

ISO 14001:2026 TRANSITION TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

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WEBINAR AGENDA



Richard Walsh

CEnv MIEMA, ISO 9001, ISO 14001,
ISO 50001, NHSS 18, Eco-Campus

**NQA Principal Assessor
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Richard is NQA's Principal Assessor for ISO 14001 and ISO 50001 management system standards. As a Principal Assessor his role is to lead and develop the technical knowledge and skill base of NQA staff and Assessors, whilst ensuring technical knowledge and changes within the industry are cascaded appropriately and accordingly to clients and external stakeholders.

Objectives

- What are the changes to ISO 14001:2026 from the 2015 version?
- Why these changes are taking place?
- Key dates and expected transition timeline.
- How to prepare for these changes?
- Transition support from NQA.
- Future transition training with NQA.
- Q&A

Please note the information in this webinar is based on the current Draft International Standard (DIS) for ISO 14001:2026, which is subject to change. It does not reflect the final requirements nor should it be taken as the final version.

ISO 14001:2026 TIMELINE

Phase	Timeline
ISO14001:2015	15 th September 2015
Draft International Standard (DIS)	February 2025
Final Draft International Standard (DIS)	Expected December 2025
New Standard expected to be published	Expected March 2026
Transition deadline	Likely a maximum of 3 years to early 2029

WHY IS ISO 14001 BEING UPDATED?

- To better reflect global environmental priorities.
- Strengthen climate action and resilience.
- Strengthens change management and supply chain oversight
- Expands EMS scope with lifecycle perspective, supporting focus beyond facilities & operations.
- Support consistent application and better alignment with ISO's Harmonized Structure



OVERVIEW OF THE 2026 REVISION

While the 2026 changes are moderate, they will enhance the following:

- Climate action and environmental resilience.
- Supply chain sustainability and due diligence.
- Lifecycle perspective (from design to disposal).
- Risk-based thinking throughout the environmental management systems (EMS).
- Expand Annex A for clearer implementation guidance.



CLAUSE UPDATES

The following ISO 14001:2026 clauses will be updated, and we will discuss these changes in the coming slides.

Clause	Key Change
4.1 & 4.2	Consideration of environmental conditions
6.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.4, & 6.1.5	Clarification of risk and opportunity assessments
6.3	Focus on structured change management
9.3	Restructure of management reviews into three sub-clauses
10.2 & 10.3	Content from 10.1 integrated into both clauses

GENERAL CHANGES

ISO/DIS 14001:2026 includes some editorial changes, updating references, restructuring, renumbering minor changes and points of clarification.

- This includes the use of **result** as the term used for the output of a process, such as management review, or intended outcome of an objective.
 - ‘Outcome’ remains the relevant term when considering the whole EMS.
 - Additional terminology changes includes changing the term fulfilment to **meeting** in reference to the compliance obligations.
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CLAUSE 4 UPDATE – CONTEXT OF THE ORGANISATION

Clause 4.1:

- Formalises the updates introduced in February 2024.
- Now explicitly includes environmental conditions, including climate change, pollution and biodiversity.
- Encourages deeper integration of environmental factors into business context and onwards into aspects.
- Consider Life Cycle Perspective for environmental aspects and operational controls, to ensure that upstream and downstream impacts the organization can control, or influence, are not overlooked.

Clause 4.2:

- Expanded focus on stakeholder requirements again from the February 2024 additions
 - Stakeholders may have sustainability requirements
 - Organisations must review and update stakeholder lists & needs.
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CLAUSE 5 UPDATE – LEADERSHIP

Leadership Commitment:

- New emphasis on ethical leadership, full accountability and the fostering of a culture of sustainable development.
- Leadership has a more visible role in embedding sustainability principles into operations.
- Likely to require top management to support all organizational roles and not just management, extending the level of personal involvement, responsibility and accountability.



CLAUSE 6.1 UPDATE – ACTIONS TO ADDRESS RISK AND OPPORTUNITIES

Clause 6.1:

- Clause 6.1 has been restructured for clarity, with the content of 6.1.1 (general) now moved to 6.1.4.
- 'Planning actions' 6.1.4 has been renumbered as 6.1.5.
- A new note has been added in 6.1.2 which explains lifecycle perspectives.
- Emphasis on the environmental impact across the value chain (as shown by the diagram below):



CLAUSE 6.3 UPDATE – NEW CLAUSE COVERING CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Clause 6.3:

- New clause introduced in ISO 14001:2026.
- Established a structured approach in managing environmental change, which addresses:
 - Regulatory changes.
 - Operational adjustments.
 - Technological or process shifts
- It is similar to the approach utilised in the ISO 9001:2015 standard.



CLAUSE 7 – SUPPORT

Clause 7

- Only minor adjustments, primarily focused on terminology updates
- Organizations should ensure alignment with changes in terminology, but overall operational impact will be minimal.



CLAUSE 8 – OPERATIONS

Requirements for climate adaptation, supply chain disruptions and emergency planning.

- Operational controls strengthened to reflect supply chain sustainability – outsourced processes changed to control of “externally provided processes, products and services”
- Lifecycle perspective embedded throughout operational planning.
- Emergency situations to be identified when considering ‘risks and opportunities’ and not just environmental aspects, so that all eventualities, or potential situations are identified.



CLAUSE 9.2 – INTERNAL AUDITING

Clause 9.2:

- The effectiveness of the environmental management system is fundamental to the whole of Clause 9 and is now included in the first sentence.
- New requirement expected that each internal audit shall have defined objective(s)



CLAUSE 9.3 – MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Clause 9.3:

- Clause 9.3 has been reorganised into three sub-clauses:
 - Inputs.
 - Process.
 - Results.
- Information requirements for the management review are now more definitive and 'shall' be included.
- This is to improve structure and traceability.



CLAUSE 10 – IMPROVEMENT

Clause 10:

- Clause 10.1 has been removed, with its content integrated into Clauses 10.2 and 10.3.
- Streamlines the approach to nonconformity and corrective action.
- Reinforces root cause analysis and the link between audit findings and continual improvement.



KEY TERMINOLOGY AND OTHER CHANGES

Terminology:

- Terminology updates include replacing “fulfil” with “meets compliance obligations” to align to modern regulatory language.

Executive Engagement:

- It also places greater emphasis on conserving natural resources and protecting ecosystems, requiring organisations to revise their environmental policies and ensure executive engagement.
 - Annex A provides expanded guidance to clarify these requirements, helping businesses navigate the changes more effectively.
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PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION

Note: Organisations are advised to start transition planning early, as the expected three-year transition period may well be shorter due to the limited scope of the new requirements.

Preparing for the Transition:

- Review your EMS context to include climate and supply chain considerations.
 - Align environmental policies with the revised standard's focus on sustainability.
 - Update stakeholder and risk registers.
 - Review lifecycle assessment practices.
 - Refresh internal audit and management review processes.
 - Strengthen root cause analysis.
 - Engage leadership early.
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Certification Body

- Keep in close contact with your certification body (NQA) who will offer information and support for this transition process.
- They will ensure that all certified organisation maintain their certification and use the revised standard to enhance their sustainability credentials.

By adopting these changes, organisations can position themselves as leaders in environmental stewardship, meet stakeholder expectations and drive long-term value in an increasingly sustainability-focused world.

NQA TRANSITION TRAINING

STANDARD	TRAINING
ISO 14001:2026	ISO 14001:2026 E-Learning Essentials Course
	ISO 14001:2026 One-Day Transition Course
	ISO 14001:2026 Two-Day Lead Auditor Course

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Q&A

