Performance and Training Evaluation Procedure For AMS Auditors

1 Purpose

This document sets forth the Agricultural Marketing Service Industry Services Audit and Accreditation Programs' (AMS ISAAP) policies and responsibilities for training and performance evaluations of the AMS Auditors and AMS Auditors-in-Training who perform audits or assessments under the AMS ISAAP.

2 Scope

This document applies to the performance and training evaluation process for AMS Auditors and AMS Auditors-in-Training. Also, subcontractors identified in either the AMS Branch Audit Management Program or the AMS Branch Accreditation Management Program shall have an equivalent system for evaluating auditors.

3 References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

3.1 AMS Industry Services Audit and Accreditation Programs Manual (AMS 1)
3.2 AMS Auditor Criteria (AMS 1C)
3.3 AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet (AMS 1C1A)
3.4 AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet (AMS 1C1B)
3.5 ISO 19011:2002 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing

4 Policy

The AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet and AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet (Evaluation Worksheets) are the documents that an AMS Branch shall use to record the knowledge, abilities, and/or performance of AMS Auditors-in Training and AMS Auditors.

5 Definitions

5.1 AMS Auditor: An employee who has met all of the Fundamental Requirements and Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program (either a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program).

5.2 AMS Auditor-in-Training: (1) An employee who has met the Fundamental Requirements for an AMS Auditor, but has not met all the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program (either a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program); or (2) An AMS Auditor who has successfully met the Fundamental Requirements and the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program is considered an AMS Auditor-in-Training when he/she is training to meet the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for another Specific Program. In this instance, the AMS Auditor must also successfully complete the Specific Program Training as defined by the AMS Branch.

5.3 Assessment: A systematic, independent, and documented process for evaluating the adequacy of program or system documentation, or the evaluation of the completeness of implementation of a documented program or system. The evaluation determines an applicant's ability to meet a Specific Accreditation Program.

5.4 Audit: A systematic, independent, and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the criteria are fulfilled. The evaluation determines an applicant's ability to meet a Specific Audit Program.

5.5 Desk Appraisal**:** An evaluation of an AMS Auditor's performance determined by reviewing documented work, such as: audit reports, audit plans, or other applicable records or documents.

5.6 Evaluator: A person knowledgeable of the policies and procedures applicable to the Specific Audit Program or the Specific Accreditation Program for which the audit or assessment is conducted. An evaluator usually is a Team Leader, but may be a supervisor, trainer, or a program manager.

5.7 Specific Program: Either a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program.

5.8 Witness Appraisal: An evaluation where an evaluator attends an audit or assessment as an observer for the purpose of evaluating the AMS Auditor's performance in conducting the audit or assessment.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 AMS Auditor-in-Training and AMS Auditor Responsibilities

6.1.1 Ensure he/she has a clear understanding of his/her expected knowledge, abilities, and/or performance, as applicable, and request clarifications, as necessary.

6.1.2 Seek feedback from the evaluator as soon as possible after training occurs.

6.1.3 Initial and date the applicable Evaluation Worksheet and return to the evaluator via mail, e-mail or fax. This may be an electronic acknowledgment; however the corresponding e-mail shall be attached to the worksheet for recordkeeping. If the Audit Employee disagrees with the annotated accomplishments, concerns, problems, and/or the overall rating, then the Audit Employee must submit a documented reason to the evaluator.

6.1.4 Take steps to improve knowledge, abilities, or performance that is identified as not meeting expectations or otherwise needing improvement.

6.2 Evaluator's Responsibilities

6.2.1 Conduct Training Evaluations, Witness Appraisals, and Desk Appraisals, as applicable.

6.2.1 Prepare the applicable Evaluation Worksheet for each designated evaluation.

6.2.2 Annotate accomplishments, concerns, and problems on the applicable Evaluation Worksheet.

6.2.3 Determine the overall rating for training and/or performance.

6.2.4 Mail, e-mail, or fax the applicable Evaluation Worksheet to the Audit Employee and his/her supervisor as soon as possible after performing the evaluation, usually within one week.

6.2.5 Obtain the Audit Employee's acknowledgment of the applicable Evaluation Worksheet. If the Audit Employee disagrees with the annotated accomplishments, concerns, problems, and/or the overall rating, obtain a documented reason from the Audit Employee.

6.3 Supervisor's Responsibilities [Rating Official for Employee Performance Appraisal (AD-435)]

6.3.1 Monitor the Audit Employee's knowledge, abilities, and/or performance during Training Evaluations, Witness Appraisals, Desk Appraisals, other communications, and through Evaluation Worksheets provided by other evaluators, as applicable.

