

A S I S I N T E R N A T I O N A L

# Investigations

ANSI/ASIS INV.1-2015



# STANDARD

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## 0. INTRODUCTION

### 0.1 General

This *Standard* provides guidance for individuals and organizations conducting investigations. The *Standard* uses a systems approach for developing an investigation program consistent with the business management principles related to the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) Model.

The *Standard* provides insight and guidance for generally accepted practices including the processes and considerations one should contemplate when undertaking an investigation. As guidance, it does not contain requirements, nor is it intended for third-party certification. If implemented, the framework offered should provide users a high degree of assurance that the investigations conducted will be:

- a) Effective;
- b) Ethical;
- c) Lawful;
- d) Useful in meeting the intended objective(s);
- e) Minimally disruptive to the organization and its operations;
- f) Able to provide feedback on procedure/policy deviations; and
- g) Value added, providing the highest return on investment without compromising the investigation.

The guidance in this *Standard* provides a framework for establishing an investigation program and conducting individual investigations within the overall program. It uses the PDCA Model approach to facilitate integration of an investigation program into any risk and resilience based management system. It describes establishing and managing an investigation program as well as conducting individual investigations. The competence of investigators is the foundation for conducting reliable investigations. This *Standard* provides competence criteria for investigators conducting investigations.

Investigators understand their activities involve interacting with people; therefore, there is a need to build rapport, trust, and confidence while avoiding the creation of an adversarial atmosphere. Good investigative techniques project a sense of fairness based on an impartial approach. An investigation supports the achievement of the objectives of the organization; therefore, it adds value and may lead to opportunities for improvement. Good investigative techniques help identify and understand root causes of any problems, thereby supporting proactive improvements to avoid a recurrence.

Organizations should adapt this guidance to fit the specific needs, size, nature and level of maturity of their risk management system. This *Standard* can be used by anybody involved in the investigative process supporting the achievement of the organization's objectives.

## ***0.2 Investigation Defined***

For the purposes of this Standard:

*An investigation is a fact-finding process of logically, methodically, and lawfully gathering and documenting information for the specific purpose of objectively developing a reasonable conclusion based on the facts learned through this process.*

An investigation is conducted to reveal information and facts that can be used to support conclusions about an allegation, assertion, claim, or process. By focusing on uncovering facts and essential information needed to reach conclusions and solve problems, a properly conducted investigation can provide additional benefits, such as:

- a) Increased awareness of policies and procedures of the organization;
- b) A means to analyze and identify process and system failures;
- c) Providing actionable information to resolve problems and mitigate consequences;
- d) Providing an informed response to litigation and regulatory actions;
- e) Identifying and understanding the root causes of an incident to prevent a recurrence; and
- f) A basis for improvement of the organization's operations and activities.

This definition applies to public and private organizations. It covers the broad range of investigations, from preemployment screening, to administrative and internal inquiries, to criminal matters, to allegations of improprieties. The value of investigative capabilities may be measured in terms of recovery, restitution, risk reduction, and process improvements.

Investigations may differ in terms of legal authorities, resource allocations, and use of outcomes based on jurisdictional laws, policies, and procedures.

This *Standard* examines investigative functions which may be conducted with internal and external resources, or a combination of both.

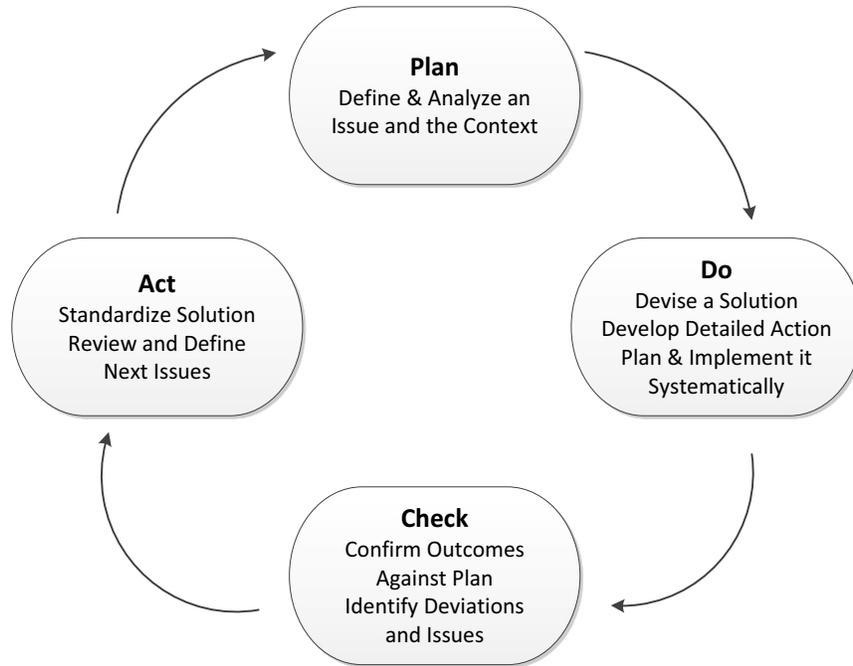
## ***0.3 Managing Investigation Programs and Individual Investigations***

