


INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION SERVICE®

IAF Mandatory Documents – MD 4:2018
 (Use of information and communication technology (ICT) for auditing/assessment purposes)

Introduction



ICT (information and communication technology) to be used to


- optimize audit/assessment effectiveness and efficiency,
- to support and maintain the integrity of the audit/assessment process.

- ICT is the use of technology for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing and transmitting information.
- It includes software and hardware such as smartphones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology, artificial intelligence, and others.
- The use of ICT may be appropriate for auditing/assessment both locally and remotely.

Examples of the use of ICT during audits/assessments may include but are not limited to:

- Meetings; by means of teleconference facilities, including audio, video and data sharing
- Audit/assessment of documents and records by means of remote access, either synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (when applicable)
- Recording of information and evidence by means of still video, video or audio recordings
- Providing visual/audio access to remote or potentially hazardous locations

Objectives




The objectives for application of ICT are:

- Methodology that is sufficiently flexible and non-prescriptive in nature to optimize the conventional audit/assessment process
- Adequate controls are in place to avoid abuses that could compromise the integrity of the audit/assessment process
- To support the principles of safety and sustainability

Measures shall also be taken to ensure that security and confidentiality is maintained throughout audit/assessment activities


Other schemes, normative documents and conformity assessment standards may impose limitations on the use of ICT for audit/assessment and may take precedence over this document.

Scope



- This MD provides for the consistent application in auditing/assessment, for the use of information and communication technology as part of the methodology.
- The scope of this document is for the auditing /assessment of management systems, persons, and product and is applicable to conformity assessment bodies and accreditation bodies.
- The use of ICT is not mandatory and may be used for other types of conformity assessment activities, but if used as part of the audit/assessment methodology, it is mandatory to conform to this document.

Definitions




Virtual Site :

Virtual location where a client organization performs work or provides a service using an on-line environment allowing persons irrespective of physical locations to execute processes.

- *A virtual site cannot be considered where the processes must be executed in a physical environment, e.g., warehousing, manufacturing, physical testing laboratories, installation or repairs to physical products.*
- *A virtual site (e.g. company intranet) is considered a single site for the calculation of audit/assessment time.*


Requirements



Security and Confidentiality :


- The security and confidentiality of electronic or electronically-transmitted information is particularly important when using ICT for audit/assessment purposes.
- The use of ICT for audit/assessment purposes shall be mutually agreed upon by the body being audited/assessed and the body performing the audit/assessment in accordance with information security and data protection measures and regulations before ICT is used for audit/assessment purposes.
- In the case of non-fulfilment of these measures or non-agreement of information security and data protection measures, the body performing the audit/assessment activities shall use other methods to conduct the audit/assessment.
- When no agreement is reached for the use of ICT for audit/assessment, other methods shall be used to fulfil audit/assessment objectives.

Process Requirements



- Identify the risk and opportunities that may impact audit/assessment effectiveness, including the selection of the technologies, and how they are managed.
- The application review to check that the client and the audit/assessment body have the necessary infrastructure to support the use of the ICT proposed.
- Considering the risks and opportunities identified, the audit/assessment plan shall identify how ICT will be utilized and the extent to which ICT will be used for audit/assessment purposes
- When using ICT, auditors/assessors and other involved persons (e.g. drone pilots, technical experts) shall have the competency and ability to understand and utilize the information and communication technologies employed to achieve the desired results of audit(s)/assessment(s).
- The auditor/assessor shall also be aware of the risks and opportunities of the information and communication technologies used and the impacts that they may have on the validity and objectivity of the information gathered.

Process Requirements



- If ICT is used, it contributes to the total audit/assessment time as additional planning may be necessary which may impact audit/assessment duration.
- Audit/assessment reports and related records shall indicate the extent to which ICT has been and the effectiveness of ICT in achieving the audit/assessment objectives.
- If virtual sites are included within the scope, the certification/accreditation documentation shall note that virtual sites are included and the activities performed at the virtual sites shall be identified.

Thank you!



