

ISM Code Lead Auditor and DPA Practice Course

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Overview

The ISM Code Lead Auditor and DPA Practice Course is a one-week advanced course for designated persons, ship managers, superintendents, SMS auditors, compliance functions, and senior officers who leave with an ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan. The course integrates ISM governance, DPA oversight, ship-shore controls, audit evidence, corrective action, emergency interfaces, and management review. Agile Leaders Training Center delivers this course on ISM Code audit leadership and DPA practice.

Who Should Attend

- Shore management functions responsible for safety management system governance and resources
- Designated person functions responsible for ship-shore communication, monitoring, and escalation
- Marine assurance functions responsible for audit planning, evidence, findings, and follow-up
- Fleet technical and operational functions responsible for procedures, maintenance, and risk controls
- Shipboard leadership functions responsible for implementation, reporting, drills, and review

The course assumes participants contribute to maritime safety management or assurance and leaves out flag authorization, classification decisions, and certification approval.

Departments and Industries

The course supports ISM assurance decisions across vessel operations and shore management.

- Marine operations and fleet management departments
- Safety, quality, risk, and compliance functions
- Technical management and vessel maintenance teams
- Shipping, offshore support, and passenger vessel operations
- Port services and maritime logistics organizations

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Analyze ISM Code responsibilities across ship and shore
- Evaluate SMS operational, risk, and emergency controls
- Build a risk-based management system audit plan
- Apply evidence, interview, sampling, and finding methods
- Diagnose nonconformities and evaluate corrective actions
- Create an ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan

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Course Agenda

Day 1: ISM Governance and DPA Oversight

- ISM Code Purpose Objective and Requirement Map
- Company Master and DPA Responsibility Matrix
- Safety Management System Document Hierarchy
- Ship-Shore Communication and Escalation Protocol
- ISM Risk and Control Register

Day 2: Operational Safety Management Controls

- Critical Shipboard Operation Procedure Map
- Vessel Maintenance Defect and Reporting Workflow
- Emergency Preparedness Drill and Response Matrix
- Incident Hazard and Nonconformity Reporting Flow
- Operational Control Effectiveness Review Checklist

Day 3: Lead Audit Planning and Evidence

- ISO 19011:2026 Audit Principle Application Guide
- Risk-Based SMS Audit Program and Scope Plan
- Audit Criteria Sampling and Trail Selection Matrix
- Interview Observation and Document Evidence Triangulation
- Audit Finding and Evidence Traceability Record

Day 4: Corrective Action and Management Review

- Nonconformity Classification and Root Cause Method
- Corrective Action Ownership and Effectiveness Test
- DPA Trend Monitoring and Escalation Dashboard
- Safety Management Review Input and Decision Pack
- Ship-Shore Assurance Reporting and Follow-Up Protocol

Day 5: ISM Assurance Practice

- Suggested Exercise: ISM Responsibility and Control Mapping
- Suggested Exercise: SMS Audit Plan and Evidence Challenge
- Suggested Exercise: Interview Finding and Nonconformity Simulation
- Suggested Exercise: Corrective Action and Management Review Test
- Capstone Exercise: ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan

Practical Exercises

The course includes suggested activities for applying ISM audit and DPA decisions across ship and shore operations.

- Suggested activity: map company, master, and DPA responsibilities to controls, records, and escalation routes.
- Suggested activity: build an SMS audit trail and test evidence from operational and emergency scenarios.
- Suggested activity: draft a nonconformity, analyze its cause, and evaluate a corrective action.
- Suggested activity: present an ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan with review and follow-up decisions.

FAQs

Who suits the ISM Code Lead Auditor and DPA Practice Course?

Designated persons, marine managers, superintendents, SMS auditors, compliance functions, and senior officers suit the course; it assumes involvement in safety management implementation or assurance.

How does ISM lead auditor practice differ from general maritime safety training?

ISM lead auditor practice evaluates a documented management system through criteria, evidence, findings, corrective action, and follow-up rather than focusing only on individual safety procedures.

What evidence supports an ISM safety management system audit?

ISM audit evidence can include controlled procedures, operational records, maintenance and defect reports, drill records, incident reports, interviews, observations, previous findings, corrective actions, and management review decisions.

How does a DPA support ISM assurance?

A DPA supports ISM assurance by monitoring safety and pollution-prevention activities, maintaining ship-shore communication, identifying resource and support needs, escalating concerns, reviewing trends, and following corrective actions.

What belongs in an ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan?

An ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan links responsibilities, risks, operational controls, audit scope, evidence trails, findings, corrective actions, DPA monitoring, escalation, management review, and follow-up.

Conclusion

Participants leave with an ISM Safety Management Assurance Plan connecting ship-shore responsibilities, operational controls, audit evidence, corrective action, and management review. The work product turns assurance expectations into defined activities, owners, records, and escalation points. It supports traceable oversight and consistent improvement decisions across the safety management system.

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