



BUSINESS ASSURANCE

THE NEW ISO 9001, ISO 14001 AND ISO 45001 REQUIREMENTS

7.4 - Communication



DEAR READER,

New versions of the ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards were released last year. The new standard for occupational health and safety, ISO 45001, is under development and when released will replace OHSAS 18001:2007.

A primary objective for the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) is to align and improve how their standards support companies in building sustainable business performance.

Also, all of ISO's management systems standards are being aligned to a common framework, including a High Level Structure (HLS) with common clauses, text, terms and definitions. Naturally, ISO 45001 is adapting this framework

as well. Faced with new requirements, the big question for certified companies is how compliant they already are to new requirements and how to meet them.

In this issue of the Espresso Survey, we investigate clause **7.4 Communication**. Previous surveys have focused on the requirements **5.1 Leadership & Commitment; 4.1 Understanding the organisation and its context; 4.2 "Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties;** and requirement **6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities**.

When it comes to the requirement on **Communication**, how compliant do companies certified to one or more of these three standards think they are? And what internal and external communications do they plan to include in their management system? Turn the page to find out more.



THE VIEWPOINT ESPRESSO

- The Viewpoint Espresso is our way of sharing with you what your peers think and how they are moving on hot topics. Our hopes are that what we share may trigger some curiosity, improved understanding and possibly action on selected topics.
- This is an extended initiative of ViewPoint, our customer community. While the main ViewPoint surveys provide in-depth analyzes, the ViewPoint Espressos are meant to be more agile, providing a concentrated injection of insight.
- Previous initiatives can be found here: dnvgl.com/viewpoint

THE REQUIREMENT IN FOCUS

1) ARE COMPANIES ALREADY COMPLIANT WITH 7.4?

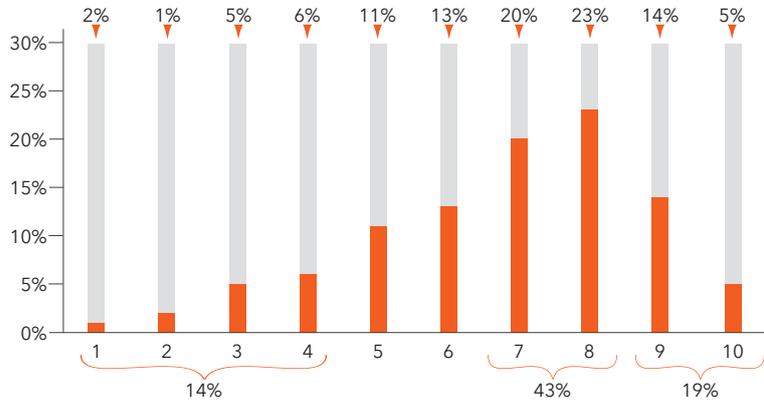


On a scale 1 to 10, where 1 is NOT COMPLIANT AT ALL and 10 is FULLY COMPLIANT, to what extent do you consider your organization already compliant with this requirement?

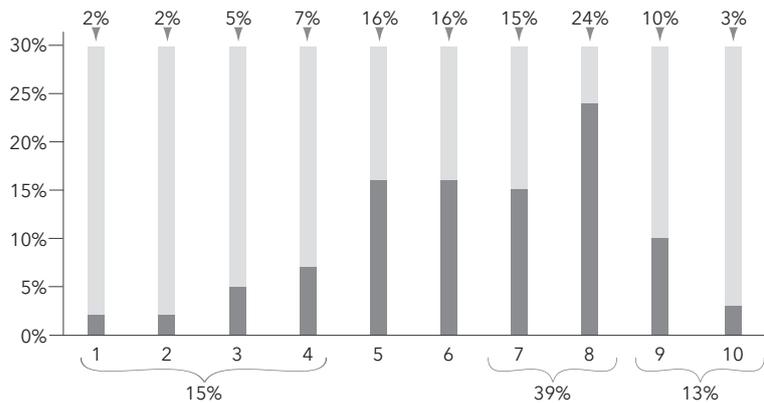
Clause 7.4 in ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001 requires the organization to determine the internal and external communications relevant to the company's management system, including what, when, how, with whom and who will communicate.

