



White Paper
Process for Integrating Assessment Programs

EFCOG
ISM/QA Working Group

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assessments are an integral part of an effective Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS). Specifically, assessments provide a cornerstone of the ISMS Core Function, “Provide Feedback and Continuous Improvement”. A well-run, effective assessment program is a proven driver for improving and sustaining performance by providing meaningful feedback on programmatic compliance and field implementation.

An Assessment Task Team was created from the Energy Facility Contractors Group (EFCOG) ISM/QA Working Group to explore the development of an integrated assessment process that responds to the requirements of performing management and independent assessments for ISM and Quality Assurance (QA) in accordance with NQA-1. An integrated assessment process will benefit an organization in controlling the overlapping and duplication of assessments, and minimizing the impact to the organization. In addition, the Department of Energy (DOE) encourages the coordination and integration of similar assessments on the same subject.

This white paper discusses the issues in developing an integrated assessment process and provides recommendations from the Assessment Task Team.

PURPOSE

Develop an integrated assessment process that fosters alignment of assessment requirements and drivers into common subject areas such that the assessment resources are effectively utilized.

DISCUSSION

Identification of Assessment Input

One of the first steps in developing an integrated assessment process is to identify the different types of assessments typically utilized in self-assessment plans. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the different types of self-assessments. In addition to the various self-assessments, consideration needs to be given to mid-term process reviews for developing a meaningful annual ISM Declaration as part of an overall self-assessment plan. The following are examples of inputs into the annual ISM Declaration.

- Rules – 835, 851, 830, etc assessments
- Orders – 414.1C, 226, etc assessments
- QA Audit per NQA-1
- Internal Assessments – management, self, FEB, etc
- External Assessments – DOE/NNSA/DNFSB/Regulators

- Discretionary – management directives, new initiatives, hot topics, lessons learned, focus areas, etc.
- NTS
- Collective Significance Reviews (CSRs)/Corrective Action Review Boards (CARBs)/Executive Safety Quality Review Boards (ESQRBs)/ Performance Reviews

Consistent Use of Terminology

During the identification and review of the different types of assessments and process reviews, there appeared to be inconsistencies in common terminology. The development of an integrated assessment process would require a thorough review of assessment terminology and approval of common terms and definitions.

Assessment Qualification Standards

DOE O 226.1A require independent evaluators to be trained and qualified and have the knowledge of the areas assessed, as does, DOE O 414.1C, Criterion 10, Independent Assessment, which states “ensure persons conducting independent assessments are technically qualified and knowledgeable in the areas to be assessed”.

The qualifications for independent assessment personnel should be established commensurate with the assessment purpose and scope. In compliance with the Orders, persons conducting independent assessments should be technically qualified and knowledgeable in the areas assessed.

Through the development of an integrated assessment process, a team approach for conducting assessments would be accomplished and therefore eliminate “stovepipes”. There would be an assessment team lead, trained to the rigor of a QA auditor and qualified, as necessary, to address the topical area. One of the responsibilities of the team lead would be to determine the need for Cognizant technical/operational expertise and knowledge on the team.

Identification of Assessment Tools

In determining the feasibility of an integrated assessment process, an integrated self-assessment matrix was developed, as shown in Figure 2. This matrix would serve as a scheduling resource planning tool designed to integrate multi-requirements/drivers used for the development of an assessment schedule. To further support the development of an integrated assessment process, an assessment “toolbox” should be developed that can be tailored to drive consistency and standardization, for the common goal of determining Integrated Safety Management (ISM) and Quality Assurance (QA) effectiveness, with the added benefit of reducing cost and impact on line activities. Examples of tools to include in the “toolbox” include the following:

- Integrated Assessment Plan Template
- Universal set of crosscutting Criteria and Review Approach Documents (CRADs) or Lines of Inquiry (LOIs) by functional area or activity

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop an approved list of assessment terminology and definitions
- Develop the qualification standard to be used for all integrated assessments
- Develop an Integrated Assessment Plan Template
- Develop standard CRADs or LOIs Banks by functional area or activity

