1. **Transition**

The International Accreditation Forum (IAF) released a Transition Planning Document to provide guidance to organizations for transition from ISO 9001:2008 to ISO 9001:2015. The purpose of this document is to guide parties to make appropriate transition arrangements before the implementation of ISO 9001:2015.

**3.1 Transition Time**

Starting from the release date of ISO 9001:2015, a term of three years has been agreed upon for transition from ISO 9001:2008 by International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment. This means that after a time period of three years, ISO 9001:2008 will not remain valid.

**3.2 Transition Process**

The process of transition is relative to each of the involved parties, according to their respective needs. The key milestones of the transition process for each party are explained below:

1. **ISO (International Organization for Standardization)**

ISO has defined four key steps or milestones to undergo the transition process. These are:

1. Publish the Final Draft International Standard (FDIS). This is a document that helps quick start the transition process, provide training to auditors and carry out certification audit.
2. Publish the International Standard (IS). It is an official document to which new certificates are issued.
3. Withdraw the previous revision.
4. Renew any certificates of the previous revision and render all old certificates invalid.
5. **IAF (International Accreditation Forum)**

IAF has published a document to guide organizations for the transition process. This document includes recommendations and instructions for Certification and Accreditation bodies.

The link to the document titled “Transition Planning Guidance for ISO 9001:2015” can be found here:

<http://www.iso.org/iso/iafid9transition9001publicationversion.pdf>

1. **Accreditation Body**

Accreditation Bodies have to undergo the transition process based upon the guidance and direction provided by the IAF transition guidance document. Because every Accreditation body is autonomous, each will have its own adaptation to the guidance according to its priorities. But all members of IAF should have similar requirements and processes of transition into practice.

1. **Certification Body**

The certification body defines the transition process by integrating ISO, IAF and Accreditation Body guidance and gives recommendations to the Certified Organizations. The Certification Body is responsible from here onwards for the quality of the transition process offered to the Certified Organization. The experience and expertise of the Certification Body plays a major role in smooth and successful transition of the ISO standard.

1. **Certified Organization**

Certified organization works in collaboration with the Certificate Body and thus defines the most suitable strategy for transition process of ISO 9001: 2015.

**3.3 Gap Analysis**

It is important to identify required time and resources to implement ISO 9001:2015 within any organization. For this reason, an impact or gap analysis is highly recommended to estimate the amount of change required in organizational practices and structure, management system and organizational policies and procedures.

Organizations that already have ISO 9001:2008 implemented can conduct gap analysis with the help of the following important measures:

* Identify and address any organizational gaps in relation to the new requirements of ISO 9001:2015
* Make an action plan
* Conduct training and awareness sessions for all stakeholders who are directly or indirectly responsible for the organization’s effective functioning
* Update existing QMS according to new requirements and verify the effectiveness of the updated
* Coordinate with certification body to make arrangements for transition.

It is important to not to implement any important changes before finalizing technical content.

**3.4 Implementation Plan**

For developing a formal implementation plan, all organizations seeking to achieve ISO 9001:2015 certification can get guidance from IAF’s transition guidance document. To get the most benefit out of the changes in the 2015 revision, the following must be ensured in the development of an effective implementation plan.

* Develop detailed knowledge of the new structure, terminologies and concepts of the revision.
* Use proactive approach to evaluate the impact of changes of the revised version on the currently implemented 2008 version.
* Based upon the evaluation, take remedial actions where necessary.
* Apply the Plan-Do-Check-Act methodology for managing the implementation.

**3.5 Training and Awareness**

To effectively implement the changes in the revised version, it is important that these changes are practically understood at all levels of the organization. Special training and awareness sessions should be conducted for each level of hierarchy to make employees better understand their roles during the transition. These trainings can be arranged with the help of specialists who have experience and expertise in the field.

Senior management level trainings should focus on understanding the purpose of ISO 9001:2015 with special reference to role of leadership in the revised standard. Trainings can also help learn about the new High Level Structure and understand the difference between ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 9001:2015. The top management can devise an action plan for transition and allow auditors to learn how to audit the key changes in ISO 9001:2015.

**3.6 Existing QMS Documentation Update**

Documented information must be updated according to the changed requirements of the standard. The quality management system must include organizational size, its type of activity, complexity of interaction and processes and competence of individuals. There are also requirements to create and update documented information such as identification, suitable format and the review and consent on documented information.

**3.7 Certificate Body Involvement**

Certificate Bodies hold a very important position in the transition process. They need to keep a track of the evaluation process in the DIS stage so that they can fully verify the process during the transition audit. To ensure smooth transition, certificate body needs to brief its clients right from the DIS stage. The following guidelines help to understand the role of certificate body involvement in a better way:

* Training of auditors and verification of results to validate that the desired level has been achieved
* Regular communication with national standards bodies
* Coordinating information with other certificate bodies
* Communicating with clients and providing guidance on the transition process, encouraging them to implement the revised standard at an early stage
* Planning and conducting audit and certification to the revised standard
* Planning certification decision timings to upgrade certification documents
* Encouraging new clients to implement ISO 9001:2015
* Arranging audits for existing clients