

FREE MANUFACTURING EHS AUDIT TEMPLATE

Incident and Corrective Action Audit Checklist

Use this 60-point audit checklist to test incident reporting, investigation quality, reportability decisions, root causes, corrective-action strength, ownership, implementation, effectiveness, recurrence, trends, and management oversight.

Facility / scope

Audit date

Lead auditor

EHS / operations owner

Internal manufacturing audit template. Apply current emergency, incident, recordkeeping, reporting, worker-participation, hazard-control, and jurisdictional requirements. For U.S. federal OSHA, 29 CFR 1904.39 includes 8-hour fatality and 24-hour severe-injury reporting requirements.

1. Audit scope, incident population, criteria, ownership, and previous findings

- 1
- Confirm the audit scope identifies the facility, departments, shifts, incident types, corrective-action processes, time period, and responsible functions being reviewed.
- CRITICAL
- EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

- 2
- Verify audit criteria include the current incident-investigation procedure, corrective-action procedure, EHS requirements, internal standards, and jurisdictional reporting or recordkeeping rules where applicable.
- CRITICAL
- EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

- 3
- Confirm the incident population includes injuries, illnesses, near misses, high-potential events, equipment or property damage, releases, fires, vehicle events, and other relevant occurrence types.
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- EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

- 4
- Review previous audit findings, repeated incidents, serious events, recurring hazards, overdue corrective actions, effectiveness failures, and reopened actions before selecting samples.
- CRITICAL
- EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

- 5
- Confirm audit sampling includes representative event severities, departments, shifts, supervisors, investigators, action owners, contractors, and higher-risk processes.
- CRITICAL
- EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

- 6
- Record audit date, facility, audit scope, lead auditor, EHS owner, operations owner, criteria, and planned follow-up date.
-
- EHS AUDIT

FINAL STATUS | Enter

EHS OWNER | Enter

MANAGEMENT APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Define the audit population before sampling. Include incidents, near misses, serious events, repeat hazards, overdue actions, and prior audit findings so the...

2. Incident reporting, near-miss capture, escalation, timeliness, and initial response controls

7

Confirm employees and contractors have accessible methods to report injuries, illnesses, near misses, hazards, property damage, releases, and other incidents without unnecessary delay.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

8

Verify supervisors and responsible functions initiate required emergency response, first aid, evacuation, medical care, shutdown, or hazard containment before investigation activity.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

9

Check serious, high-potential, repeated, or unusual incidents are escalated promptly to the required EHS, operations, management, or technical functions.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

10

Review whether delayed, incomplete, or unreported incidents and near misses are identified through inspections, medical records, maintenance records, production logs, or employee feedback.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

11

Confirm reporting expectations do not discourage employee participation through blame, retaliation, unreasonable complexity, or incentives that could suppress reporting.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

12

Verify incident date, time, location, activity, affected person or process, event type, initial severity, immediate response, and responsible supervisor are captured consistently.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: A strong incident system makes reporting easy and timely. Audit whether employees report events and near misses promptly, and whether serious events...

3. Scene stabilization, evidence preservation, witnesses, timeline, and factual reconstruction

13

Confirm serious or technically significant incidents include appropriate scene security and evidence preservation after immediate hazards and emergency needs are controlled.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

14

Verify investigation records include relevant photographs, equipment condition, damaged parts, PPE, controls, alarms, settings, logs, maintenance records, or other objective evidence where applicable.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Conforming

Needs action

Major finding

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

15

Confirm relevant witnesses, affected employees, supervisors, responders, maintenance personnel, contractors, and process experts are identified and interviewed as appropriate.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

16

Check witness interviews focus on factual observations and process conditions rather than leading questions or blame-focused conclusions.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

17

Verify investigators establish an event timeline or task reconstruction that distinguishes confirmed facts, assumptions, disputed information, and unknowns.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

18

Confirm changes made during rescue, shutdown, cleanup, repair, reset, rework, or restart are documented so post-incident conditions are not mistaken for original conditions.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit whether investigators preserve facts before repair or cleanup. Good investigations reconstruct what actually happened using the scene, people,...

4. Investigation quality, underlying causes, worker participation, and systemic analysis

19

Confirm investigation conclusions identify underlying, root, or systemic causes where supported rather than stopping only at the immediate event or injury mechanism.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

20

Verify labels such as 'operator error', 'carelessness', or 'failure to follow procedure' are not accepted as sufficient causes without examining system conditions that made the event possible.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

21

Check investigations evaluate relevant factors such as equipment, guarding, maintenance, procedure design, staffing, workload, training, supervision, environment, communication, change management, and planning.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

22

Confirm investigators analyze why existing hazard controls failed to prevent the event and why inspections, supervision, monitoring, or other detection controls failed to identify the condition earlier.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

23

Verify employees or worker representatives participate meaningfully in incident and near-miss investigations where appropriate to provide operational knowledge and perspective.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

24

Confirm significant cause conclusions are supported by objective evidence and unresolved uncertainty is documented rather than replaced with an unsupported explanation.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: OSHA recommends addressing underlying or root causes instead of stopping at fault. Audit whether investigations examine equipment, procedures, training,...

