

Auditing as a Tool to Improve Performance

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Introduction and Session Overview

- Introduction
- 60 minute interactive session that includes:
 - 20 minute opening presentation
 - 20 minute roundtable
 - 20 minute review and discussion

One definition of auditing

“A convoluted exercise of interrogation designed to terrorize supervisors and managers into reactive posturing and buck-passing.”

Definition of Auditing

- “A systematic, documented process of objectively collecting and evaluating factual information in order to verify a site organization’s EHS status with respect to specific, predetermined criteria. Audits encompass both compliance audits, which are directed at verifying a site or organization’s compliance with requirements, and management system audits, which evaluate the effectiveness of management systems.”

(BEAC 2008)

Why Audit

- Improve public image
- Increase awareness and understanding of EHS hazards
- Reduce employee and community exposure hazards
- Improve compliance
- Reduce costs by operating efficiently and safely
- Assess potential EHS liabilities

Standards Against which to Audit

- Audit criteria
 - Laws and regulations (Federal, Provincial, local)
 - Corporate/Site policies and procedures
 - Facility standard operation procedures (SOPs)
 - Best management practices (CSA, ISO, NFPA)
 - Management systems

Three-Phased Audit Approach

- Pre-audit activities
 - Initial planning, document review, audit plan and protocol preparation
- On-site activities
- Post-audit activities
 - develop report; distribute report; develop, implement and track corrective actions

Five Step Process for On-Site Activities

- Step 1 Understand Management Systems
 - Opening meeting, tours, initial interviews, document reviews
 - (outcome: strong working knowledge of key systems on site, and identification of key issues to review)

- Step 2 - Assess strengths and weaknesses of management systems
 - Develop verification strategies, reallocate team resources if required. (outcome: identify potential impacts and management system weaknesses)
- Step 3 - Gather audit evidence
 - Physical inspections, focused interviews, data and record examination, verification testing. (outcome: develop evidence to substantiate findings, confirm effective implementation of programs/processes)

- Step 4 - Evaluate audit results
 - Review data collected, review accuracy of findings, analyze/integrate findings of team. (outcome: prepare draft findings, identify potential root causes)
- Step 5 - Report audit findings
 - Daily debrief meetings, close-out meetings. (outcome: early, clear, consistent communication; understand facility concerns)

Necessary Audit Skills and Techniques

- Conducting interviews
- Documenting the audit (development of working papers)
- Gathering audit data
- Using sampling strategies
- Writing audit findings
- Communicating audit results

Seed Questions

- What activities/actions could prevent an audit from being effective?
- What would you include in the “scope” of an emergency preparedness audit?
- Describe effective pre-audit and post-audit activities?

Keys to an Effective Audit

- Collaborative process
- Adequate pre-planning, full understanding by all of the scope of the audit
- Use of trained auditors, if possible, have auditors shadow (mentoring)
- Effective and frequent communication, before, during and after the audit (no surprises)
- Working with the facility in developing findings and corrective actions
- Informing management and site representatives of all findings as they arise
- Don't make assumptions

- Thank you.
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