

The Audit Process

An audit can be a valuable independent inspection of how a safety management plan (SMS) is working. An audit should be considered a qualification for a business.

Various agencies require providers to have a safety audit.

WorkSafe NZ administers the [Adventure Activities Regulations 2023](#), which require providers of high-risk activities to be audited. Similar audits are required by the Civil Aviation Authority and Maritime NZ.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) requires concessionaires to have their planning documents audited but they don't necessarily require field checks.

Adventure activity audits

These audits must be conducted by an approved audit provider – AdventureMark or Qualworx. They must work to the [New Zealand Activities Certification Scheme 2023](#), which are the rules audit providers work to.

Audit steps

The audit process has three steps:

- 1. Pre-engagement.** The formal setting up of the audit.
- 2. Audit.** There are two parts, resulting in a report:
 - Stage 1: SMS review.
 - Stage 2: Onsite evaluation.
- 3. Monitoring.** The scheme calls this *surveillance*. It can vary from a declaration of conformity with the safety audit standard to evaluations of activities by technical experts.

Audit requirements

The scheme is based on ISO/IEC 17021. Together these documents detail the requirements of audit providers, including:

- Reviewing providers against the [Safety Management System Requirements 2023](#) (the safety audit standard), which includes working to good practice (see the Scheme, appendix L).
- Verifying and documenting the qualifications, attestations, skills, and knowledge of auditors and technical experts.
- Managing auditors' potential conflicts of interest and ensuring that the auditors work to the *Code of Conduct*.
- Certifying providers (with conditions if required) and recommending registration.
- Sharing provider information with WorkSafe.

Overview

WorkSafe [registers](#) providers after reviewing audit providers' recommendations. They monitor audit providers, as does JAS-ANZ, an accreditation body.

JAS-ANZ accredits audit providers and regularly audits their work.

Other audits

If relevant, DOC accepts an adventure-activity audit when granting concessions.

However, providers of lower-risk activities need to have an audit of their SMS as a minimum. DOC recognises a wider range of [audit bodies](#) to conduct these audits.

Other agencies, such as local councils, may also require providers to gain audit approval.