5. Regulatory reporting, OSHA recordkeeping, internal records, and reportability decisions

25

Confirm the organization has a defined process for determining whether injuries and illnesses are work-related and recordable under the applicable jurisdiction.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

26

For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, verify work-related fatalities are reported to OSHA within 8 hours when required by 29 CFR 1904.39.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

27

For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, verify work-related in-patient hospitalizations, amputations, and losses of an eye are reported to OSHA within 24 hours when required by 29 CFR 1904.39.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

28

Confirm applicable State Plan, workers' compensation, environmental, fire, transportation, customer, insurer, or other notification requirements are reviewed where relevant.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

29

Verify required OSHA 300, 301, 300A, internal incident, medical, or other records are completed and retained where applicable.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

30

Check reportability and recordability decisions are documented with the facts and rationale used, including any legal or EHS review for uncertain cases.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit reporting decisions promptly. For U.S. federal OSHA jurisdiction, severe-event reporting deadlines are time-sensitive, and State Plan rules can differ.

6. Corrective-action design, hierarchy of controls, cause alignment, and action quality

31

Confirm each permanent corrective action is traceable to a specific direct, contributing, root, or systemic cause identified by the investigation.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

32

Verify immediate correction or temporary containment is clearly distinguished from permanent corrective action.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

33

Check action selection considers the hierarchy of controls and prioritizes elimination, substitution, or engineering controls where feasible before relying mainly on administrative controls or PPE.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

34

Confirm actions address both occurrence and detection or escape weaknesses where the investigation identifies separate prevention and detection failures.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

35

Verify proposed actions do not simply add reminders or retraining when the verified cause involves equipment design, process control, maintenance, staffing, supervision, change control, or another systemic issue.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

36

Confirm measurable effectiveness criteria and the evidence needed to prove risk reduction or recurrence prevention are defined before action closure.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Corrective actions should address verified causes and use stronger controls where feasible. OSHA's hierarchy of controls prioritizes elimination and...

7. Action ownership, prioritization, due dates, interim controls, and overdue-action escalation

37

Confirm every open corrective action has a named owner, priority or risk level, target date, required evidence, and clear completion criteria.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

38

Verify interim controls remain active and periodically reviewed while permanent high-risk corrective actions are still open.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

39

Check action due dates reflect risk and implementation complexity rather than being repeatedly extended without justification.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

40

Confirm overdue, stalled, high-risk, or repeatedly extended actions are visible and escalated through defined EHS and management channels.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

41

Verify dependencies such as engineering design, procurement, maintenance shutdowns, supplier changes, capital approval, training, or validation are tracked to completion.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

42

Review action aging, overdue percentage, repeat extensions, priority distribution, and ownership load for systemic barriers to timely risk reduction.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Audit the action register, not only closed investigations. High-risk open actions should have visible interim controls, named ownership, realistic due dates,...

8. Implementation, change control, training, field verification, and sustained use

43

Confirm completed actions are physically or systemically implemented in the affected workplace, process, equipment, procedure, or management system.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Conforming

Needs action

Major finding

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

44

Verify equipment, guarding, ventilation, automation, interlocks, alarms, software, layout, or other engineered changes are tested or verified before reliance on them.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

45

Confirm revised procedures, permits, job plans, risk assessments, inspections, maintenance tasks, or other documents are approved and available at the point of use.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

46

Verify affected employees and supervisors receive required communication, training, qualification, or competency verification for changed controls.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

47

Check obsolete work methods, temporary controls, bypasses, old documents, or superseded settings are removed or controlled to prevent reversion.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Conforming

Needs action

Major finding

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

48

Observe the affected task or process and confirm the permanent corrective action is used consistently during normal work, not only during the audit.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Conforming

Needs action

Major finding

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: An action is not implemented because a work order closed. Audit the changed workplace and verify procedures, equipment, training, and worker behavior...

9. Effectiveness verification, recurrence, similar-area review, residual risk, and reopening

49

Confirm effectiveness reviews occur after enough operating time, work cycles, production volume, inspections, or other relevant exposure to make the conclusion meaningful.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

50

Verify effectiveness is judged against predefined criteria rather than only confirming that action tasks were completed.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

51

Review repeat incidents, near misses, hazard reports, audit findings, inspection data, maintenance data, employee feedback, and other recurrence indicators for the same hazard or cause.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

52

Confirm similar equipment, tasks, departments, sites, contractors, or processes are reviewed for the same causal weakness and appropriate controls are deployed where relevant.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

53

Verify residual risk and unintended consequences of the corrective action are assessed before final closure where significant risk remains.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

54

If recurrence occurs or effectiveness criteria are not met, confirm the investigation or action is reopened, extended, or escalated and causes or controls are reassessed.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Completion is not effectiveness. Audit whether enough operating time has passed, whether recurrence was actively checked, and whether similar...

10. Audit trail, trend analysis, recurring causes, management review, and final audit sign-off

55

Confirm incident and corrective-action records are complete, attributable, dated, traceable, protected, and retained according to the organization's record-control process.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...

56

Verify incident records link investigation evidence, reportability decisions, causes, actions, owners, due dates, implementation evidence, and effectiveness results.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...

57

Trend incidents, near misses, severity, hazards, root causes, action types, overdue actions, recurrence, effectiveness failures, departments, shifts, and contractors where useful.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...

58

Confirm repeated causes, serious-event patterns, ineffective actions, aging corrective actions, and recurring high-potential near misses trigger systemic review and stronger prevention.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...

59

Verify incident and corrective-action performance is included in EHS objectives, resource planning, capital decisions, audit focus, and management review where appropriate.

EHS AUDIT

Audit item	Finding / status	Owner	Evidence	Action
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Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...

60

Record final audit status, major findings, reportability gaps, overdue high-risk actions, recurrence concerns, required follow-up, lead auditor, EHS owner, operations owner, and management approval.

CRITICAL

EHS AUDIT

FINAL STATUS | Enter

EHS OWNER | Enter

MANAGEMENT APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Use audit results to improve the incident system itself. Repeated causes, late investigations, weak actions, overdue closures, and ineffective controls should...