

EMS Spotlights



Internal Audits are Coming

The EMS Audit Criteria are established:

- To assist NCCOS in identifying both the strong and weak elements of our EMS.
- To enable NCCOS to identify those areas of environmental management across the organization that should be the focus of improvement actions.
- To provide a streamlined approach for verifying EMS implementation, and determining environmental performance status.
- To support NCCOS in meeting report requirements, and implementing the annual Management Review.

The FY08 NCCOS EMS Audit Plan schedule is as follows:

- CCEHBR and CCHR-Charleston, SC – June 16-20
- CCFHR-Beaufort, NC – June 16-20
- CCFHR-Kasitsna Bay, AK – June 21-23
- NCCOS SSMC-June 23
- CCEHBR-Oxford, MD – June 24-25

It is important to note that EMS Audits are different from other facilities audits in that they deal with what management “wants” to do with regard to being better stewards of our natural environment. Other facilities audits are concerned typically with what is required bylaw (i.e., what “has to be done”).

Your Role:

- Consider ways to minimize your environmental impact
- Help to identify new ways to meet NCCOS Objectives and Targets
- Be creative and communicate your ideas with your EMS Team by sending an email to your Local Facility EMS Team Lead, NCCOS EMS Team Representative or NCCOS EMS Coordinator

The National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) is committed to establishing and maintaining robust environmental management systems (EMS) that support operations and enable the NCCOS to meet their mission efficiently.

In an effort to promote the continuous improvement of the NCCOS EMS, internal audits are conducted to identify those EMS elements that warrant the focus of efforts for improvement. These audits help us to understand our current status and map a performance improvement pathway for the future.

The audit criteria are designed to help NCCOS assess our EMS, determine conformance with ISO 14001, and meet the NOAA requirements.

Conducting the Internal EMS Audit:

Internal EMS audits are conducted annually by individuals who have received internal auditor training or are experienced in audit-related matters, and are employees of the organization. The purpose of the internal audit is to provide information on the system for its continual improvement. Such an audit normally results in the listing of findings and presentation of opportunities for improvements.

What You Need to Know

EMS is Environmental

- EMS addresses environmental impacts
- EMS extends environmental responsibilities to everyone

EMS is Management

- EMS requires the commitment of Management at all levels
- EMS must be consistent with other existing management systems
 - Safety
 - Budget
 - IT

EMS is a System

- EMS is a formalized system of Plan-Do-Check-Act
- EMS actively links
 - Policies
 - Programs
 - Procedures
 - Performance

We Need Everyone to Participate!

- Your work directly impacts the environment can you describe the potential environmental impacts of your job?
- Can you describe the procedures/protocols (SOPs/SOGs) of your job?
- Do you know the potential environmental impacts of departing from the procedures/protocols of your job?
- Your products, services, and activities are represented in all of NCCOS' significant environmental aspects – can you identify any of the significant environmental aspects?
- You will be asked about the NCCOS EMS policy statement – can you describe or summarize the content of the policy?

You will be asked who to contact at your facility regarding environmental issues – do you know the person or persons?

- You will be asked who are the members of your Local Facility EMS Team – can you name them?
- Does your job function have any legal and/or other environmental requirements – if so, could you articulate those requirements? Do you have access to those requirements (i.e., web, file, other)?
- You will be involved in the upcoming audits of our EMS – are you prepared?

Be aware of your role in EMS
because you will directly impact its success