Respondents are customers with a certified quality, environmental and/or occupational health and safety management system. The latter customers are fairly new to the Espresso Survey as we now have the draft version of ISO 45001.

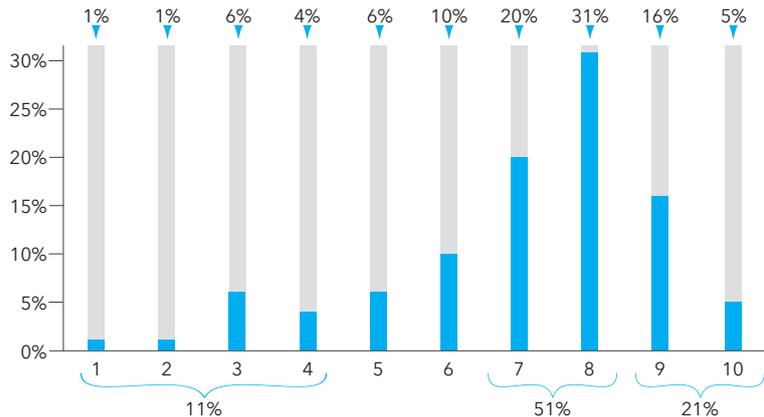
ISO 9001



ISO 14001



ISO 45001



WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- Companies certified to OHSAS 18001 stand out with 21% indicating full compliance (respondents with rating 9 and 10). A total of 19% of the ISO 9001 certified companies indicate compliance while only 13% of the ISO 14001 certified companies do the same.
- On average 18% of the companies surveyed indicate full compliance. In the survey on clause **5.1. Leadership & Commitment**, the equivalent average was 30%. When comparing with all previous surveys, full compliance percentages ranged between 11-17%.
- Those reporting to be somewhat compliant are 51% for OHSAS 18001, 43% for ISO 9001 and 39% for ISO 14001. On average 44% report that they are somewhat compliant, the comparable average in previous surveys ranged between 39-44% in past surveys.
- When comparing the overall scores, ISO 14001 certified companies seem to feel less compliant than those certified to ISO 9001 and OHSAS 18001.
- On average 13% indicate that they are not compliant (respondents with rating 1 to 4), versus 10-21% in past surveys.

WHAT DO WE THINK?

When comparing with the results of the Espresso Survey on clause **5.1 Leadership & Commitment**, when it comes to compliance to clause **7.4 Communication** there is a shift to a perception of being less compliant.

Looking at the overall scores, ISO 14001 respondents perceive themselves to be less compliant than their peers certified to ISO 9001 and OHSAS 18001. One reason for this could be that ISO 14001 for this clause has some additional requirements, e.g. related to the need to communicate consistent and reliable data (See also Final Thoughts page 15).

The highest degree of compliance is not surprisingly found among companies certified to OHSAS 18001. This could be explained by the fact that occupational health and safety communication, including the establishment of formal communication channels, are implemented in some form or fashion in many companies due to legislative requirements.

PREVIOUS ESPRESSO SURVEYS TOPICS

- 4.1 Understanding the organisation and its context.
- 4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties and requirement.
- 5.1 Leadership & Commitment.
- 6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities.

THE REQUIREMENT IN FOCUS

2A) HOW WILL COMPANIES MEET 7.4 IN THE FUTURE?



INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Among the following internal communication topics, please mark what your company management system will include. The listed chart elements in pages 5, 6 and 7 are identical across standards, except for those indicated in the charts.

ISO 9001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policy and objectives** is considered the highest rated topic to be included in the management system when it comes to internal communication (88%).

- ISO 9001 certified companies also rate the following topics for internal communication high: **Reporting on non-conformities, incidents/accidents (78%), Organizational changes, responsibilities and authorities (77%)** and **Changes in your company management systems, e.g. documentation, processes (76%)**.

