



# Ask the auditor

Everything you always wanted to know about a COR™ audit but were afraid to ask

So your company is thinking about getting involved in the Certificate of Recognition (COR™), but your employer and fellow employees have a lot of questions about what it entails. IHSA has collected some of the most commonly asked questions about the program. We hope that the answers we provide will help you understand and explain the COR™ process.

- 1. Can I submit my self-audit before completing the required training?**  
No. You have to complete the three required courses first. In addition, the senior management representative needs to complete the half-day *COR™ Essentials* course before IHSA accepts the audit.
- 2. I did my COR™ training in another province. Do I have to take IHSA's training?**  
No. Not if you can provide IHSA with satisfactory records that show you have taken the training somewhere else.
- 3. Our internal auditor has left the organization. Do we have to retrain another employee to conduct our self-audit?**  
Yes. The employer also has an obligation to inform IHSA of those kind of changes when they occur. (Refer to the employer guidelines.)
- 4. If we hire a person who has already completed the required COR™ training, do we have to retrain that person?**  
No. The training goes with the person, not with the company. IHSA will have that person's records on file.
- 5. Do we have to train more than one person to be our internal auditor?**  
No. However, it may benefit a company to have more than one internal auditor. That way, if one of the auditors leaves the firm, there will be someone to take over. And if there is more than one auditor, they can share the work and help one another.
- 6. We just scheduled our external audit with IHSA. Can I choose who will be interviewed and which sites I would like the auditor to visit?**  
No. Good auditing practice dictates that the auditor must decide who is interviewed and which sites will be visited without any input from the company.
- 7. What type of documentation will IHSA look for on our jobsite?**  
The IHSA auditor will look at a number of things, such as mandatory jobsite postings, inspection documentation, safety talks, general hazard assessments for the project, ongoing communication of hazard assessments, incident investigations, incident reports, emergency response plans, and documentation of emergency response drills.
- 8. What type of information about inspections will IHSA look for?**  
The IHSA auditor will check to see if the company is meeting its legal requirements (such as frequency of meetings) as well as its own internal health and safety program requirements. The auditor will look at how observations are recorded during inspections, as well as if deficiencies are properly dealt with by senior management and if corrective actions are taken.



**9. If our company's OH&S program states that each site will conduct weekly jobsite inspections and we actually only conduct monthly inspections, will that affect our score?**

Yes, it may. You aren't doing what you said you were going to do. That is covered in the audit.

**10. If the employees being interviewed cannot remember certain kinds of training, practices, procedures, or communications, will that affect our overall score?**

Yes, it may. If the interview scores are 51 per cent or less, you will receive no score for the interviews. These interviews are an indication of internal communication and competence, and that makes them crucial to your health and safety program.

**11. If we are unable to answer some questions on regulations correctly, will our overall score be affected?**

Absolutely. You need to score 100 per cent on any question that IHSA has identified as a legislative question. These items are a minimum requirement.

**12. How will the auditor treat questions that do not apply to the type of work we do?**

The auditor can indicate that certain questions are not applicable. Even certain questions about regulations may not be applicable in some circumstances, provided that the company can prove it is exempt from that specific piece of legislation.

**13. What happens if we fail to pass either the internal or external audit?**

You will receive a report identifying the various deficiencies encountered by the auditor. You will then be asked to correct these deficiencies and to inform IHSA that you have corrected them before IHSA will re-audit.

**14. Once the audit is completed, who will receive the report at my organization?**

Usually the internal auditor or designated full-time permanent employee along with management will receive the report.

**15. If we have to have a re-audit due to failure, what will the auditor look for? Will they grant me COR™ on the basis of documentation stating I have made improvements?**

The auditor will ask you to develop an action plan for improvement. You can work on this plan, and IHSA will re-audit you for the achievements specified in the plan.

**16. If we disagree with some of the findings in the audit, is there any opportunity for appeal?**

Yes there is. You have two weeks to appeal in writing. (See the employer guidelines.)

**17. Do general contractors have to include a job hazard analysis (JHA) for their own work or for all scopes of work?**

Both. If they are performing work on a site, they need to have a JHA for their own employees. They also need to have a high-level JHA for the entire project.

**18. How long will it take to complete the audit?**

It really depends on what a company already has in place and how prepared it is. Preparing for the audit could take anywhere from two or three months to more than a year. Don't set unrealistic goals at the audit or management level. It is best to be honest about expectations and timelines. The audit itself can take a day or several days depending on the size and number of sites your firm has.

If you have additional questions, contact IHSA or visit the COR™ web page at [ihsa.ca/cor](http://ihsa.ca/cor)