



Guideline

Accreditation of Contaminated Sites Auditors

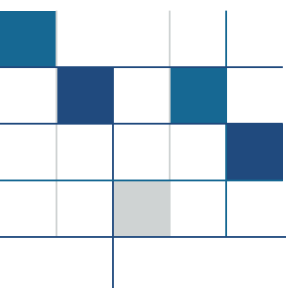
Activities regulated under the:

Contaminated Sites Act 2003

Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006

National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure
1999

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Acknowledgements

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the requirements for individuals intending to apply to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department) for accreditation as a contaminated sites auditor in Western Australia.

This document should be read in conjunction with the department's contaminated sites guidelines:

- *The Western Australian Contaminated Sites Auditor Scheme* (DWER 2024a)
- *Requirements for Mandatory Auditors' Reports* (DWER 2024b).

The contaminated sites auditor scheme operates in Western Australia (WA) within the legislative framework provided by the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (the CS Act) and the *Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006* (the CS Regulations); and the *National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999* (the NEPM).

This document provides guidance on:

- the application process
- the selection criteria and minimum requirements applicable to auditors
- the selection and accreditation process.

This guideline is intended to improve understanding of the accredited auditor scheme operating in WA. It should be referred to by environmental professionals intending to apply to the department for accreditation as an auditor in WA.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The CS Act and CS Regulations provide for the identification, recording, management and remediation of known and suspected contaminated sites in WA.

The department is responsible for administering the CS Act. This includes classifying sites based on the risk to human health and the environment, maintaining the contaminated sites database, issuing regulatory notices where appropriate action is not being undertaken voluntarily, issuing Certificates of Contamination Audit (if requested), and accrediting contaminated site auditors.

In recognition of the specialist nature of the assessment and remediation of contaminated sites, the CS Act provides for the department to accredit suitably

qualified professionals as auditors to undertake independent review of site assessments and/or remediation work carried out by other professionals.

The CS Act and CS Regulations:

- provide for the department to accredit suitably qualified individuals as auditors
- set out the requirements for the accreditation of auditors, the duties of auditors and the circumstances in which auditors must be engaged
- empower the department to issue site “sign-off or clearances” through site classifications and Certificates of Contamination Audit.

This guideline is consistent with the principles for appointment of contaminated sites auditors as outlined in Schedule B9 of the *National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure – Guideline on Competencies & Acceptance of Environmental Auditors and Related Professionals*.

3. Legislative framework

The key sections of the CS Act and the CS Regulations relating to accreditation of “a person as a contaminated sites auditor” are listed below:

CS Act	Content
s.69	Accreditation of auditors
s.70(1)	Authority of accredited auditor
s.70(2)	Department power to place conditions on the duties of an auditor
s.70(3)	Auditor must carry out duties in accordance with authority
s.71	Offences relating to accreditation, for example knowingly providing false information in order to obtain accreditation and offences relating to authority
CS Regulations	Content
r.35 – r.36	Application for accreditation as auditor
r.38	Auditors to be individuals
r.39 – r.42	Accreditation of auditors
r.44 – r.45	Renewal of accreditation
r.46	Return of authority if accreditation ceases

r.47 – r.54	Cancellation or suspension of accreditation
r.55(1)–(2)	Notification requirements in relation to accreditation
r.61, Schedule 3	Auditor Code of Conduct

Copies of all Western Australian legislation may be accessed from the [Department of Justice website](#).

4. Auditor accreditation process

4.1 Overview of application process

The department calls for applications from persons interested in applying for first-time accreditation as auditors in WA by public advertisement.¹ In general, applications for first-time accreditation are invited once every two years at the discretion of the department. As an alternative to the process described in this guideline for first-time accreditation, the department may choose to participate in a nationally harmonised accreditation process which has been agreed to by all Australian jurisdictions with equivalent schemes.

There is no restriction on the number of individuals who may be accredited as auditors in WA.

