



Frequently asked questions on self-auditing of mining activities



1. Why is auditing important?

Employers must maintain, as far as is practicable, a workplace in which employees are not exposed to hazards. Measures must be taken to ensure persons at the mine are not exposed to hazards. Sections 9, 13 and 43 of the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994* define the duties of the employer, principal employer and manager.

Auditing is a recognised systematic method to monitor, review and check whether a safe working environment is provided and maintained.

2. What types of audit can be applied to mining activities?

There are two main types of audit:

- management system
- high impact function (HIF).

A management system audit is “horizontal” in that it looks across the whole organization structure and considers the broad scope of management policies and procedures that are in place to manage the organisation’s safety and health at the site.

HIF audits are “vertical” in that they look at the detail of a specific activity through a vertical slice of the organisation’s structure, from senior management to the workplace.

3. How do mines inspectors audit?

Mines inspectors regularly audit parts of mine sites to ensure compliance with the *Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994* and the *Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995*. As part of this process, the inspectors also support sites to improve their safety management systems.

4. How does self-auditing help?

Inspectors cannot be at every workplace in Western Australia overseeing all work activities. It is the employers and workers based at the mine who are best placed to ensure the requirements of the legislation are met. It is therefore recommended that sites use their management teams and safety and health representatives to regularly self-audit their operations

Some benefits of self-auditing are:

- the required information is kept up-to-date
- areas of non-compliance with the Act and regulations are determined
- target areas for continuous improvement are identified
- increased knowledge and understanding of the organisation’s individual safety management systems.

Auditing is one of the best ways to ensure your systems are current and useful. A well-run audit will indicate where resources are best allocated.

5. Are the inspectors’ audits publicly available?

The audit templates used by the mines inspectors are available on the Resources Safety website in the publication section.

Each audit has a comprehensive guideline that explains the intent of each standard and indicates the appropriate section of the Act or regulation being reviewed or suggests best practice.

Resources Safety welcomes feedback on its audits so they can be improved for everyone’s benefit.

6. What are the steps in self-auditing?

- Review the audits available
- Identify what you need to audit
- Download the audit and guideline tool
- Select the parts that apply to your operation and modify the template as necessary
- Perform the audit
- Identify the opportunities for improvement
- Decide who is doing what
- Make the changes
- Keep a record of what was done.

7. What audit topics are available?

Resources Safety audits cover areas such as:

- classified plant and administration
- development of high headings underground
- electrical safety management systems
- emergency preparedness
- fixed plant
- geotechnical considerations
- gold rooms
- isolation and tagout
- management systems for small mines
- manual tasks
- mineral exploration
- noise
- quarry systems
- surface dust management
- tailings dam
- tipping
- traffic management
- underground fire prevention
- underground mine fill
- underground ventilation management
- workshops.

For further information, please contact an inspector at any of our regional offices listed below.

North inspectorate 303 Sevenoaks Street CANNINGTON WA 6107
Postal address: 100 Plain Street EAST PERTH WA 6004
Telephone: 08 9358 8079 Email: north.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au

East inspectorate Cnr Broadwood and Hunter Streets KALGOORLIE WA 6433
Postal address: Locked Bag 405 KALGOORLIE WA 6433
Telephone: 08 9021 9430 Email: east.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au

West inspectorate 303 Sevenoaks Street CANNINGTON WA 6107
Postal address: 100 Plain Street EAST PERTH WA 6004
Telephone: 08 9358 8079 Email: west.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au

OR

66 Wittenoorn Street COLLIE WA 6225
Postal address: PO Box 500 COLLIE WA 6225
Telephone: 08 9734 1222 Email: west.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au

Comprehensive work safety and health information provided by the Department of Mines and Petroleum can be found at:
www.dmp.wa.gov.au/ResourcesSafety

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