



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY GUIDELINE

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Owned by: Audit Specialist,  
Safety Audits & Certifications

Approval:   
Approved By: Manager,  
Safety Audits & Certifications

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## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This Summary shows:

- All changes from last approved and published document
- The location within the document where the changes have been made

Version	Date	Author(s)	Revision Notes
1.0	August 24, 2021	Carol Hockley	New Document
1.1	May 18, 2023	Kristen O’Hara	Revised to include cover page and other required pages. Updated throughout to current standard for Executive Summary.

 Requirements changed in the new revision will be identified with a revision triangle beside it.

## SUMMARY OF REVIEWERS

The following people were involved in the review of this Procedure.

Name	Position
Kristen O’Hara	Quality Assurance, Safety Audits & Certifications
Juliet Goodwin	Manager, Safety Audits & Certifications
Courtney Christie	Audit Specialist, Safety Audits & Certifications
SA&C Team	Subject Matter Experts (SME)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary of Changes .....	2
Summary of Reviewers.....	2
1.0 About This Procedure.....	4
1.1 Purpose and Direction .....	4
1.2 Scope.....	4
1.3 Target Audience .....	4
2.0 Contents of An Executive Summary .....	4
2.1 Required Contents of an Executive Summary .....	4
3.0 Approach to Writing an Executive Summary .....	4
4.0 Executive Summary Example .....	5
5.0 Reference Documents .....	6
6.0 Terms and Definitions .....	7

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## 1.0 ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE

### 1.1 Purpose and Direction

This guideline outlines the required content of an executive summary within a Certificate of Recognition (COR) Audit. It also provides guidance on how to write an effective executive summary.

### 1.2 Scope

The scope of the Executive Summary Guideline applies to:

- Large Employer Audits
- Audits conducted by Energy Safety Canada Certified Auditors and student auditors.

### 1.3 Target Audience

The target audience for this document are Energy Safety Canada Certified Auditors and student auditors.

## 2.0 CONTENTS OF AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 2.1 Required Contents of an Executive Summary

2.1.1 The executive summary provides the reader with an overview of the audit report. It should give senior management sufficient detail to obtain a clear understanding of the key recommendations provided by the lead auditor and/or audit team. Moreover, the executive summary should encourage the reader to continue reading the entire report.

2.1.2 Regarding format and layout, it is suggested that the length of the executive summary does not exceed more than three pages. Parallel bulleted lists and headings can be used to help improve clarity and flow.

2.1.3 The content of the executive summary must include the following:

- an attention-getting statement, including the audit score
- the purpose of the audit
- the scope of the audit
- the employer's name, locations audited and the audit time frame
- key strengths which are company specific and applicable to the audit content
- key high-priority areas for improvement which are clear, actionable (include the deficiency, corrective action, and benefit of implementing the suggested actions)
- reference to audit activities
- name/signoff of the auditor

## 3.0 APPROACH TO WRITING AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1.1 The following approach may be utilized to write an effective executive summary as outlined in the Certified Health and Safety Auditor Program (CHSAP) participant

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manual:

1. Write the executive summary after the main body of the report has been drafted.
2. List the main points that the summary will cover in order of priority.
3. Write a simple and clear sentence that describes each main point.
4. Add supporting or explanatory sentences as needed. Omit needless elaboration and jargon.
5. Maintain confidentiality while supporting your findings.
6. Proofread the first draft of the executive summary to ensure it outlines the essentials of the audit report (i.e., audit score, scope and main strengths and key recommendations).

## 4.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY EXAMPLE

### ABC Widgets - Executive Summary

An external COR renewal audit was conducted for ABC Widgets and the company achieved a passing score of 91%. Included in the audit scope was documentation review, interviews, and observations as per Energy Safety Canada's 2023 COR Audit Protocol. The audit was conducted between the dates of April 1, 2023, and May 1, 2023, encompassing all ABC Widgets locations and operations, including the head office location in Calgary and the field site locations in Edmonton and Red Deer. Based on the audit findings, an overview of key strengths and a few suggestions for improvement are provided below.

#### Strengths:

Strengths were identified in the following audit areas: Management, Leadership and Organizational Commitment, Incident Investigation, and Emergency Response.

It was evident that ABC Widgets ensures that all employees are aware of the Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) Policy through effective distribution and communication of the policy during employee onboarding and annual refresher training. During observations, the HSE policy was found to be posted at the office and made available electronically on the organization's intranet.

Interviewed personnel indicated that there is a strong and positive reporting culture at ABC Widgets and that management encourages the reporting of incidents, near misses, and hazards. For future, continue to encourage reporting with all employees to allow ABC Widgets to receive timely notification of events that can allow them to investigate and implement corrective actions.

With respect to the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), it was a finding that the ERP and procedures exceeded the requirements outlined within the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety legislation. ABC Widgets has demonstrated that emergency preparedness is a priority and that the safety and protection of workers is of high importance. Furthermore, the ERP is well communicated throughout the organization and employees have been adequately trained in their ERP responsibilities.

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### Recommendations:

Key suggestions for improvement were included within the following audit areas: Hazard Control, Qualifications, Orientation and Training.

Some discrepancies were identified in the record keeping system for storing safety training and orientation records. It is recommended that awareness is improved so that employees recognize the importance of submitting safety training and orientation records through the organization's internal database for company inventory purposes, as well for the purpose of maintaining the required safety training as per legislated requirements.

During interviews, it was discovered that the majority of personnel lacked familiarity with the engineering controls that apply to their job tasks. It is recommended that awareness of engineering controls is improved to ensure that engineering controls are being utilized as intended and to enhance employee understanding of the barriers placed between them and hazards. Furthermore, some personnel did not recall receiving any formal Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) training. As such, it is recommended that employees are trained in the care, use, maintenance, and limitations of any legislated PPE. Improving employee awareness would help increase compliance with PPE, as well as increase employees' understanding of how PPE can be used to reduce or minimize exposure to hazardous agents.

With respect to the Preventative Maintenance (PM) program, it is recommended that a central storage hub for PM records is stored on the company's internal database. A pre-determined schedule should be developed to ensure that PM is not missed for any equipment and to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and manufacturer's specifications.

### Concluding Remarks

I would like to express my appreciation towards ABC Widgets for allowing me to participate in this year's COR renewal audit. Thank you to the company key contacts for their assistance in providing documentation and thank you to all interviewed personnel for participating in the audit process. I encourage management to read through the entire audit report to review the supporting details provided in the body of the report and address opportunities for improvement.

Kind regards,

*Auditor Name / Audit Team*

## 5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Certified Health and Safety Auditor Program - Participant Manual: Version 19.2

## 6.0 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Strengths	Strengths in the executive summary focus on the systemic components of the overall health and safety management system or positive attributes of the corporate culture, and not on efforts of particular individuals or departments.
Recommendations	Recommendations in the executive summary are derived from suggestions for improvement identified during the audit process.
Suggestions for Improvement	<p>When a weakness in the health and safety management system or a deficient item has been identified during the audit process, auditors are to write a comprehensive suggestion for improvement for each deficiency.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvement are to include the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a brief description of the deficiency found</li> <li>• be attainable and practical</li> <li>• be relevant for the deficiency identified</li> <li>• provide the benefit to the company on how implementing your suggestion with help them</li> </ul>