

# AUSTRALIAN MINERALS INDUSTRY CODE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## INTERIM GUIDANCE NOTE ON OPTIONS

### FOR ACCREDITATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITORS

February 1999

Implementation of the Australian Minerals Industry Code for Environmental Management will be evaluated by qualified, externally-certified auditors from within the signatory company, or by accredited external auditors appointed by the company. This evaluation is separate to the regular evaluation of environmental management systems which may be conducted by appropriately trained and accredited auditors.

Environmental auditors may be registered by a number of certification bodies. These include the Quality Society of Australasia – Register of Certified Auditors (QSA-RCA), Environmental Auditor's Registration Association (EARA) of the UK, and the Environmental Auditing Roundtable (EAR) of the US. The requirements for accreditation involve formal education, auditor training, and a specified duration of work and practical auditing experience, although none of these organisations are directly comparable. The International Auditor Training and Certification Association (IATCA) currently has a working group, chaired by QSA-RCA, made up of a number of these organisations to develop uniform criteria for certifying environmental auditors.

The Victorian Environment Protection Authority also has a register of environmental auditors, but this specifically covers auditor certification of site contamination assessment and remediation. Places for the register are advertised annually. The New South Wales Environment Protection Authority currently uses the Victorian register, but is considering adopting its own system.

As an example, the following information details the requirements of the QSA Register of Certified Auditors has three levels of auditor certification: Associate Environmental Auditor; Environmental Auditor; and Senior Environmental Auditor. QSA-RCA uses the ISO 14012 standards as a guide to the qualification of environmental auditors. All levels require formal education in the form of a degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant discipline, or professional membership of an institution which has similar academic/technical qualification requirements.

All levels also require auditor training, including formal assessment in the following areas:

- auditing skills;
- environmental management standards;
- relevant environmental law, regulations and government policies;
- principles for identifying and assessing environmental aspects and impacts;
- relevant ecosystems;
- social and cultural environmental values; and
- pollution prevention and abatement technology and techniques.

Work experience requirements vary between levels. An Associate Environmental Auditor is required to have two years' minimum full-time work experience including at least one year of environmental experience. Environmental Auditors require at least five years' work experience with at least three years' environmental component, and Senior Environmental Auditors must have seven years' experience with at least five years' environmental experience. In addition an Environmental Auditor will have done 20 days' auditing on site. A Senior Environmental Auditor must have completed an additional fifteen days as leader of an audit team.

A sponsor for each applicant is required to have evidence or personal knowledge of the elements of the information contained within the application.

It is important to be aware that RCA certified auditors are listed in the Register according to their specialised experience in auditing. The audit categories include, but are not limited to, Environmental Management Audit, Environmental Management System (EMS) Audit, Due Diligence Audit, Environmental Financial Audit, Compliance Audit, Waste Audit, Energy Audit, Contaminated Site Audit, and Facilities and Process Audit. In addition, certified auditors must list the particular industries in which they have verified audit experience, and this information is also included in the Register. Mining is only one of 27 such industry categories.

RCA auditors are expected to maintain their competencies through participating in audits and undertaking appropriate continuing professional development. Re-certification is required every two years following certification.

#### **CONTACT DETAILS**

The following auditor certification bodies may be contacted to obtain information about their individual accreditation requirements. This document will be a dynamic one, and if there are any comments or additions to this list, please contact the Secretariat of the Code at the Minerals Council of Australia on 61 2 6279 3600.

#### **Quality Society of Australasia – Register of Certified Auditors (QSA-RCA)**

Ms Lucy McClean

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Crows Nest NSW 2065

Phone: 02 9901 9940

Fax: 02 9901 4677

Internet: [www.qualitysociety.org.au/~qsa](http://www.qualitysociety.org.au/~qsa)

#### ~~Australian Environmental Auditors Certification Registration Organisation (AEACRO)~~

~~e/ Chris Davies (Convener)~~

~~Executive Director~~

~~Australian Water and Wastewater Association~~

~~22 Kooyong Rd~~

~~Caulfield North VIC 3161~~

~~Phone: 61 3 9509 2748~~

~~Fax: 61 3 9509 0243~~

#### **Environmental Auditing Roundtable (EAR)**

35888 Mildred Avenue

North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039

USA

Phone: 1 216 327 6605

Fax: 1 216 327 6609

e-mail: cc004250@interramp.com

**NSW Environment Protection Authority Register for Contaminated Sites**

P O Box 1135

Chatswood NSW 2057

Phone: 02 9795 5000

Fax: 02 9325 5678

Contact: Catherine Dwyer or Bruce Markey

Internet:

**Victorian Environment Protection Agency**

477 Collins Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

Contact: Mr Jim Clements, VEPA: 03 9628 5533

For Environmental Auditor guidelines and application details for industrial sites:

Phone customer services: 03 9628 5622