IOSA Q&A Sessions Brief
16 & 18 April 2024

Thank you for attending our April Q&A Sessions! We appreciate the high turnout and effective feedback provided. Please find below answers to questions that were most frequently asked during the sessions. For any additional questions, please contact our team at iosa@iata.org.

Question 1

We expect to be audited by March 2025, when should we contact you to request the audit, and start the contract process?

Answer

We strongly recommend starting the contract process as early as possible to allow enough time for contract legal reviews, invoice payment processes and of course the audit planning. Therefore, we suggest minimum four months before the registration renewal audit windows (T-180).

Question 2

Regarding Mandatory Observations (MOs): Will these still be conducted and is it like the previous process?
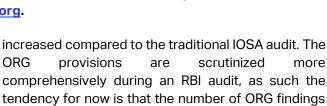
Answer

Mandatory observations will be conducted in principle very similar to before. However, the number of mandatory observations will be increased. As the audit is risk-based, Auditors will focus on pertinent and safety critical areas while conducting observations. Cockpit- and cabin-line operations observations will be increased each by one and, specifically ground, cargo, engineering & maintenance related mandatory observations will be conducted as much as time allows.

Question 3

What is the average number of findings and are the findings different comparing to conventional IOSA?

Answer

Since the number of audits conducted under RBI is still fairly low, it would be premature to draw definitive conclusions on the number of findings. With the audits so far conducted the average number of findings has increased compared to the traditional IOSA audit. The ORG provisions are scrutinized more comprehensively during an RBI audit, as such the tendency for now is that the number of ORG findings has increased.

Question 4

How does RBI affect internal auditing?

Answer

Operators are required to audit all ISARPs in every 2 years as per ORG 2.1.4 and this does not change. However, it is within the Operator's discretion to apply an internal risk-based audit or maturity assessment while being in conformity with ORG 2.1.4.

Question 5

Regarding Maturity Assessments (MA): Will there be some kind of guidance of best practices for airlines that are not as well-developed?

Answer

As of now we do not have specific guidance for the Maturity Assessment. There are however many documents already available that describe in detail what many of the maturity criteria refer to. The main focus of the MA is the SMS – for that we have ICAO Doc 9859, which provides a lot of details of a well-established system. We are also continuously working on training products, which can help in preparing for the Maturity Assessment.

Question 6

Are you going to give operators criteria for Maturity Assessment which can help operators prepare?

Answer

Yes, for now the Maturity Criteria are shared with the operators that are in the planning phase of an RBI. In the future, the criteria will be shared with all operators. It is however important to note that many of the criteria will require things to be in place and well established before they can be assessed as being implemented. In other words, for many criteria an operator will need time. The Maturity Assessment is intended to drive continuous improvement, as such, it is equally meaningful to undergo the assessment and then start implementing the recommendations given through the MA report.

Question 7

While the audit checklist is tailored to each Operator, is there a possibility of sharing a generic checklist to assist airlines with preparations? With the conventional audit, airlines currently have access to IOSA Audit checklists which assists with preparations.

Answer

The checklist with the ISARPs remains identical. We do not change ISARP requirements as part of RBI. When we state that the checklist is tailored to the operator, we mean that we select or emphasize ISARPs to be audited from the complete list. So, rather than auditing all approximately 920 ISARPs in the ISM, we may select some 600 of them. These 600 are however the same in wording and requirement. ISARPs identified as high priority will simply be audited with more in-depth. E.g., rather than selecting 5 records during sampling, an auditor may select 20 for a high priority ISARP.

Question 8

How is the audit scope determined, and does this change at each audit?

Answer

Risk-based IOSA audit scope is tailored to areas pertinent to the individual airline's needs, with ISARPs prioritized according to the operator's operating profile and audit history, as well as safety risk areas that are on the rise universally.

ISARPs are prioritized in regular intervals and those identified as high priority are audited in-depth. While keeping a baseline level of conformity with all ISARPs, ISARPs with low criticality may be audited at lower frequency to allow focus on high-criticality ISARPs. Audit scope will be therefore re-evaluated prior to each audit, while keeping the baseline criteria.

Some benefits of this tailored approach include less repeated ISARPs, virtually no "not applicable" ISARPs, a more in-depth assessment, reduced on-site audit days (4 auditors, 4 days).

To note, initial registration audits will be audited against all applicable ISARPs in the ISM and will have five auditors for a five-day audit. Please note that priority levels are not shared with operators to minimize bias.

Question 9

Does IATA offer training courses for airline subject matter experts (not auditors) to gain knowledge into RBI? How long are these courses and how are they offered (onsite, virtual etc)

Answer

IATA offers a virtual classroom course which is called "Introduction to Risk-based IOSA." Please see details on the Training site. Also, a classroom course, "Risk-Based IOSA Airline Training", provides in-depth knowledge regarding Risk-based IOSA.

Question 10

If the operator had a previous IOSA audit as an affiliate, are the rules/criteria the same now with RBI?

Answer

Yes, the rules for affiliated audits remain the same as before. Under RBI, operators are equally eligible to undergo an affiliated audit. The main criteria for assigning audit days also remains the same - which is primarily the level of commonality in documentation and procedures.

Useful Links

IOSA Standards Manual (ISM) Ed 16 Rev 3
Conformance Report ISM Ed 16 Rev 3

▶ Click here to visit the IOSA Documentation site

World Safety and Operations Conference (WSOC)

▶ Click here to visit the WSOC site