Figure 1

Typical Input to a Self-Assessment Plan

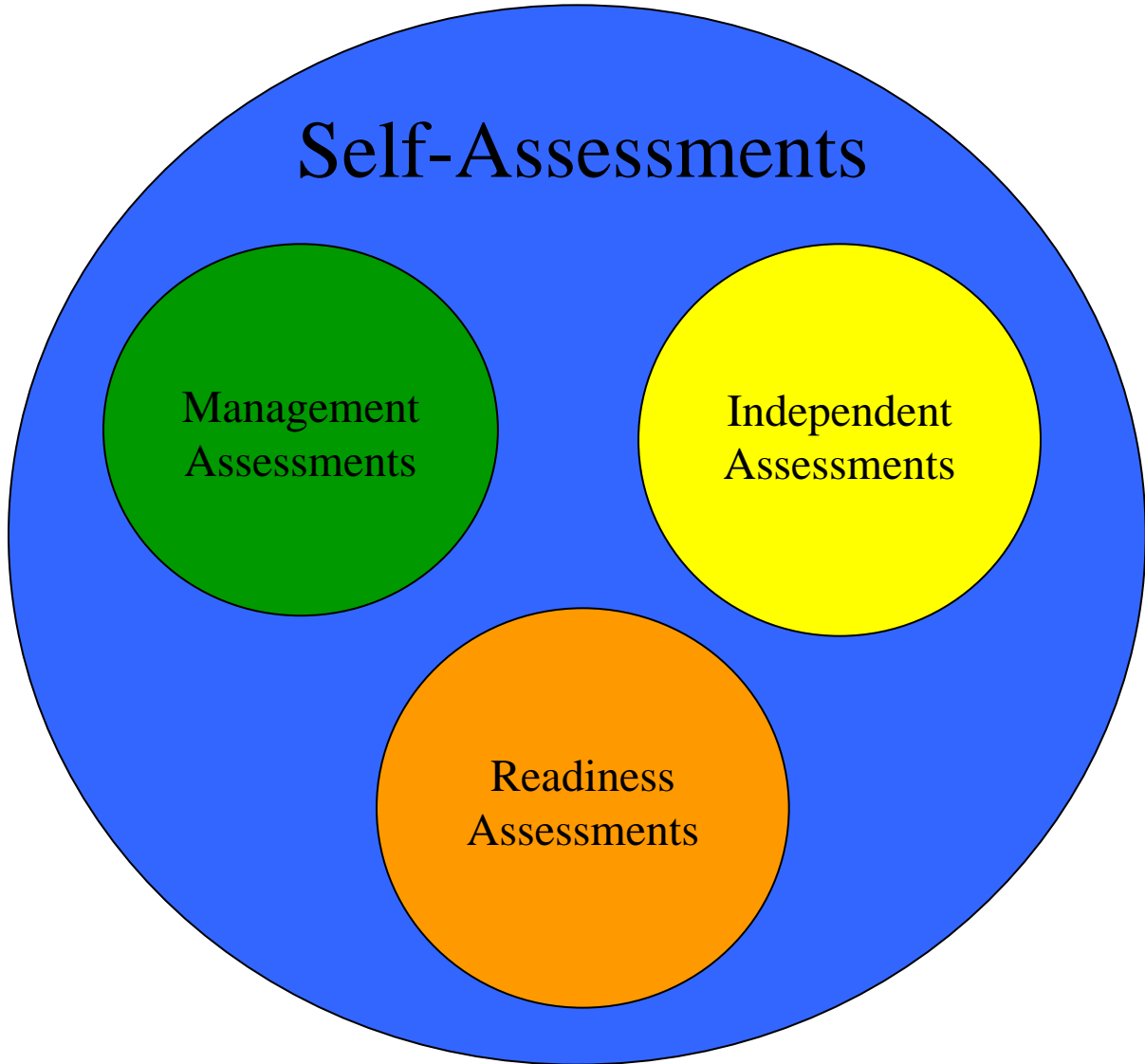


Figure 2

Integrated Self-Assessment Matrix (Example)

Topic	Assessment Type	Requirements/ Driver Source	Scope	ISM CF & GP	Lead/Resources	Schedule	CRAD/ LOIs	Results	Comments
NQA1-1 Criterion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Independent •Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NQA1 Program • Annual Declaration • Management Directive 	SMP Facility/ Activity/ Program	3 5 7	Lead Auditor – SME – SME – SME -	1QFY09	See Assessment Plan	Strengths: Weaknesses: Performance Gaps:	

Definitions

- 1) Integrated Self-Assessment Matrix – Scheduling Resource Planning Tool designed to integrate multi-requirements/drivers to be used for the development of an assessment schedule
- 2) Topic – Areas, programs, processes, etc. to assess
- 3) Assessment Type – Independent, Management (Facility Evaluation Board (FEB), Management By Walking Around (MBWA), Collective Significance Reviews (CSRs)/Corrective Action Review Boards (CARBs)/Executive Safety Quality Review Boards (ESQRBs), Formal Assessment document), etc.
- 4) Requirements/Driver Source – What drives the assessment? Results of the Annual Declaration, DOE Orders, Management Concerns, Hot Topics, etc or an integration of all
- 5) Scope – Refinement of the Topical Area or finer cut/target
- 6) ISMS Core Functions and Guiding Principles – List the ones that apply to the Topic
- 7) CRADs and LOIs – List the CRADs and/or LOIs used or reference the location of the list
- 8) Lead/Resources – Lead should be selected based on qualifications necessary to address the Topical area. Include names of individuals conducting the assessment.
- 9) Schedule – Time period in which the assessment will be conducted
- 10) Results – Add Strengths, Weaknesses, Best Practices, and Performance Gaps
- 11) Comments – Any additional information that helps to foster integration