Type of application	Further information	Deadline for applications
First-time applicants	Section 4.2	Submit the completed application form with all supporting information before the closing date in the advertisement, ² including confirmation of payment of the application fee. ³ The department may also request further information required to properly consider the application. ⁴
Former auditors	Section 4.3	A person who has been previously accredited in WA but whose accreditation has ceased, may

¹ r.35 of the CS Regulations.

² r.36(1) of the CS Regulations.

³ r.36(1)(c) of the CS Regulations.

⁴ r.36(2) of the CS Regulations.

		submit an application form and fee to the department at any time. ⁵
Mutual recognition ⁶	Section 4.4	Notifications seeking registration through mutual recognition as an auditor in WA under r.40 of the CS Regulations, by persons who are already accredited as contaminated sites auditors under equivalent schemes in other Australian jurisdictions, may be submitted to the department at any time. An application fee does not apply to these notifications; however, the accreditation fee must be paid before the person carries out a function as an auditor.
Automatic deemed registration ⁷	Section 4.5	Notifications by persons who are already accredited as contaminated sites auditors under equivalent schemes in other Australian jurisdictions, and who intend to work in WA as an auditor under automatic deemed registration may be submitted to the department at any time. An application fee does not apply to these notifications.
Renewal of accreditation	Section 4.6	Auditors accredited within WA (aside from those with automatic deemed registration) must apply for renewal within the renewal period, which is the period of 70 days ending on the day the auditor's term of accreditation expires. ⁸ Renewal applications made less than 35 days before the expiry day must be accompanied by the late renewal application fee. ⁹ The department will not issue renewal reminders.

All applications and notifications (and associated correspondence) should be submitted in electronic format addressed to:

⁵ r.36(1A) and (1) of the CS Regulations.

⁶ Part 3 of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Commonwealth).

⁷ Part 3A of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Commonwealth).

⁸ r.44(1) and (1A) of the CS Regulations.

⁹ r.44 (2)(d) of the CS Regulations.

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Forms requiring a signature must be signed and scanned or an electronic signature inserted.

Example reports must be provided as separate attachments to the application.

4.2 First-time applicants

Requirements for first-time accreditation applicants	
Form A*	Auditor's application and confirmation of payment of application fee.
Form D* Supporting experts	Provide evidence demonstrating ability to access expertise or technical resources in the fields where the applicant does not personally possess such expertise or resources (referred to as "supporting experts"). Refer to section 4.6.
Civil liability insurance	Evidence of civil liability insurance cover, or an undertaking from the applicant that such cover will be obtained if the application is successful. Refer to section 4.7.
Form E* Professional referees	Nomination from two referees (not professionally associated with the applicant or the entity employing the applicant), who can confirm the applicant's experience and/or expertise in contaminated site assessment, management and remediation.
Curriculum Vitae	A current detailed Curriculum Vitae and certified copies of certificates of education/professional qualifications and memberships of any professional associations in Australia.
Project synopsis	<p>A synopsis of projects (in chronological order) in which the applicant has made a significant contribution to the design, implementation, analysis and reporting of contaminated site assessment, management or remediation, including a detailed description of the applicant's role in each case. This may also include research papers/reports/studies.</p> <p><i>If relevant for the applicant</i></p> <p>Summary information about additional reports and studies in which the applicant has made a major contribution, indicating the title of the project, the date of the report, the applicant's role</p>

