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ISO 14001:2026

Environmental Aspects Register — Training

F0612-01_Aspect_Identification_Register.xlsx · G0612-01_Environmental_Aspects_Register_User_Guide.docx

How to identify, score, and control environmental aspects — Clause 6.1.2 from first identification to post-control reassessment

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Overview

Why aspect identification matters — what the register produces and how it drives operational control

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What the Aspects Register Delivers

The register produces three interconnected outputs — a systematic aspect inventory, defensible significance scoring, and pre/post-control evidence that demonstrates the EMS actually reduces environmental impact.

Deliverable 1 — Systematic aspect inventory across activities, products, services

Every aspect captured with category, process, impact description, operating condition, and lifecycle stage. Covers normal, abnormal, AND emergency conditions — a Clause 6.1.2 requirement that is a frequent audit finding when omitted. Provides defensible evidence of identification completeness.

Deliverable 2 — Significance scoring with Legal as a multiplier

Significance = Legal × (Impact + Quantity + Frequency). Any aspect scoring 23 or above is auto-flagged as Significant and MUST have operational controls. The Legal multiplier means regulatory exposure dominates the score — exactly as ISO 14001:2026 intends.

Deliverable 3 — Pre-control vs post-control evidence of mitigation

Every significant aspect is re-scored after operational controls are in place. Post-control scores demonstrate the EMS actually reduces impact — not just identifies it. Legal should drop to 2 (Compliant) once controls bring the organisation into full regulatory compliance for that aspect.

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Aspect vs Impact — The Critical Distinction

Getting aspect and impact the right way round is the foundation of the register. Aspect is the cause (something the organisation does); impact is the effect (change to the environment). Confusing them is the most common Clause 6.1.2 finding.

ASPECT

The cause — what your organisation does

- An element of an activity, product, or service
- That CAN interact with the environment
- Examples: VOC solvent use, HGV fleet operation
- Generation of effluent, diesel generator test runs
- Something YOU control or influence — Column D

IMPACT

The effect — change to the environment

- A change to the environment — adverse or beneficial
- Wholly or partly resulting from the aspect
- Examples: reduced air quality, watercourse pollution
- Greenhouse gas emissions, resource depletion
- Captured separately from the aspect — Column F

WHERE TO LOOK

Sources of aspects across the lifecycle

- Design of facilities, processes, products, services
- Raw material acquisition and extraction
- Operation and maintenance of facilities and assets
- Transport, storage, use, and end-of-life treatment
- Waste management — re-use, recycling, disposal

Every row needs BOTH an Aspect Description (Column D) and an Impact Description (Column F). Leaving one blank is the most frequent register defect auditors find — it signals the team hasn’t separated cause from effect in their thinking.

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The Four Scoring Dimensions — Each Scored 1 to 4

Four dimensions drive the significance score. You enter all four on a 1–4 scale; the register calculates Significance, Rank, and the Significant flag automatically.

Dimension (enter 1–4)	What each score means
Impact — Column I	1 Harmless → 4 Severe / potentially fatal or catastrophic
Legal — Column J (the multiplier)	1 No relevant law → 4 Breach of legislation
Quantity — Column K	1 Very low quantity → 4 Large release / permit breach
Frequency — Column L	1 Once in 10 years → 4 At least daily
Significance — Column M (auto-calculated)	Legal × (Impact + Quantity + Frequency) — range 3–48
Significant? — Column O (auto-flagged at 23)	Score ≥ 23 triggers the Significant flag automatically

Never overwrite the Significance column (M) — it is a formula. Enter only the four input scores; the register calculates significance, rank, and the significant flag. Every significant aspect (≥23) MUST have operational controls entered in Column Q.