ISO 14001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policy and objectives** is the highest rated topic to be included in the management system for internal communication (90%).

- The next three topics are **Environmental performance, e.g. related to emissions to air, effluents to water, waste generation (78%)**, **Reporting on non-conformities, incidents/accidents (77%)** and **Changes in your company management systems, e.g. documentation, processes (71%)**.

ISO 45001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policy and objectives** is by far the highest ranked topic to be included in the management system for internal communication (95%). This is higher than for both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certified companies (88% and 90% respectively).
- The four runner-up topics are **OH&S performance, based on relevant indicators, e.g. sick leave rate, injury rate (88%), Reporting**

on non-conformities, incidents/accidents (88%), Changes in your company management systems, e.g. documentation, processes (83%) and Organizational changes, responsibilities and authorities (83%).

- **OH&S hazards to and from contractors (65%)** is a requirement specific to the ISO 45001 standard and not included in ISO 9001 or ISO 14001.

STANDARDS COMPARED

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	ISO 9001	ISO 14001	ISO 45001
Company strategy	52%	44%	55%
Company policy and objectives	88%	90%	95%
Organizational changes, responsibilities and authorities	77%	68%	83%
Major business changes	43%	41%	58%
Changes in your company management systems	76%	71%	83%
Changes in relevant regulation and legislation	53%	70%	77%
Overall performance of your company (financial performances or other)	39%	39%	53%
Performance of your company management system	62%	78%	88%
Collection of feedback from employees (e.g. for improving your company management systems)	48%	48%	61%
Reporting on non-conformities, incidents/accidents	78%	77%	88%
Information related to new products/services	49%	N/A	N/A
Information related to environmental footprint of products	N/A	30%	N/A
Risks and opportunities for the company	55%	51%	63%
Information related to participation of your company in initiatives/events	37%	34%	50%
OH&S hazards to and from contractors	N/A	N/A	65%
Output of the management review	67%	67%	77%
Other, please specify	2%	4%	4%

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policy and objectives** stand out as the highest ranked topic to be included in the management system for internal communication for all standards, with 95% for occupational health and safety management systems, 90% for environmental and 88% for quality.
- **Performance of your company management system** is rated high for ISO 45001 (88%) and ISO 14001 (78%).
- **Reporting on non-conformities, incidents/accidents** rank high for all three standards with 88% for ISO 45001, 78% for ISO 9001 and 77% for ISO 14001.
- **Organizational changes, responsibilities and**

authorities is perceived as an important topic for ISO 45001 (83%) and ISO 9001 (77%), while a bit less important for ISO 14001 (68%).

- Standard specific topics receive varying scores. For ISO 45001 **OH&S hazards to and from contractors** receives 65%, for ISO 9001 **Information related to new products/services** is picked by 49% and the requirement **Information related to environmental footprint of products** for ISO 14001 scores 30%.
- The listed elements in the table on page 8 are identical across standards, except for those indicated as N/A, which are standard specific.

WHAT DO WE THINK?

There seems to be a trend that topics that are more explicitly related to the standard itself score higher for all three standards. For example, topics related to policy and objectives, performance of the management system, organizational changes, roles and responsibilities tend to score higher.

Moreover, the hit-rate for all topics generally seems to be higher for companies with a certified OHSAS 18001 management system. Many countries have occupational health and safety-related legislation that requires the participation and involvement of workers. Not surprisingly this affects the level and expectations when it comes to internal communication. We also see that **Changes in relevant regulation** and legislation score higher for ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 than for ISO 9001. This could be because 9001-related legislation applicable to a specific product is probably employees as their daily work is not necessarily directly affected.

Changes in environmental or occupational health and safety regulation, on the other hand, are likely to have a greater direct impact on a larger number of employees and/or the management system itself.

THE REQUIREMENT IN FOCUS

2B) HOW WILL COMPANIES MEET 7.4 IN THE FUTURE?



EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Among the following external communication topics, please mark what your company management system will include:

ISO 9001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

■ **Company policies, vision and values etc.** is considered the main topic for external communication (66%).