	<p>and the purpose of the project. This may include mandatory auditor’s reports (include a statement from the auditor confirming the applicant’s role), research papers and other technical reports.</p>
<p>Original statement</p>	<p>A detailed statement demonstrating the applicant’s knowledge, experience and expertise in relation to the assessment of contaminated sites and environmental issues, addressing the professional experience and technical competency requirements.</p> <p>The statement should clearly demonstrate the applicant’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of the <i>principles and methods for conducting contaminated sites audits</i> • ability to meet the <i>selection criteria set out in sections 4 and 5</i> of this guideline. <p>The original statement is expected to provide a detailed demonstration of the applicant’s experience and capability, which is recommended to include discussion of the subject material (i.e. not be limited to a statement of experience or summary/paraphrasing of relevant references) in addition to examples and case studies. Cross-referencing is recommended to supporting information or where there is overlap in demonstration provided, such as a discussion which demonstrates knowledge of legislation/guidelines and capability in core/other technical competencies.</p> <p>The Curriculum Vitae, project synopsis and example reports are expected to support the applicant’s original statement to assist in demonstrating relevant professional experience, understanding of principles and methods for conducting contaminated sites audits, and ability to meet the selection criteria.</p>
<p>Example reports and statement of involvement</p>	<p>Two examples of relevant reports which were authored or substantially prepared by the applicant. The reports should demonstrate the applicant’s understanding and expertise in the assessment, remediation/validation and/or management of contaminated sites and their written communication skills. The role of the applicant in conducting the study and in preparing the report must be clearly indicated.</p> <p>Example reports should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly support the statements made by the applicant in addressing the selection criteria

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate the applicant’s technical ability to act independently using balanced professional judgement based on site-specific data and the advice of specialised support professionals when required • be prepared no more than two years before the date of application in order to be representative of the applicant’s current level of expertise. <p>If an example report (including earlier or ‘draft’ versions) has been reviewed by the department or an auditor (in the course of preparing a mandatory auditor’s report), the applicant should provide a copy of any subsequent correspondence from the department or the auditor.</p> <p>A report prepared by other technical specialists under the applicant’s “project management” is not considered suitable for this purpose.</p>
<p>Form F* Permission to reference client’s reports</p>	<p>Before submitting example reports, obtain the client’s consent. All reports will be treated as confidential and, where provided separate to the main application, will be deleted from the department’s records on completion of the application process.</p>

*Forms are available from the [department’s website](#).

Once the deadline for applications has expired, the department will evaluate the applications received in accordance with the procedure outlined in section 6 of this document.

4.3 Mutual recognition registrations

Under Part 3 of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Commonwealth), a person who is registered in one state or territory for an occupation is entitled to submit a notification seeking registration in an equivalent occupation in another state or territory with payment of relevant (accreditation) fees.

The department will accept notifications seeking registration in WA at any time from contaminated sites auditors appointed under equivalent schemes in other Australian jurisdictions.

Requirements for mutual recognition registrations	
Form B*	Mutual recognition notification seeking registration
Form D*	Provide evidence demonstrating ability to access expertise or technical resources in the fields where the applicant does not

Supporting experts	personally possess such expertise or resources (referred to as “supporting experts”). Refer to section 4.6.
Civil liability insurance	Evidence of civil liability insurance cover, or an undertaking from the applicant that such cover will be obtained if the application is successful. Refer to section 4.7.
Accreditation fee	On receipt, the department will issue a request and instructions for payment of the accreditation fee (250 fee units per year). ¹⁰ The initial accreditation period for all auditors in WA is one year.
Details of existing accreditation	<p>Details of the auditor’s existing accreditation(s), as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirmation of the state(s) or territory(s) where existing accreditation is held • confirmation that current, valid accreditation in other state(s) or territory(s) has not been cancelled, suspended or revoked • notification of any conditions or limitations associated with accreditation held by the applicant • expiry date of the accreditation held by the applicant • confirmation that the applicant is not subject to disciplinary, criminal or civil investigation, allegation, charge and/or proceedings or similar in any state or territory in relation to their position as a contaminated sites auditor • consent to make enquiries and exchange information with the authorities of state(s) or territory(s) where the applicant holds accreditation, regarding the applicant’s activities as a contaminated sites auditor.

*Forms are available from the [department’s website](#).

