Surveillance Audit Process

A Surveillance Audit is a mandatory, periodic audit conducted after initial ISO certification to ensure that the organization's management system continues to meet the standard requirements and is being maintained and improved.

It typically occurs annually during the 3-year certification cycle, between the initial certification and the recertification audit.

PURPOSE OF SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

- Confirm the **ongoing compliance** of the management system.
- Ensure the system is **effectively implemented and maintained.**
- Review **continual improvement** efforts and **corrective actions** taken.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

1. **Audit Planning:**
- Define audit scope, objectives, and schedule.
- Select representative samples of sites, processes, and departments.

2. **Opening Meeting:**
- Introduction of audit team and agenda
- Review of previous audit results

3. **System Evaluation (Sampling Basis):**

Focus is on selected critical areas, such as:
- Internal audits and management reviews
- Corrective and preventive actions
- Customer complaints and feedback
- Performance monitoring and achievement of objectives
- Legal and regulatory compliance
- Operational control of core processes

4. **Interviews & On-Site Observations:**
- Discussions with staff
- Observation of processes
- Sampling of documents and records

5. **Review of Previous NCs (if any):**
- Check closure and effectiveness of corrective actions from the previous audit

6. **Identification of New Findings:**
- If any nonconformities, observations, or opportunities for improvement are found

7. **Closing Meeting:**
- Present findings
- Discuss next steps and timelines for any required actions

DELIVERABLES

Surveillance Audit Report, which includes:

• Summary of findings

• Nonconformities (if any)

• Auditor's recommendations

OUTCOME

• If compliant: Certification remains valid.

• If nonconformities are found:

• Corrective actions are required within a defined period.

• Failure to comply may lead to suspension or withdrawal of certification.

FREQUENCY

• Typically every 12 months

• Some certification bodies may allow a risk-based approach (e.g., ±3 months)