■ Other topics rated high are **Complaints handling and feedback** (64%) and **Customer satisfaction feedback** (60%).

ISO 14001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policies, vision and values etc.** is the highest rated topic (71%).

- The next two external communication topics are **Mandatory communications towards authorities, e.g. in case of product recalls, environmental accidents, human injuries, periodic reporting of performance** (69%) and **Environmental performance, e.g. related to emissions to air, effluents to water, waste generation** (57%).

ISO 45001



* Standard specific requirement.

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Mandatory communications towards authorities (e.g. in case of product recalls, environmental accidents, human injuries, periodic reporting of performance)** is the main topic for OHSAS 18001 certified companies (76%).
- A close runner up is **Company policies, vision and values etc.** (75%).

- Further topics ranking high are **OH&S performance, based on relevant indicators, e.g. sick leave rate, injury rate (55%)** and **Customer satisfaction feedback (48%)**.
- **OH&S hazards and risks related to contractors (39%)** is a requirement unique to the ISO 45001 standard and not outlined in ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.

STANDARDS COMPARED

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION	ISO 9001	ISO 14001	ISO 45001
Company policies, vision and values etc.	66%	71%	75%
Overall performance of your company (financial performances or other)	29%	28%	45%
Performance related to the management system	41%	57%	55%
Mandatory communications towards authorities (e.g. in case of product recalls, environmental accidents, human injuries, periodic reporting of performance)	53%	69%	76%
Marketing communication on your products / company	54%	40%	45%
Customer satisfaction feedback	60%	36%	48%
Complaints handling and feedback	64%	44%	45%
Collecting views from interested parties	38%	32%	37%
Crisis and emergency response	43%	42%	40%
Information related to provision and delivery of products/services to customers	55%	N/A	N/A
Information related to participation of your company in initiatives/events	41%	25%	35%
Information to interested parties regarding product recalls	29%	N/A	N/A
Requirements to external providers of products and services	48%	N/A	N/A
Environmental requirements to contracted companies and hired personnel	N/A	32%	N/A
OH&S hazards and risks related to contractors	N/A	N/A	39%
Other, please specify	1%	1%	5%

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- **Company policies, vision and values etc.** stand out as the main topic for external communication for all the companies in the survey: 75% for ISO 45001, 71% for ISO 14001 and 66% for ISO 9001.
- **Mandatory communications towards authorities** is considered among the main topics for OHSAS 18001 certified companies (76%) and for companies with certified environmental management systems (69%).
- For companies with a certified quality management system **Complaints handling and feedback** (64 %) and **Customer satisfaction feedback** (60 %) are rated as central topics.

- Performance related topics are considered high for ISO 14001 and ISO 45001, with **Environmental performance, e.g. related to emissions to air, effluents to water, waste generation** scoring 57 % for ISO 14001 and **OH&S performance (based on relevant indicators, e.g. sick leave rate, injury rate)** scoring 55 % for ISO 45001.
- The listed elements in the table on page 13 are identical across standards, except for those indicated as N/A, which are standard specific.

WHAT DO WE THINK?

For several of the topics, the scores are higher for ISO 9001 than for the other two standards. This is probably because a number of the listed external communication topics are perceived to be more closely linked to the product.

What is interesting is that **Collecting views from interested parties** is generally low for all three standards. One could expect this to be somewhat higher when seen in combination with another new requirement clause **4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties**. The lack of focus is most likely due to the need for stakeholder engagement and communication to mature and for companies to set the right level of analysis, interaction and communication with stakeholders (see Espresso Survey 02/2015 on clause 4.2).

Performance related to the management system scores higher for ISO 14001 and ISO 45001. One reason could be the fact that this type of data is better defined and confined to specific parameters for environmental and occupational health and safety aspects compared to data related to a product.

Somewhat surprisingly, the score for mandatory communication is relatively low for ISO 9001 (53%). This could be explained by the survey sample including companies that do not have specific requirements from external stakeholders to do so. Mandatory requirements on this type of communication will depend upon factors such as the type of products supplied, business sector and the business environment in which the company operates.