Once a notification seeking registration has been lodged, the department will review the information provided (usually within 30 days after lodgement) and consult the authorities in the jurisdiction(s) where the applicant holds accreditation prior to granting accreditation in WA.

4.4 Automatic deemed registration

From 1 July 2022, auditors accredited in other Australian jurisdictions may also be eligible for automatic deemed registration in WA under Part 3A of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Commonwealth). This means that where auditors are

¹⁰ r.40 of the CS regulations

accredited to operate in another state or territory and decide to operate in WA as their second state, under the automated mutual recognition (AMR) scheme they will not need to apply for recognition and pay a second accreditation fee to perform the same activities as in their home state.

Contaminated sites auditors, appointed under equivalent schemes in other Australian jurisdictions in which automatic deemed registration is in effect for contaminated land auditing, may submit notifications for automatic deemed registration in WA to the department at any time.¹¹

Requirements for mutual recognition registrations	
Form B2*	Notification – Automatic Deemed Registration

*Forms are available from the [department's website](#).

4.5 Renewal applicants

Requirements for auditors seeking renewal of accreditation in WA ¹²	
Form C*	Accreditation renewal
Form D* Supporting experts	Provide evidence demonstrating ability to access expertise or technical resources in the fields where the applicant does not personally possess such expertise or resources (referred to as “supporting experts”). Refer to section 4.6.
Civil liability insurance	Evidence of civil liability insurance cover, or an undertaking from the applicant that such cover will be obtained if the application is successful. Refer to section 4.7.
Summary of audits undertaken	A summary of all contaminated sites audits undertaken, or in progress, in WA since obtaining or renewing accreditation (also to be provided to the department on an annual basis).

¹¹ At time of publishing of this guideline, automatic deemed registration had been generally adopted in WA, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales; however, exemptions were in place (i.e. automatic deemed registration was not in effect) for contaminated land auditors in New South Wales and South Australia.

¹² Renewal applications are required to be submitted by auditors whose primary accreditation is in WA and by auditors accredited through mutual recognition under Part 3 of the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Commonwealth).

Accreditation fee	On receipt, the department will issue a request and instructions for payment of the accreditation fee (250 fee units) ¹³ per year for the period of accreditation being sought.
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*Forms are available from the [department's website](#).

Auditors accredited in WA must apply for renewal of their accreditation within the renewal period, which is the period of 70 days before the expiry of their current term of accreditation.¹⁴ Applications for renewals submitted less than 35 days prior to the expiry date are required to be accompanied by the late renewal fee.¹⁵ Auditors should note that it can take the department up to 30 days to renew accreditation; however, if the renewal application has been submitted within the renewal period, the term of the auditor's accreditation continues until the date of renewal.

It is the responsibility of auditors to apply for renewal of accreditation within the prescribed renewal period. The department will not issue renewal reminders. Where an auditor fails to renew their accreditation and their accreditation expires, the auditor will be required to reapply for accreditation.

4.6 Requirements for supporting experts

Applicants seeking accreditation as an auditor in WA are required to submit evidence demonstrating their ability to access expertise or technical resources in fields where the applicant does not personally possess such expertise or resources (referred to as the "supporting experts").

The department requires WA auditors to maintain supporting experts to address all "core areas of technical expertise" (refer to section 5 .6), where the auditor has basic proficiency but is not considered "expert". In conducting their audits, auditors must consult their nominated supporting expert(s) when the situation requires expert opinion.

Example to illustrate the appropriate use of supporting expert(s)

An auditor claiming general practitioner status in human health and/or ecological risk assessment would be expected to seek advice from their relevant supporting expert when assessing a detailed or site-specific human health or ecological risk assessment.

Application requirements regarding supporting experts

¹³ r.40 of the CS regulations.

¹⁴ r.44 of the CS Regulations.

¹⁵ Schedule 2 item 5A of the CS Regulations.

