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Information and documentation — Records risks — Risk assessment for records management

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National foreword

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Contents

Page

Foreword ... **iv**
Introduction ... **v**
1 Scope ... **1**
2 Normative references ... **1**
3 Terms and definitions ... **1**
3.1 Terms specific to risk ... 2
3.2 Terms specific to records ... 2
4 Core concepts ... **3**
4.1 Issues and concerns about uncertainty ... 3
5 Determining scope, context and criteria ... **4**
5.1 General ... 4
5.2 Defining the scope ... 4
5.3 External and internal context ... 5
5.3.1 General ... 5
5.3.2 External context ... 5
5.3.3 Internal context ... 5
5.4 Definition of records risk criteria ... 5
5.5 Risk description ... 6
6 Uses of risk assessment techniques ... **7**
7 Risk identification ... **7**
7.1 General ... 7
7.2 Techniques for identifying risks ... 8
7.2.1 General ... 8
7.2.2 Checklist analysis for risk identification ... 9
8 Risk analysis ... **9**
8.1 General ... 9
8.2 Techniques for analysing risks ... 10
8.2.1 General ... 10
8.2.2 Business impact analysis (BIA) ... 10
8.2.3 Human reliability analysis (HRA) ... 11
8.2.4 Bow tie analysis ... 12
9 Risk evaluation ... **13**
9.1 General ... 13
9.2 Techniques for evaluating risk ... 13
9.2.1 As low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) ... 13
9.2.2 Reliability-centred maintenance (RCM) ... 14
9.2.3 Risk indices ... 16
9.2.4 Cost/benefit analysis ... 18
Annex A (informative) **Categorization of techniques following IEC 31010** ... **20**
Annex B (informative) **Checklist of uncertainties** ... **22**
Bibliography ... **26**

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Foreword

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 11, *Archives/records management*.

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Introduction

Successful organizations identify and manage all their business risks. Identifying and managing the risks to records processes, controls and systems (records risks) is the responsibility of the organization's records professionals.

This document is intended to help records professionals and people who have responsibility for records in their organization to assess records risks.

This is distinct from the task of identifying and assessing the organization's business risks to which creating and keeping adequate records is one strategic response. The decisions to create records or not in response to general business risks are business decisions, which should be informed by the analysis of the organization's records requirements undertaken by records professionals together with business managers. The premise of this document is that the organization has created records of its business activities to meet operational and other purposes and has established at least minimal mechanisms for the systematic management of the records.

The consequence of records risk events can be the loss of, or damage to, records, which are therefore no longer useable, reliable, authentic, complete, or unaltered, and therefore can fail to meet the organization's purposes.

The document provides guidance and examples based on the general risk management process established in ISO 31000 (see Figure 1) to apply to records risks, including information on relevant risk assessment tools and techniques. It covers the risk assessment components:

a) risk identification,

b) risk analysis, and

c) risk evaluation.

This document introduces and explains selected techniques from IEC 31010 that are applicable in a records management environment (see Table A.2 for the list of techniques).

The results of the assessment of records risk should be incorporated into the organization's general risk management framework. Consequently, the organization will have better control of its records and their quality for business purposes.

This document does not deal with risk treatment. Once the assessment of records risks has been completed, the assessed risks are documented and communicated to the organization's risk management section. Response to the assessed risks should be undertaken as part of the organization's overall risk management program. The priority assigned by the records professional to the assessed risks is provided to inform the organization's decisions about managing those risks.

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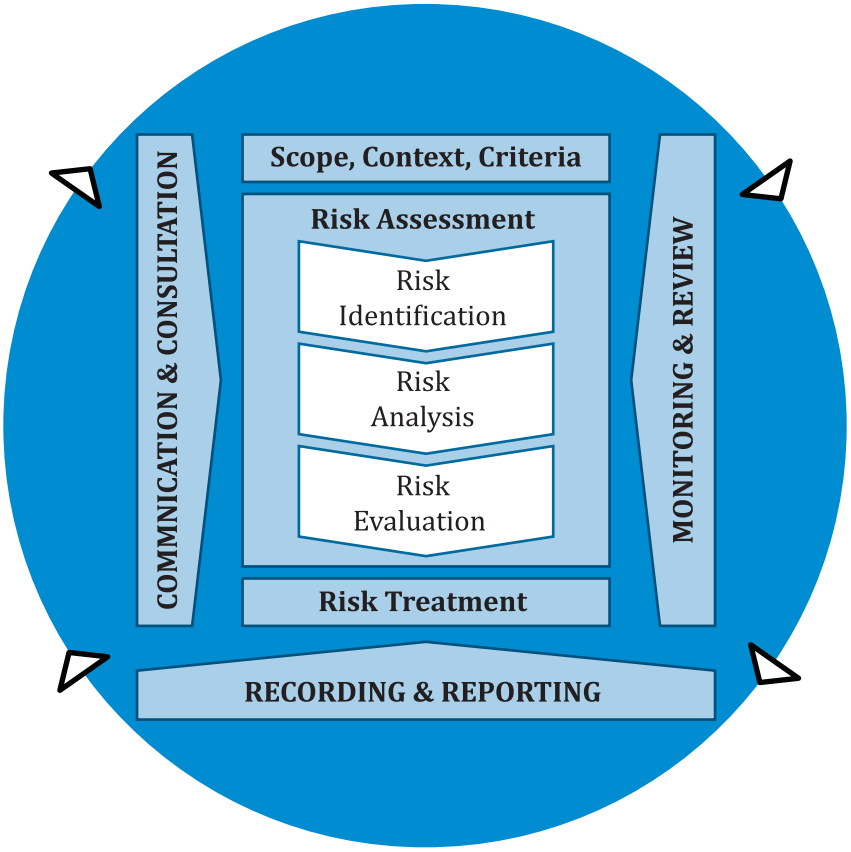