The investigation program establishes the overall investigation process. The investigation program is the overarching organizational structure, resources, commitment, and documented methods used to plan and execute investigations. An effective program is built by clearly defining the investigation objectives. A competent person should manage the investigation program and the necessary resources (including qualified personnel and sufficient time) should be committed to meet the program objectives. Priority should be given to gathering and assessing information significant to the mission of the organization and meeting legal, ethical, and contractual obligations.

Individual investigations within the overall investigation program are conducted within a clearly defined scope consistent with achieving the objectives of the overall investigation program. This *Standard* also provides guidance on the preparation for and execution of individual investigations.

### 0.4 Plan-Do-Check-Act Model

This *Standard* adopts the PDCA model from Total Quality Management (TQM). Figure 1 illustrates the model.



**Figure 1: Plan-Do-Check-Act Model**

The PDCA model is a clear, systematic, and documented approach to:

- a) Set measurable policies, objectives, and targets;
- b) Methodically implement the program;
- c) Monitor, measure, and evaluate progress;
- d) Identify, prevent, or remedy problems as they occur;
- e) Assess competence requirements and train persons working on the organization’s behalf; and
- f) Provide top management with a feedback loop to assess progress and make appropriate changes to the investigation program.

Furthermore, it contributes to information management within the organization, thereby improving operational efficiency.

In conjunction with the PDCA model, this *Standard* uses a *process approach* for the investigation program. An investigation program is a compilation of a system of interrelated processes. The identification, linkages, and interactions of the processes comprising the investigation, and their management, can be referred to as a “process approach”. When designing an investigation program, it is necessary to identify and manage many activities in order to function effectively. Any managed activity using resources to enable the transformation of inputs to outputs can be considered a process. In developing the

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investigation, and individual investigations, it is important to recognize that often the output from one process directly forms the input of another process.

### **Tip #1: Investigations and PDCA**

Though the objectives, and certainly the scope of investigations vary widely, their principal purpose is always objective fact-finding. Thus the investigator must be fair, impartial, thorough and certainly purposeful. Lacking an effective process, investigators often spend more time and resources than necessary, produce inconsistent results, and create unnecessary liabilities for those they serve. No investigation, regardless of its objectives or scope, can be successful if not properly planned, lawfully executed, and within a prescribed process.

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# Investigations

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## 1 SCOPE

This *Standard* provides guidance for individuals and organizations intending to undertake the collection and examination of information pursuant to an investigation. It should be noted that although this *Standard* is intended for use in the private sector, this document may also be applicable to the processes and methods used in the public sector.

This *Standard*:

- a) Provides a framework for investigative processes that is intended to enable an organization to identify, develop and implement policies, objectives, protocols and programs;
- b) Identifies some of the jurisdictional laws and regulations or other obligations that may impact or govern the investigative process and the various ways investigations are used;
- c) Describes the process for conducting investigations consistent with the PDCA Model;
- d) Provides confidence that the information was gathered and assessed in a fair, objective, thorough, and purposeful fashion; and
- e) Provides insight and guidance regarding generally accepted practices relative to the processes and considerations for an investigation.

This *Standard* is applicable to all organizations that conduct investigations whether using persons who are internal or external to the organization. Annex E provides information for organizations considering the use of external investigators.

Furthermore, the guidance offered is sufficiently generic to be applicable to all organizations, regardless of type, size, geographic footprint or nature of their activities, products or services.

This *Standard* is a guidance document and not intended as a specification for third-party certification.

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## 2 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

This *Standard* does not make reference to any normative documents which constitute foundational knowledge for the use of this American National Standard.