Curriculum Vitae	Current detailed Curriculum Vitae, demonstrating the supporting expert's qualifications and expertise in the area(s) nominated (including demonstration of relevant project experience), professional organisation memberships and relevant publications.
Form D* Supporting experts	Provide evidence demonstrating ability to access expertise or technical resources in the fields where the applicant does not personally possess such expertise or resources (referred to as "supporting experts").
Statement from supporting experts	For each supporting expert external to the applicant's organisation, the applicant must submit a statement that is signed by the nominated supporting expert, agreeing to provide specified expert support services to the applicant.

*Forms are available from the [department's website](#).

It is the auditor's responsibility to ensure that individuals nominated as a supporting expert meet the minimum requirements of section 6.4 in Schedule B9 of the NEPM.

The minimum requirements are:

- demonstration of a high level of expertise or knowledge in the competencies where the applicant does not personally possess such expertise or knowledge to the level required
- qualifications relevant to and supporting the nominated competencies (refer to section 5.8)
- at least eight years' relevant experience
- actively working in the field of the nominated competencies
- current membership of professional organisations/associations relevant to the field of the nominated competencies
- demonstration of an ongoing commitment to professional training and development.

The department may refuse to accept a nominated supporting expert if these requirements are not met.

Auditors should ensure that supporting experts or employers of supporting experts hold adequate civil liability insurance.

Auditors should inform supporting experts that in performing their function as an expert they should conduct themselves in accordance with the code of conduct for auditors (schedule 3 of the CS Regulations) and be aware of the confidentiality requirements in s.96 of the CS Act.

The department should be notified of any changes to an auditor's expert support team via email using the Form D available from the [department's website](#).

4.7 Auditor insurance

All auditors must be covered by civil liability insurance (or provide confirmation that cover is held on their behalf by their employer) that is adequate for the activities undertaken by the auditor.¹⁶ This requirement also applies to the auditor's supporting experts.¹⁷

Application requirements regarding civil liability insurance	
Certificate of currency	All applicants must submit evidence of current civil liability insurance and clearly state the relevant details of the cover provided before accreditation (and renewal) will be granted.
Amount of cover	<p>Applicants should carry out a risk assessment to determine the adequacy of the amount of insurance cover they require. The <i>minimum</i> amount of cover for each and every engagement is \$5 million.</p> <p>It may be appropriate for larger projects to have a substantially larger amount of civil liability insurance. It is the responsibility of the auditor to determine the appropriate amount of civil liability insurance for each project in which they are engaged.</p>
Basis of cover	<p>The policy may be written on either an occurrence basis or a claims-made basis.</p> <p>If on a claims-made basis, the applicant must also undertake to hold run-off (or equivalent) insurance that provides professional indemnity insurance cover for work conducted during the period of accreditation, and for an adequate period after accreditation has ended.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the comments made in the previous sentence, the minimum period of cover from the end of accreditation is seven years.¹⁸</p>

¹⁶ r.59A of the CS Regulations.

¹⁷ r.59B of the CS Regulations.

¹⁸ Applicants and accredited auditors should note that, in certain circumstances, civil claims could be commenced more than six years after an event/occurrence took place. Auditors should obtain professional advice (including independent legal advice) to determine if a longer period of run-off cover is appropriate for their circumstances.

No limitations on work undertaken as an auditor	<p>All applicants must ensure that exclusions relating to their civil liability insurance cover do not limit work undertaken as a contaminated sites auditor and provide a statement to this effect whenever a certificate of currency is submitted to the department for accreditation purposes.</p> <p>Applicants should be aware of potential unintended exclusions to their civil liability insurance. For example, where the certificate of currency refers to specific work without including contaminated sites auditing or refers to contaminated sites auditing in a specific jurisdiction or by a specific person without including WA or the applicant, this may be interpreted as excluding any contaminated sites auditing in WA by the applicant.</p>
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A certificate of currency confirming civil liability insurance does not have to be included with the initial application. The applicant may provide an undertaking to the department that such cover will be obtained if the application is successful. However, successful applicants will not be accredited until evidence of civil liability insurance cover (that is, an appropriate certificate of currency) and relevant details of the cover are provided.