NOTE Source ISO 31000:2018, Figure 4

Figure 1 — Risk management process

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1 Scope

The document:

a) provides methods for identifying and documenting risks related to records, records processes, controls and systems (records risks);

b) provides techniques for analysing records risks;

c) provides guidelines for conducting an evaluation of records risks.

This document intends to assist organizations in assessing records risks so they can ensure records continue to meet identified business needs as long as required.

This document can be used by all organizations regardless of size, nature of their activities, or complexity of their functions and structure.

This document does not directly address the mitigation of risks, as methods for these vary from organization to organization.

It can be used by records professionals or people who have responsibility for records and records processes, controls and/or systems in their organizations, and by auditors or managers who have responsibility for risk management programs in their organizations.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 30300, *Information and documentation — Records management — Core concepts and vocabulary*

ISO 31000, *Risk management — Guidelines*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 30300, ISO 31000 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

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3.1 Terms specific to risk

3.1.1
risk
effect of uncertainty on objectives

Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and threats.

Note 2 to entry: Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

Note 3 to entry: Objectives can have different aspects and categories, and can be applied at different levels.

Note 4 to entry: Risk is usually expressed in terms of risk sources, potential events, their consequences and their likelihood.

Note 5 to entry: In the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L , the definition of risk and the Notes to entry are slightly different.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.1.26]

3.1.2
risk management
coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regards to risk

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018, 3.2]

3.2 Terms specific to records

3.2.1
authoritative record
record (3.2.2) which possess the characteristics of authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.2.3]

3.2.2
record
information created or received and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organization, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the course of conducting business

Note 1 to entry: to entry; Records are normally used in plural.

Note 2 to entry: In a management system standard (MSS) implementation, the records created to conduct and direct the management system and to document its implementation are called documented information.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.2.10]

3.2.3
records control
instrument for helping in the conduct of *records processes* (3.2.5)

EXAMPLE Examples of records controls include metadata schemas for records, business classification schemes, access and permission rules, and disposition authorities.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.5.6]

3.2.4
records management (preferred term)
recordkeeping (admitted term)
field responsible for the efficient and systematic governance of *records* (3.2.2), using *records processes* (3.2.5), *records controls* (3.2.3) and *records systems* (3.2.7)

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.4.12]

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3.2.5
records process
set of activities for managing authoritative records

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.4.13]

3.2.6
records requirements
requirements for evidence of a business function, activity or transaction and for for records processes including how, and how long, records need to be kept

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.3.2]

3.2.7
records risk
risk (3.1.1) related to *records* (3.2.2), *records processes* (3.2.5), *controls* (3.2.3) and *systems* (3.2.8)

Note 1 to entry: Risk management of records is associated with appraisal and records requirements

3.2.8
records system
information system that manages *records* (3.2.2) over time

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.6.4]

4 Core concepts

4.1 Issues and concerns about uncertainty

Uncertainty is a term which embraces many underlying concepts. Commonly recognized forms of uncertainty include decision uncertainty, which has particular relevance to risk management strategies, and which identifies uncertainty associated with value systems, professional judgement, organizational values and societal norms.

Examples of uncertainty include:

— uncertainty as to the truth of assumptions, including presumptions about how people or systems might behave;

— variability in the parameters on which a decision is to be based;

— uncertainty in the validity or accuracy of models which have been established to make predictions about the future;

— events (including changes in circumstances or conditions) whose occurrence, character or consequences are uncertain;

— uncertainty associated with disruptive events;

— the uncertain outcomes of systemic issues, such as shortages of competent staff , that can have wide ranging impacts which cannot be clearly defined;

— lack of knowledge which arises when uncertainty is recognized but not fully understood;

— unpredictability;

— uncertainty arising from the limitations of the human mind, for example in understanding complex data, predicting situations with long-term consequences or making bias-free judgments.

Not all uncertainty is able to be understood and the significance of uncertainty might be hard or impossible to define or influence. However, a recognition that uncertainty exists in a specific context enables early

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