



APPENDIX A

COMPETENCE AND EVALUATION OF AUDITORS

(Informative)

A1 GENERAL

Fire safety audits may be regulated by a number of authorities, including local councils, State Government and Commonwealth Government bodies. In addition, owners, clients, industry codes of practice, enterprises' operating procedures and product technical manuals may include additional competencies. Persons and organizations engaged in fire safety auditing should be aware of regulations and any specific actions required to ensure that their audit practices satisfy the regulations.

The competence to satisfactorily perform a fire safety audit may vary with the complexity of the task and the circumstances of any specific audit. Persons and organizations engaging auditors of fire safety measures need to recognize that the reliability of the audit outcome is **dependent on the competence of the auditor and the auditor's ability to deal with the complexity and size of the specific audit.**

A2 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF AUDITORS

A2.1 General

Clause 1.5 of this Standard sets out the principles of auditing that should be used as part of the criteria for selecting auditors.

Auditors **who undertake fire safety audits of more than one fire safety measure, component, or element should have the required knowledge and skill for each and every fire safety measure, component or element.**

More specific criteria for the selection of auditors should be considered. These are set out in Paragraphs A2.2 and A2.3 and A4.

A2.2 Technical knowledge

Auditor selection should include consideration of the auditor's **technical knowledge** of relevant **fire safety measures** gained through work experience, education **and** training, including the ability to—

- (a) apply the operational principles of various fire safety elements, components and measures to different facilities to provide an appropriate level of fire safety and to address limitations that are likely to affect the long-term functionality and suitability of the measure(s);
- (b) understand the interaction between the elements, components and measures of the fire safety system;
- (c) apply appropriate Standards, procedures or other documents used as audit criteria;
- (d) recognize differences between and priority of the reference documents;
- (e) apply the reference documents to different audit situations; and
- (f) understand and apply information systems and technology for authorization, security, distribution and control of documents, data and records.

NOTE: Training and other learning opportunities of a technical nature may be provided by the person's own organization or by an external organization.

A2.3 Audit practice and process knowledge and skills

Auditor selection should include consideration of audit practice, process knowledge and skills gained through work experience, education and training. Such experience should involve the exercise of judgment, problem solving, and communication with other managerial or professional personnel, peers, customers and other interested parties and include an ability to—

- (a) apply audit principles, procedures and techniques;
- (b) plan and organize the work effectively;
- (c) conduct the audit within an agreed time schedule;
- (d) prioritize and focus on matters of significance;
- (e) collect information through effective interviewing, listening, observing and reviewing documents, records and data;
- (f) understand the appropriateness and consequences of using sampling techniques for auditing;
- (g) **verify the accuracy** of collected information;
- (h) confirm the sufficiency and appropriateness of **audit evidence** to support audit findings and conclusions;
- (i) assess those factors that can affect the reliability of the audit findings and conclusions;
- (j) use work documents to record audit activities;
- (k) prepare audit reports;
- (l) maintain the confidentiality and security of information; and
- (m) communicate effectively.

NOTE: Training and other learning opportunities in the audit process may be provided by the person's own organization or by an external organization. Audit experience should be gained under the direction and guidance of an auditor who is competent in the same discipline.

A3 AUDIT TEAM LEADERS

Audit team leaders should have additional knowledge and skills in audit leadership to facilitate the efficient and effective conduct of the audit including the ability to—

- (a) plan the audit and make effective use of resources during the audit;
- (b) represent the audit team in communications with the audit client and auditee;
- (c) organize and direct audit team members;
- (d) provide direction and guidance to auditors;
- (e) lead the audit team to reach the audit conclusions;
- (f) prevent and resolve conflicts; and
- (g) prepare and complete the audit report.

An audit team leader should have acquired additional audit experience to develop the knowledge and skills described in this standard. This additional experience should have been gained while acting in the role of an audit team leader under the direction and guidance of another auditor who is competent as an audit team leader.

Audit team leaders do not need to have the knowledge and skills for each fire safety measure, component or element but should clearly understand the operational principles and technical terms that relate to each.

NOTE: The extent of direction and guidance needed during an audit is at the discretion of those assigned the responsibility for managing the audit program and the audit team leader. The provision of direction and guidance does not imply constant supervision and does not require someone to be assigned solely to the task.

A4 LEVELS OF EDUCATION, WORK EXPERIENCE, AUDITOR TRAINING AND AUDIT EXPERIENCE

Organizations should establish the levels of education, work experience, auditor training and audit experience that an auditor needs to gain the knowledge and skills appropriate to the audit program.

Experience has shown that the levels given in Table A1 **are appropriate for auditors conducting certification or similar audits**. Depending on the audit program, higher or lower levels may be appropriate.

TABLE A1
LEVELS OF EDUCATION, WORK EXPERIENCE,
AUDITOR TRAINING AND AUDIT EXPERIENCE

Education/Training/Experience	Appropriate level
Formal education	Relevant tertiary, short course training or equivalent on-the-job training
Auditor training	Relevant tertiary, short course training or equivalent on-the-job training
Work experience	4 years
Specific experience	2 years
Auditing experience	20 days

NOTE: National competency standards have also been developed for a range of technical skills appropriate to auditing of fire safety measures.

A5 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF COMPETENCE

Auditors should develop, maintain and improve their competence through regular participation in audits, peer review and continual professional development.

Continual professional development is concerned with the maintenance and improvement of knowledge, skills and personal attributes and can be achieved through means such as—

- (a) additional work experience;
- (b) training;
- (c) private study;
- (d) coaching;
- (e) attendance at meetings;
- (f) seminars and conferences; and
- (g) other relevant activities.

The continual professional development activities should take into account changes in the needs of the individual and the organization, the practice of auditing, **Standards** and other requirements.

Auditors should be able to demonstrate their continual professional development.