Supporting experts

Auditors are responsible for ensuring that their supporting experts are covered by adequate civil liability insurance. Certificates of currency for all supporting experts may be required to be provided to the department before an auditor is accredited.

5. Selection criteria for accreditation as an auditor

5.1 Overview

The minimum criteria that should be considered by regulatory authorities when assessing applicants are set out in Schedule B9 of the NEPM (refer to section 6). In addition, the criteria which an applicant must satisfy in WA are set out in r.39 of the CS Regulations. In particular, the applicant must have:

- adequate theoretical and practical knowledge and skills to carry out the functions of an auditor
- access to supporting experts whose assistance would be necessary for the person to competently carry out the functions of an auditor
- adequate knowledge and understanding of relevant laws and currently accepted industry standards.

Applicants for *first-time* accreditation must demonstrate that they satisfy the selection criteria set out in sections 5.2 – 5.8.

5.2 Academic qualifications

The applicant must possess a Bachelor's or higher degree in a relevant discipline from a recognised college or university. Applicants with overseas qualifications are advised to contact the department before submitting their application to discuss any additional information or certification requirements.

5.3 Understanding WA legislation

The applicant must be able to demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure and WA legislation relating to the management of contaminated sites and environmental protection in general.

The applicant is recommended to consider the full range of legislation which is relevant to contaminated sites, and which interacts with the key national and WA contaminated sites legislation.

5.4 National and WA policies and guidelines

The applicant must be able to demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of national and WA policies and guidelines relating to contaminated site assessment and management. The principal guidelines and documents for use in the assessment and management of contaminated sites in WA are listed in Appendix A (DWER 2024b). Other authoritative technical documents may also be relevant to the assessment and management of specific sites.

It is recommended that the applicant consider the full range of policies and guidelines which are relevant to contaminated sites, and which interact with the key national and WA guidance for contaminated sites.

5.5 Relevant professional experience

The applicant should have at least eight years of experience relevant to the assessment and remediation (including management) of contaminated sites (refer to section 6.4 Schedule B9 of the NEPM). It is desirable, but not essential, that this experience includes at least two years of relevant work in Australia and two years in the role of a project manager supervising a multi-disciplinary team approach to contaminated sites assessment and management.

It is desirable, but not essential, for the applicant to have contaminated site or environmental auditing experience, for example, as a supporting expert of an accredited auditor or as an auditor's assistant.

The applicant's contaminated sites experience should be broadly based in terms of the scale of work undertaken, the range of contaminants encountered, and the scope of work performed.

In accordance with the NEPM (refer to section 6.7 Schedule B9), the department may consider persons with less than eight years of contaminated land experience if the applicant has significant years of relevant and related environmental experience, including assessment and management of major environmental issues involving complex sampling design and chemical or hydrogeological data collection and interpretation, where this experience is relevant.

The applicant should be able to demonstrate sound ability and experience in forming and managing multi-disciplinary teams, which contain the appropriate balance of expertise for assessment and management of complex sites.

Once accredited, an auditor is generally not limited in terms of the types of sites and contaminants on which they may work. For this reason, the department requires applicants to be able to demonstrate experience in the assessment and management of a broad range of contaminant types, including metals, hydrocarbons, solvents, pesticides, asbestos, ground gases and soil vapours in a variety of geological settings.

The applicant must demonstrate consistent delivery of work to an acceptable standard in accordance with the relevant contaminated sites guidelines and references therein.

