ISO 22301

Business continuity
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Floods, cyber-attacks, IT breakdowns, supply chain issues or loss of skilled staff are just some of the possible threats to the smooth running of an organization. If not addressed effectively, they can cause disruption or even business failure. Consistent planning for what to do when disaster strikes means a more effective response and a quicker recovery. ISO 22301, *Security and resilience – Business continuity management systems – Requirements*, was the world's first International Standard for implementing and maintaining effective business continuity plans, systems and processes when it was published in 2012. Now it has been revised to bring it up to date with the latest thinking and best practice.

Who is **ISO 22301** for?

ISO 22301 is applicable to all organizations, regardless of size, industry or nature of business. It is also relevant to certification and regulatory bodies as it enables them to assess an organization's ability to meet its legal or regulatory requirements.

Based on ISO's High-Level Structure (HLS), it aligns with many other internationally recognized management system standards, such as ISO 9001 (quality management) and ISO 14001 (environmental management). As such, it is designed to be integrated into an organization's existing management processes.

ISO 22301 is useful for business continuity and risk professionals, supply chain directors, audit managers and associates, developers of corporate social responsibility reports, regulatory bodies and anyone else involved or interested in business continuity.

What are the **benefits** for my **business**?

ISO 22301 brings together international best practice to help organizations respond to, and recover from, disruptions effectively. This means reduced costs and less impact on business performance should something go wrong. What's more, companies with multiple sites or divisions can rely on the same consistent approach throughout the entire organization.

Other benefits include:
- The ability to reassure clients, suppliers, regulators and other stakeholders that the organization has sound systems and processes in place for business continuity
- Improved business performance and organizational resilience
- A better understanding of the business through analysis of critical issues and areas of vulnerability

ISO 22301 also gives a clear and detailed view of how an organization operates, offering valuable insights that are useful for strategic planning, risk management, supply chain management, business transformation and resource management.

What **improvements** were made?

ISO 22301 was revised in late 2019 to reflect ongoing changes in the business continuity world and bring more value to users. The text has also been improved to provide increased clarity and consistency. The changes include:
- The structure of the standard has been reviewed to make it easier to read and implement, with greater clarification of what is required.
- The language and terminology have been simplified to remove duplication and better reflect today's thinking in the business continuity industry.
- The High-Level Structure (HLS) has been streamlined to remain in line with all other ISO management system standards.

Can I **integrate ISO 22301** into my **existing management system**?

ISO 22301 shares a high-level structure (identical core text, terms and definitions) with other ISO management system standards such ISO 9001 (quality) and ISO 14001 (environment). This framework is designed to facilitate the integration of new management topics into an organization's established management processes.

What about **certification**?

Certification to ISO 22301 is not a requirement of the standard, but can be a useful tool to demonstrate that your organization meets its criteria and has adopted international best practice.
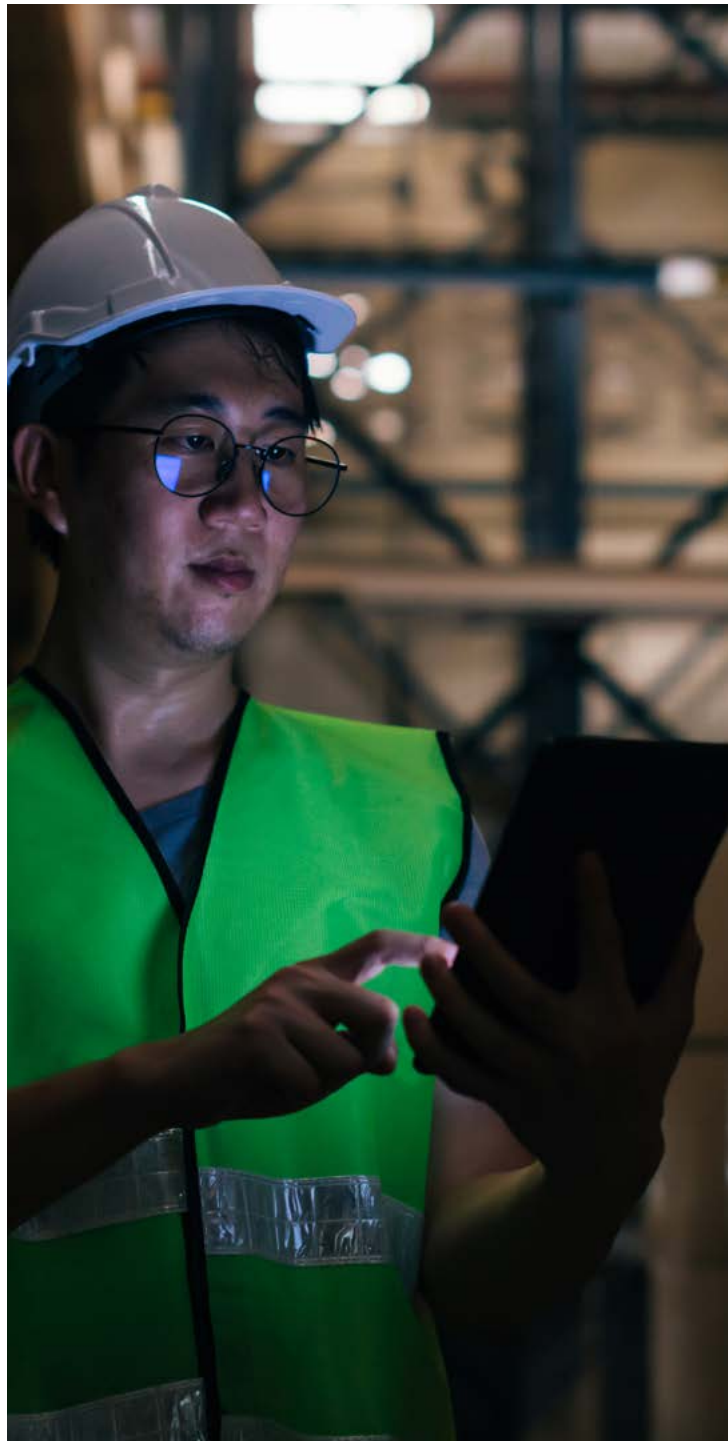
How do I get **started**?

If you are considering implementing ISO 22301, here are a few tips to get you started:
- Ensure you have buy-in from top management. A business continuity management system can only be effective if those in decision-making positions provide genuine support and treat it as a high priority.
- Do a readiness assessment to establish where you are in relation to the standard's requirements and what level of resources you will require to meet them.
- Undertake a business recovery exercise to consider carefully what you would currently do should there be a disruption to any area of your business. This will help you to be clear on how capable your organization is to respond and how ISO 22301 can help.

For more information, see our dedicated Web page on ISO management system standards (**www.iso.org/management-system-standards**) or contact your national ISO member.

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ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 164* national standards bodies. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

ISO has published more than 22 500* International Standards and related documents covering almost every industry, from technology to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare.

For more information, please visit **www.iso.org**.

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