

Insight aims to provide useful information, links and tips in the areas of Risk Management, Work Health and Safety, Business Continuity Management, and other areas relating to management systems and corporate governance.

Audit Fatigue



All organisations with established management systems have some form of auditing program that incorporates internal audits, external audits and, potentially, certification audits. If this program is not managed effectively, 'audit fatigue' can seriously impact on the effectiveness of audits, and more importantly on the proper management of audit findings.

Where management systems have specific legislative requirements, such as Health and Safety or Environmental systems, audit findings may indicate legislative non-compliances. Where this is the case, it is critical that such findings are actioned as soon as possible after the audit, or at least documented within an action plan. Where a finding relates to an imminent physical health and safety or environmental hazard, action must be taken to ensure the hazard is mitigated.

Management system audits should present findings to clearly indicate to the auditee what the compliance issue is and to facilitate the prioritisation of corrective actions. As such findings should be categorised as follows:

- **Major non-conformance** – A non-fulfilment of a requirement of the standard, internal organisational requirement or non-compliance

to a legislative requirement that affects the ability of a management system to achieve the intended results or a number of minor non-conformities listed against similar areas.

- **Minor non-conformance** – A non-conformity from the Standard or internal organisation requirement that does not affect the capability of the management system to achieve its intended results.
- **Opportunity for Improvement** – OFIs are identified where there is conformance with potential to improve or streamline an area or process and may also indicate trends which may result in a future non-conformance.

However, all too often organisations are subject to a myriad of audits with managers having to deal with multiple corrective actions in order to meet individual and company KPIs.

The resulting audit 'fatigue' can cause serious issues to be overlooked, or audit 'desensitisation' where auditees become so used to receiving audit findings that they simply relegate them to business as usual, with the result that routine tasks are often prioritised before potentially serious legislative non-compliances.

Organisations can benefit from conducting a thoughtful review of the amount of audits they subject their people to, with consideration of how each audit contributes to the final objective of the audit program. The audit program can then be revised to ensure that audits are focussed on areas where they are most needed (to avoid audit duplication), scheduled to allow sufficient time for the implementation and review of any management system based corrective actions. We would strongly recommend the use of a risk-based approach to the audit regime, and clear linkages between the risks, the controls and the audit process.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.

An Introduction to Change Management



How often have you heard the phrase “the only constant is change”? Trite but true, this is an area in which modern organisations need to be skilled, or risk their success.

Originally attributed to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus around the year 500 B.C., change is something that has always been with us, and today thanks to ongoing technological advances, change is evolving rapidly now more than ever.

Organisations have very quickly discovered that they too must evolve and change or get left behind. What worked last year may not work next year as customer demands, management expectations to do more with less, and changes to the surrounding work environment increase. The only constant is change and with it, a need to anticipate, plan for and manage change so that business disruptions and losses are avoided, and desired outcomes are given the best chance of succeeding.

Change management is a systematic approach to dealing with the transition or transformation of an organisation's goals, processes or technologies from the current state to a future, desired state. Primarily, change management is concerned with identifying and guiding *individuals* to navigate the journey through the change process. For it is the employees of an organisation that will ultimately determine the success or otherwise of the change. If individuals are unsuccessful in their personal transitions, if they don't embrace and learn a new way of working, the initiative will fail. Whereas if employees embrace and adopt changes required by the initiative, it will deliver the expected results.

When your organisation undertakes projects or initiatives to improve performance, or seeks to take advantage of new opportunities or to implement actions to address key issues, how do you consider the impact of the change on your employees? How does your organisation identify change champions and change resisters? How are you planning to engage with your employees about the change and to how to successfully bring your employees through the change so that they remain engaged, productive and committed to the change?

More and more organisations these days are incorporating a change management approach to support their initiative or project and to answer these questions. It is a key inclusion within the industry best-practice standards for Management Systems (as represented in ISO 45001, ISO 9001 & ISO 14001) as well as within ISO 31000 – Risk Management.

QRMC can work with you to incorporate a change management approach to managing the key risks and opportunities unique to your business. [Contact](#) one of our consultants for further information. More information on managing change will come in future editions of Insight.