5.6 Technical competencies

The applicant must be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of ***the principles and methods of conducting environmental audits.***

The applicant must be able to demonstrate extensive experience and a high level of expertise in the following ***core competencies*** listed in section 6.1 of Schedule B9 of the NEPM:

Core competencies

- assessment of contaminant exposure pathways
- contaminated site assessment and remediation including management
- evaluation and interpretation of chemical and analytical data
- soil sampling design and methodology
- soil gas sampling design and methodology
- groundwater sampling design and methodology
- identification of potential human health and environmental risks

- quality control/quality assurance procedures
- risk communication.

As stated in Schedule B9 (refer to section 6.1), the applicant should have basic proficiency in, or have access to, supporting experts with expertise in the following areas in which the applicant is not an expert, or be able to demonstrate experience and expertise relating to the competencies listed below:

Other competencies

- air quality (volatile emissions and dust) assessment relating to contamination
- contaminant fate and transport
- assessment of impacts on groundwater from contaminated sites
- environmental chemistry
- environmental sampling
- environmental toxicology
- geology
- human health and ecological risk assessment relating to contamination
- human toxicology
- hydrogeology
- identification of contaminants of concern from past and current industrial land uses
- work health and safety relating to contamination
- remediation technologies and geotechnology
- soil science
- statutory and environmental planning.

In competency areas where the applicant demonstrates basic proficiency but not an expert level of competence, the applicant must demonstrate how these competencies will be addressed to a high level of expertise in the conduct of an audit.

In conducting an audit, auditors are required to consult their nominated supporting expert(s) when the situation requires expert opinion.

5.7 Continued professional development

The applicant must be able to demonstrate a commitment to training and professional development relevant to contaminated sites. This may include active membership of one or more relevant professional organisations, private study of relevant publications, and attending relevant conferences, seminars and training courses.

Applicants should provide details and evidence of training or other professional development undertaken and learning outcomes. Applicants should be able to demonstrate how up-to-date knowledge is maintained across developments in the scientific, technical, regulatory and legal fields relevant to assessment, management and remediation of contaminated sites.

5.8 Qualifications and memberships of professional bodies

In addition to holding appropriate academic qualifications (refer to section 5.2), the applicant should demonstrate current individual membership of and/or certification from one or more professional bodies relevant to their area of expertise or professional employment in the assessment of site contamination.

Applicants (and nominated supporting experts), nominated in the specialist technical competencies such as soil science, geology, hydrogeology, human toxicology and environmental toxicology, should be able to demonstrate they hold:

- directly relevant qualifications
- individual certification or memberships with relevant professional bodies.

Examples of professional bodies in Australia which provide chartered or certified membership include:

- Australian Institute of Geoscientists
- Engineers Australia
- Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand's Certified Environmental Practitioner Scheme
- Royal Australian Chemical Institute
- Soil Science Australia.

6. Selection process for auditor accreditation

6.1 Selection panel

Under r.41 of the CS Regulations, the department may establish a selection panel of at least two panel members to assist in the assessment of applicants for accreditation.

In practice, the department establishes a selection panel whenever applicants for first-time accreditation are being assessed. The selection panel generally includes department officers and persons external to the department, including a representative of another Australian jurisdiction. In addition to the selection panel, the department seeks advice from other relevant sources to assist in decision making on the application(s).¹⁹

6.2 Preliminary assessment and short-listing of applicants

Applications which are incomplete, or do not meet the application requirements set out in this guideline, will not be considered for short-listing. Supporting documentation will be returned to the applicant; however, the application form and fee will be retained by the department. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the reason(s) the application was not successful and may reapply at a later date.

The selection panel assesses all valid applications in accordance with the application requirements set out in section 4 and the selection criteria detailed in section 5.

In assessing the applications, the selection panel may also consider other reports and correspondence held on the department's files which are relevant to the performance and professional conduct of the applicant. If the selection panel requires further information from the applicant to properly assess an application, this will be requested in writing by the department.²⁰

Applicants assessed as meeting the criteria set out in r.39 of the CS Regulations are short-listed for interview based on this preliminary assessment process.

