



ISO 14001:2015 - Interpretation Procedure

Version – revised 4 September 2017

This procedure sets out the process for dealing with clarifications of intent relating to ISO 14001 requirements. It applies to ISO member Bodies and SC1 and specifies the process to be followed to respond to and manage all received interpretation requests submitted by an initiator.

This procedure is intended to help prevent misinterpretation of ISO 14001 requirements; by applying this procedure it is not intended to add to, subtract from, or in any way modify them.

This procedure recognises the authority of ISO National Member Bodies to provide interpretations of ISO 14001 requirements. The review of national interpretations by SC1 is intended to ensure and maintain international consistency.

Interpretation Procedure

1. All requests for interpretation of any clause of ISO 14001 should, in the first instance, be submitted to the relevant ISO member body by the initiator. The ISO member body may choose to answer the request itself or by the use of a national process established for the purpose.
2. All requests for interpretation received by ISO member bodies and answered with a formal response by (or on behalf of) such bodies shall be forwarded to the Secretary of ISO/TC 207/SC 1, prior to the next SC1 plenary meeting. It is the responsibility of the ISO member body to ensure the submission is translated into English.
3. All requests received and formal responses given by ISO member bodies will be included in an annual compilation of all interpretations and circulated to SC1 members by the SC1 Secretariat and reviewed at the Plenary Meetings of ISO/TC 207/SC 1. This compilation shall not be circulated outside SC1 without prior review by SC1.
4. The SC1 plenary meeting will be asked to consider all information received and if any interpretation is at variance with the formulated position of SC1, then an explanation of the variance will be provided to the member body, and the member body will be invited to reconsider the interpretation to help ensure consistency at the international level.
5. Any ISO member body or liaison organization may choose to forward any interpretation request to the ISO/TC 207/SC 1 Secretary directly. In such circumstances the initiator should be advised by the member body or liaison organization that this action has been taken and be given an indication of the likely date of the next meeting of the SC1 when the matter will be considered.
SC1 will discuss the request and the resulting SC1 position will be sent to the ISO member body or liaison organization, so that the SC1 position can be taken into account by the member body or liaison organization.



6. The SC1 Secretary will advise all SC1 members, ISO/CS, ISO/CASCO, IAF, IIOC and IQNet of the annual compilation referred to in clause 3, any interpretation requests made directly to SC1 under clause 5, and any SC1 positions formulated pursuant to clause 4 or 5, in order to ensure that accreditation bodies (through IAF), certification bodies (through IIOC and IQNet) and conformity assessment standards developers (through CASCO) are aware of interpretations so they can manage consistency. SC1 will ensure that interpretation requests and responses given are used as input into the revision process when ISO 14001 and supporting standards are reviewed. The SC1 Secretary will also make provision for wider dissemination of the formulated SC1 position on SC1 agreed interpretations, in accordance with the SC1 Advisory Group on Communications and Engagement processes.
7. This interpretation process will be formally reviewed by SC1 at its annual plenary every 3 years to ensure that it meets the needs of all involved. When ISO 14001 is revised in the future the process will be reviewed at the plenary following publication of the FDIS.
8. Any questions about the operation of this process will be dealt with by the SC1 Leadership.
9. SC1 will make its interpretation process and the annual compilation of interpretations after its review by the SC1 plenary publicly available on the SC1 website free of charge.