are complete and accurate.

#### **Close-out meeting**

Once the auditor is notified by the certifying partner that the audit quality assurance review is complete, a close-out meeting should take place, ideally involving the same personnel who attended the pre-audit meeting. This is the auditor's opportunity to communicate audit findings to the organization, invite and answer any questions the organization's representatives may have, and let the employer know the next step required. The auditor should give credit to the



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organization in those areas where they have performed well and also recommend that the company develop an action plan based on the audit results that is to be submitted to the certifying partner.

The following items should be discussed in the meeting:

- thank the employer for to the opportunity to audit their safety and health management system
- restate how the program was verified using documentation, observation, interview techniques, assessment and perception surveys
- invite questions during the review process and be prepared to objectively discuss your results
- give the employer credit and recognition for their efforts
- include site location(s) audited and the number of personnel interviewed
- emphasize the successful elements of the safety and health management system
- identify any immediate concerns that need to be addressed
- make reasonable and practical recommendations towards the ongoing improvement of the safety and health management system
- the requirement to develop and implement an action plan based on the results of the audit
- answer any questions and acknowledge any concerns the organization may have
- the auditor must obtain an electronic sign off on the Worker Representative Statement which is included in the executive summary report. The employer is to email the signed executive summary report to the certifying partner and to SAFE Work Manitoba at [swc@safeworkmanitoba.ca](mailto:swc@safeworkmanitoba.ca). Once SAFE Work Manitoba receives the signed audit report, a SAFE Work Certified certification date will be communicated to the certifying partner.



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#### Audit action plan

The employer is required to develop a written [action plan](#) upon completion of each audit in conjunction with the worker representative. The resulting action plan provides the employer with the opportunity to respond to the results of an audit and must be submitted to the certifying partner within three months of receiving their SAFE Work Certified certification date.

Documented action plans demonstrate a level of due diligence, provided the plan has been effectively implemented. The plan should address the opportunities for improvement identified during the course of the audit.

Requests for recertification will not be accepted if the previous audit action plan has not been received by the certifying partner. A template may be requested from the certifying partner to assist employers in developing an audit action plan.

A completed action plan will:

- prioritize identified opportunities for improvement and recommendations from the audit
- describe actions to be taken and expected outcomes
- assign responsibility for each action
- state target and completion dates.

Upon completion, the action plan must be submitted to the certifying partner. The names of the employer and worker representative involved in the creation or review and the date of submission must be indicated on the action plan.



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#### Limited scope audit

This audit template may also be used to conduct a limited scope audit to address the areas of an audit which may require re-evaluation. Only specified elements are audited when conducting a limited scope audit using the SAFE Work Certified Guided Audit Tool and Maintenance Tool. An employer must make a written request to the certifying partner for a limited scope audit upon receipt of an unsuccessful score on a certification audit. The request must describe the corrective actions that will be taken to correct previous audit deficiencies. The certifying partner has the complete discretion to accept or deny a request for a limited scope audit and to assign the same or an alternate SAFE Work Certified auditor to conduct the audit.



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#### Definitions related to safety and health management systems and auditing

**Action plan** - document that addresses weaknesses identified during the audit process, as well as describes actions to be taken to address these weaknesses, expected outcomes and timelines.

**Audit** - evaluation of an organization's safety and health management system against an approved set of criteria.

**Audit cycle** - the time between a certification and re-certification audit during which maintenance audits must be performed.

**Auditee** - a self-employed person or organization undergoing an audit

**Certification audit** - an initial audit conducted by a SAFE Work Certified auditor to enable an organization to obtain certification.

**Certifying partner** - Independent, not-for-profit industry-based safety program or association approved by SAFE Work Manitoba to administer the SAFE Work Certified Program.-The CP serves as the employer's main point of contact regarding all operational aspects of obtaining safety and health certification that meets the criteria for the SAFE Work Certified Program.

**Critical task (job)** - a job or task with high potential for serious loss or injury.

**Evidence-based approach** - rationale method for reaching reliable audit conclusions based on verifiable evidence.

**Incident** - an undesired, unplanned, unwanted or unexpected event that results in physical injury, illness, or property damage.



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**IWH - Institute for Work & Health** - an independent, not-for-profit organization with an aim to promote, protect and improve the safety and health of working people by conducting actionable research that is valued by employers, workers and policy-makers.

**Limited scope audit** - A re-audit of a particular element or elements of a safety and health management system that did not meet the minimum standard for SAFE Work Certified.

**Maintenance audit** - An audit intended to confirm maintenance and continuous improvement in safety and health management systems. This includes verification of progress made on the action plan generated in the previous year's audit. Maintenance audits are conducted in the intervening years between re-certification cycles (every three years). Completion of a maintenance audit or re-certification is required to be eligible for the Prevention Rebate.

**Maintenance auditor** - Individual(s) from within a company trained to conduct self-audits to demonstrate that certification standards are maintained between certification audits.

**Near-miss incident** - any occurrence that has the potential to cause physical injury, illness or property damage

**Qualitative data** - Data that does not have a numerical value and are instead assigned labels (e.g. gender, socio-economic status or religious preference).

**Quantitative data** - Data that can be expressed as a number, or can be quantified (e.g., scores on achievement tests, number of hours of study, or weight of a subject), may be represented by ordinal, interval or ratio scales, and lend themselves to statistical manipulation.

**Re-certification audit** - A full SAFE Work Certified audit carried out by a SAFE Work Certified auditor every three years. Re-certification is a requirement for eligibility to receive the Prevention Rebate.



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**SAFE Work Certified auditor** - Recognized and specially-trained individual, external to the organization being certified, who is qualified to assess an employer's safety and health management system. A SAFE Work Certified auditor is accredited and approved to conduct SAFE Work Certified safety and health audits on behalf of certifying partners.

**Safety culture** - Set of shared attitudes, values and norms regarding safety and health in an organization or group, which are demonstrated through interactions, practices and behaviours relative to safety and health. It is a continuing practice.

**Safe work procedure (SWP)** - A step-by-step set of instructions describing how to do a job safely from start to finish.

**Verification audit** - Re-audit of an employer to confirm/verify the findings of a certification or maintenance audit. The verification audit is used as a quality assurance review of the auditor's work or the employer's program or both.

**Vulnerable workers** - Workers who are at greater risk for workplace injury and illness arising from a mix of individual and workplace factors, and who generally lack the power to alter those conditions. These factors and conditions include, but are not limited to, newness (to job, work, country, etc.), precarious work (casual, temporary work, low wages, etc.), language and socio-cultural barriers, high turnover/high-risk industry, or disabilities (physical, mental, cognitive, etc.).

**Worker representative** - Worker designated to sign off on their understanding of the audit and contribute to the action plan. This should be the worker co-chair of the safety and health committee (or designate) for a large employer or the designated worker representative for a small employer (or designate).

**Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba (WCB)** - is a public organization involved in the promotion of safe and healthy workplaces, recovery and return to work and which provides compassionate and supportive compensation services for workers and employers while ensuring responsible financial stewardship.



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**Workplace Safety and Health Branch (WSH)** - the government organization responsible for enforcement of the *Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation* in order to protect the safety and health of workers in Manitoba.