6.3 Conflict of interest

To enable short-listed applicants to address potential conflicts of interest prior to the interview, the applicants will be informed of the membership of the selection panel. The applicant and selection panel members must disclose any relationship that may

¹⁹ r.41 of the CS Regulations.

²⁰ r.36(2) of the CS Regulations.

create, or have the potential to create, a conflict of interest in relation to the selection process.

For example, in the event that any member of the selection panel has an existing personal or professional relationship with the applicant, or is nominated to be an applicant's supporting expert, the applicant and selection panel member must notify the department and other panel members to ensure no conflict of interest issues arise.

6.4 Interview and case study exercise

Short-listed applicants will be invited by the department to attend an interview with the selection panel.²¹ During the interview, the panellists will test the applicant's ability to address issues associated with contaminated sites assessment, remediation and management related to the selection criteria.

The selection panel will interview short-listed applicants with reference to a case study. Applicants will be provided with the case study prior to the start of the interview and will be asked to address a series of related questions.

The applicant's responses will be assessed by the selection panel to determine their ability to:

- competently and objectively review data relating to the assessment
- identify the key and subsidiary risks to the environment and human health
- determine practical and scientifically sound management approaches to address the identified risks based on the information provided
- communicate this information effectively while demonstrating the logical basis of their decision-making processes
- carry out the role and responsibilities of an auditor.

The applicant may be invited to provide additional information or clarification to assist the selection panel in assessing their expertise in the assessment and remediation of contaminated sites.

The time set aside for each interview is 1.5 – 2 hours (including pre-interview case study reading time). Applicants are not permitted to contact any other person by any method during the course of the interview process (including pre-interview case study reading time).

Following the interviews, the selection panel will make a recommendation to the department as to which applicants, if any, are suitable for accreditation as auditors.

²¹ The interview is verbal only, as the applicant's written skills will have been assessed during the short-listing process.

6.5 Accreditation procedure

The department will decide to accredit an individual as an auditor in WA after considering the application, any further information requested, the recommendations of the selection panel and any advice sought from other relevant sources.²² A person will only be accredited as an auditor if the department is satisfied that the person meets the requirements of r.39 of the CS Regulations.

Successful applicants will be advised initially by telephone (followed by written confirmation) and will be asked to submit the accreditation fee (refer to section 6.6), an electronic photograph and evidence of the applicant's civil liability insurance so that their accreditation can proceed. Once the applicant has satisfied these requirements, they will receive an authorisation in writing from the department in the form of a Notice of Accreditation.²³ The Notice of Accreditation will contain a statement that the person is an accredited auditor under the CS Act, the accreditation expiry date and, if applicable, any limitations or conditions imposed on the auditor's duties.

Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the reason(s) the application was not successful and may reapply when the department subsequently calls for applications for auditor accreditation.

6.6 Accreditation fees

Accreditation of a suitable applicant as an auditor takes place once the annual accreditation fee of 250 fee units²⁴ specified in the CS Regulations has been paid.

²² r.36(2) and r.41 of the CS Regulations.

²³ s.70 of the CS Act.

²⁴ Schedule 2 item 5 of the CS Regulations, one fee unit is currently \$22.

Appendix Shortened forms

CS Act	<i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i>
CS Regulations	Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006
DWER	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation In this document, 'the department' refers to the relevant Delegated Officer(s) under the <i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i> and Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006 except when referring to the department website or a DWER form
NEPM	National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure
r	Regulation (of the CS Regulations)
s	Section (of the CS Act)
WA	Western Australia

References

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, 2021. [Assessment and management of contaminated sites](#), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Perth, Western Australia.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, 2024a, [The Western Australian Contaminated Sites Auditor Scheme](#), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Perth, Western Australia.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, 2024b, [Requirements for Mandatory Auditor's Reports](#), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Perth, Western Australia.

Websites

[Contaminated Sites Act 2003](#)

[Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006](#)

National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999, National Environment Protection Council

National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure | nep