6.3.2 Assist Audit Employees in improving knowledge, abilities, and/or performance identified as not meeting expectations or otherwise needing improvement.

6.3.3 Compile Evaluation Worksheets for each Audit Employee and use these evaluations to assist in determining their mid-term and annual Employee Performance Appraisal.

6.3.4 Discuss any "Unsatisfactory" overall rating or individual element rating with the Audit Employee as soon as possible after notification of the rating.

6.3.5 Notify the AMS ISAAP Program Manager of the results of an Audit Employee's evaluations. The AMS ISAAP Program Manager should be notified of any "Unsatisfactory" rating as soon as possible after notification of the rating.

6.4 AMS Branch Responsibilities

6.4.1 Track and assimilate all Evaluation Worksheets to ensure that AMS Auditors conducting audits or assessments have received the required training, possess the required knowledge and abilities, and are performing as expected to meet the requirements of the AMS Auditor Criteria.

6.4.2 Provide summaries, evidence of training, Evaluation Worksheets, or other data to the AMS ISAAP Program Manager upon request.

7 Frequency of Evaluation Worksheets

7.1 AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet

The AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet shall be used for training evaluations. It shall be used to verify that training was completed, and to record the knowledge and abilities of the AMS Auditor-in-Training. It shall be completed by the evaluator <u>each time</u> an AMS Auditor-in-Training participates in an audit or assessment.

7.2 AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet

7.2.1 An AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet shall be used for performance evaluations. It shall be used to verify an AMS Auditor's knowledge, ability, and performance. It shall be completed by the evaluator at least annually (one of them must be concurrent with the annual employee performance appraisal) for each Specific Program in which the AMS Branch considers the AMS Auditor qualified.

a) A Desk or Witness Appraisal shall be performed at least annually for each Specific Program.
b) A Witness Appraisal shall be conducted at least once every 3 years for each Specific Program.

8 Determining Overall Rating for Evaluation Worksheets

8.1 Two-level Rating System

A two-level rating system, “Satisfactory” and “Unsatisfactory”, shall be used to evaluate training or performance.

8.2 Criteria to Determine Overall Rating for an AMS Auditor-in-Training

8.2.1 Satisfactory means the AMS Auditor-in-Training meets the expected knowledge and abilities. The overall criteria are

a) All the individual elements are rated “2” and
b) No individual element is rated “1”.

8.2.2 Unsatisfactory means the AMS Auditor-in-Training does not meet the expected knowledge and abilities. If any individual element is rated “1,” the overall rating shall be Unsatisfactory.

8.3 Criteria to Determine Overall Rating for an AMS Auditor

8.3.1 Satisfactory means the AMS Auditor meets the expected knowledge and performance. The overall criteria are

a) All the individual elements are rated “2” and
b) No individual element is rated “1.”

8.3.2 Unsatisfactory means the AMS Auditor does not meet the expected knowledge and performance. If any individual element is rated “1,” the overall rating shall be Unsatisfactory.

9 Failure to Demonstrate Satisfactory Knowledge, Ability, and/or Performance

9.1 Training

An AMS Auditor-in-Training receiving an overall rating of Unsatisfactory for a Specific Program shall be required to perform 2 consecutive audits or assessments for the Specific Program under the supervision of an evaluator to receive guidance and training in the unacceptable evaluation element(s).

a) Both evaluations after the Unsatisfactory rating shall be prepared using the AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet.
b) If the result of the 2nd evaluation continues to be Satisfactory, then:
   1) The AMS Auditor-in-Training shall not be qualified as an AMS Auditor
   2) An AMS Auditor who is training for the Specific Program shall not be considered qualified for the Specific Program.

9.2 Performance

AMS Auditors are required to perform at an overall Satisfactory level.

9.2.1 An AMS Auditor receiving an overall rating of Satisfactory for a Specific Program shall be required to perform the next two consecutive audit or assessment assignments for the Specific Program under the supervision of an evaluator to receive guidance and training in the unacceptable evaluation element(s).

a) The first evaluation after the Unsatisfactory rating shall be prepared using the AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet.
b) The 2nd evaluation shall be prepared using the AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet. If the result of the 2nd evaluation continues to be Unsatisfactory, the employee shall not be considered a qualified AMS Auditor for that Specific Program.

9.3 The AMS Branch may take further action based on the Evaluation Worksheets. For example, the AMS Branch may develop alternate training programs to bring employees up to an acceptable knowledge, abilities, and/or performance level necessary to meet the AMS Auditor Criteria.

10 Records

The AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation Worksheet and the AMS Auditor-in-Training Worksheet records shall be maintained by the AMS Branch for evidence of meeting the AMS Auditor Criteria for the Specific Program.