Overall, when comparing with internal communication, we generally see lower scores for all external communication topics. This could be linked to focus in the past being more limited to internal stakeholders. The extended focus on external communication is introduced with the new versions of the standards. Those typically working to develop and implement the company's management system will most likely feel they have a greater direct control of and channels to communicate internally. Whereas external communication, when relevant, would more often require the involvement of communication specialists and thus creating the perception of a more complex process.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Communication includes the process of sharing and collecting information to build trust, credibility and partnerships. The communication should raise awareness and contribute to decision making processes.

Clause 7.4 addresses the importance for a management system to have an effective communication with both internal and external stakeholders. In the past, focus may have been more internally oriented. The basic requirement in all standards is that companies have to identify the relevant stakeholders and decide on what, when and how to communicate with them. ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 have some extended requirements compared with ISO 9001 (see details in fact box).

Effective communication is a critical element of a management system. A more structured approach on communication, facilitated by the top management, is increasingly needed due to:

- An overall extended flow and availability of information and data.
- Enhanced expectations on transparency from stakeholders.
- The need for timely and speedy information through various communication channels.
- Changes in communication technology and platforms.
- The need to ensure reliable information and data.

Top management needs to ensure that mechanisms are in place to facilitate and manage these aspects. The approach and set-up of what companies communicate will depend upon factors such as size, complexity and type of business. Moreover, communication is a two-way flow. To be effective one must think broader than what is required and also consider what is achieved with the communication.

When it comes to external stakeholders, in particular, companies are in general increasingly exposed to the need to provide timely information and express their views on various aspects of their business, ranging from their products and services,

performance, specific activities and so on. There is also a growing need to listen to stakeholders, incorporating views and requirements into how the company operates. Clause 4.2 **Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties** specifically requires companies to determine relevant stakeholders and their needs and expectations.

Therefore, it is important to see clause 4.2 and 7.4 in conjunction; the communication is a means of systematically getting relevant information and requirements from stakeholders.

There is a wide range of stakeholder engagement methods, ranging from the more traditional face-to-face to social media channels that may be felt to be harder to manage. But whether engaging with stakeholders through conferences, informal discussions, organization of open days, focus groups, community dialogue, involvement in community events or digital channels like websites, e-mail, online surveys, formal interviews, social media or telephone hotlines, for example, it is important to have an idea on what you wish to achieve and, of course, who your most relevant stakeholders are.

EXTENDED REQUIREMENTS FOR:

ISO 14001

- External communication required as part of legal and regulatory requirements and adaptation of voluntary reporting schemes.
- Need for ensuring consistent use and reliability of information and data.
- Obligation to respond to requests related to its environmental management system.
- Ensure relevant communication to persons working on its behalf, not only own employees.

ISO 45001

- Explicitly addresses contractor and visitors and external or interested parties in relation to whom to communicate with.
- Need to define the objective to be achieved by its information and communication.
- Need to take into account the diversity aspects of the receiver of information (language, culture, literacy etc).



SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- 866 qualified management system experts completed the online survey between July 13 to 20, 2016.
- Respondents were drawn from quality, environment and safety companies certified by DNV GL.
- Experts surveyed span around quality, environment and safety certified customers in the following proportions:
 - 70 % Quality
 - 14 % Environment
 - 16 % Safety

DEMOGRAPHIES & RESPONDENTS

IN TOTAL

866





TOR GUNNAR TOLLEFSEN

Global Service Manager - Management Systems

Tor Gunnar Tollefsen participated as a national expert delegate to the ISO committee TC 207/SC1 WG5, which was responsible for the ISO 14001 revision.



BASTIAAN POLDERMANS

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Bastiaan Poldermans participated as a member of the ISO committee TC 176/SC2 WG24, which was responsible for the ISO 9001 revision.



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Patrick Smink is a member of the ISO committee ISO/PC 283 WG1, which is responsible for the development of ISO 45001.



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