



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 5665**

**Consumer incident investigation —  
Requirements and guidance**

*Analyse des incidents affectant les consommateurs — Exigences  
et recommandations*

**First edition**

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Project Committee ISO/PC 329, *Consumer incident investigation guideline*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

The objective of this document is to provide a process to any person or any organization of any size, whether it is public, private or not-for-profit, to investigate consumer incidents in order to prevent them from occurring in the future.

To prevent incidents from recurring, it is essential to conduct incident investigations that can lead to effective measures.

Some manuals and guides describing the principles and methods of incident investigation already exist in many fields (e.g. the aviation industry). Even though the fields are different, the literature have a common investigative purpose – to analyse the causal factors leading to the incident and propose preventative measures.

However, the development of effective incident investigation guidelines has yet to include incidents that affect consumers involving the use of products, services or facilities. These incidents can occur anywhere.

This document focuses on the investigation of consumer incidents. Thus, the incident investigation organization can trust other organizations conducting investigations according to this document. It would activate data sharing, respecting confidentiality policy or regulation, among organizations including full and complete data and related information on consumer incidents. This document encourages the full and complete sharing of information arising from an investigation, including the final report and all of the data developed during the investigation.

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# Consumer incident investigation — Requirements and guidance

## 1 Scope

This document provides general requirements and recommendations on the principles, procedures, and methods for investigating incidents where there have been injuries, illnesses, damage to health, fatalities to consumers, damage to property or environmental damage related to the use of products, services or facilities by consumers.

NOTE 1 These incidents can occur anywhere.

This document is applicable to any person or any organization of any size, whether it is public, private or community-based.

NOTE 2 This document is not limited to incidents while products, services or facilities are in use, but also includes incidents that occur when products, services or facilities are not in use, such as during transportation or storage by consumers.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### causal factor

condition, event, omission, deficiency or action that contributed directly to the incident

### 3.2

#### conflict of interest

situation where business, financial, family, political or personal interests can interfere with the impartial judgment of persons in carrying out their duties for the *incident investigation organization* (3.10)

### 3.3

#### consumer

individual member of the general public purchasing or using products, services or facilities for private purpose

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.2 modified — "property" was deleted from the definition "facilities" has been added to the definition.]

**3.4  
consumer incident  
incident**

occurrence, condition or situation that resulted in, or can result in injuries, illnesses, damage to health, or fatalities to *consumers* (3.3), damage to property, or an environmental damage related to use of products, services or facilities by consumers

Note 1 to entry: The term “accident” is used in some sectors as a synonym for incident but it is not used synonymously in this document.

**3.5  
consumer incident investigation  
incident investigation  
investigation**

series of processes to collect as much *data* (3.6) as possible related to the incident to be investigated, to understand the events that occurred, to analyze the factors, to identify or estimate the causes and factors of the incident, and to develop and submit *recommendations* (3.13) on measures to prevent the incident from recurring

**3.6  
data**

information collected during the course of an investigation for reference or analysis

Note 1 to entry: Data can be in, but is not limited to, the following forms: documents, records, dictations, interview transcripts, photographs, videos, materials, instruments, tools, statistical information, analytical results, research data, papers, hospital records and coroner’s records, social media posts.

Note 2 to entry: Data can include discovery of non-incident related data that, although not directly related to the incident, can potentially pose a hazard or identify a deficiency.

[SOURCE: CSA Z1005-17:2017, 3.1]

**3.7  
direct cause**

last *causal factor* (3.1) in the chain of causation leading to the incident

Note 1 to entry: There can be more than one direct cause.

**3.8  
harm**

injury or damage to the health of people, or damage to property or the environment

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.1]

**3.9  
human error**

discrepancy between the human action taken or omitted, and that intended or required

[SOURCE: IEC 62740:2015, 3.1.10]

**3.10  
incident investigation organization**

organization whose purpose is to conduct *consumer incident investigations* (3.5)

**3.11  
incident investigation team**

people assigned by an *incident investigation organization* (3.10) to perform *consumer incident investigations* (3.5)



### 3.12

#### **reasonably foreseeable misuse**

use of a product or system in a way not intended by the supplier, but which can result from readily predictable human behaviour

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.7, modified — Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been deleted.]

### 3.13

#### **recommendation**

advice to the relevant department or organization regarding matters identified as needing to be corrected to prevent recurrence as a result of the incident investigation

Note 1 to entry: Corrective actions to remove potential for *harm* (3.8) and to reduce *risk* (3.14) can include, but are not limited to: additional product or facility redesign, instructions, warning statements, signage, service procedures, training for service providers and organizational management issues.

### 3.14

#### **risk**

combination of the probability of occurrence of *harm* (3.8) and the severity of that harm

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.9, modified — Note 1 to entry has been deleted.]

### 3.15

#### **root cause**

*causal factor* (3.1) or *underlying factor* (3.17) with no predecessor, that is relevant for the purpose of the investigation

Note 1 to entry: An incident normally has more than one root cause.

### 3.16

#### **safety**

freedom from *risk* (3.14) which is not tolerable

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.14]

### 3.17

#### **underlying factor**

condition, event, omission, deficiency or action that contributed indirectly to the incident

Note 1 to entry: Underlying factors are factors, if eliminated, that would not necessarily prevent the incident, but can help prevent future incidents.

Note 2 to entry: Underlying factors include management and organizational factors.

Note 3 to entry: Some documents apply the term “contributing factor” to this definition.

### 3.18

#### **vulnerable consumer**

*consumer* (3.3) who can be at greater *risk* (3.14) of *harm* (3.8) from products, services or facilities due to their demographic, level of literacy, physical condition or limitations, or inability to access product *safety* (3.16) information

[SOURCE: ISO 10377:2013, 2.30, modified — “service or facility.” has been added and “age” has been replaced by “demographic in the definition.]

## 4 Principles of consumer incident investigation

### 4.1 General

The incident investigation process described in this document is shown in [Figure 1](#). Each stage in the process is discussed in detail in the subclauses of [Clause 4](#). [Figure 1](#) includes the relevant clause numbers at each step to help find the relevant information.

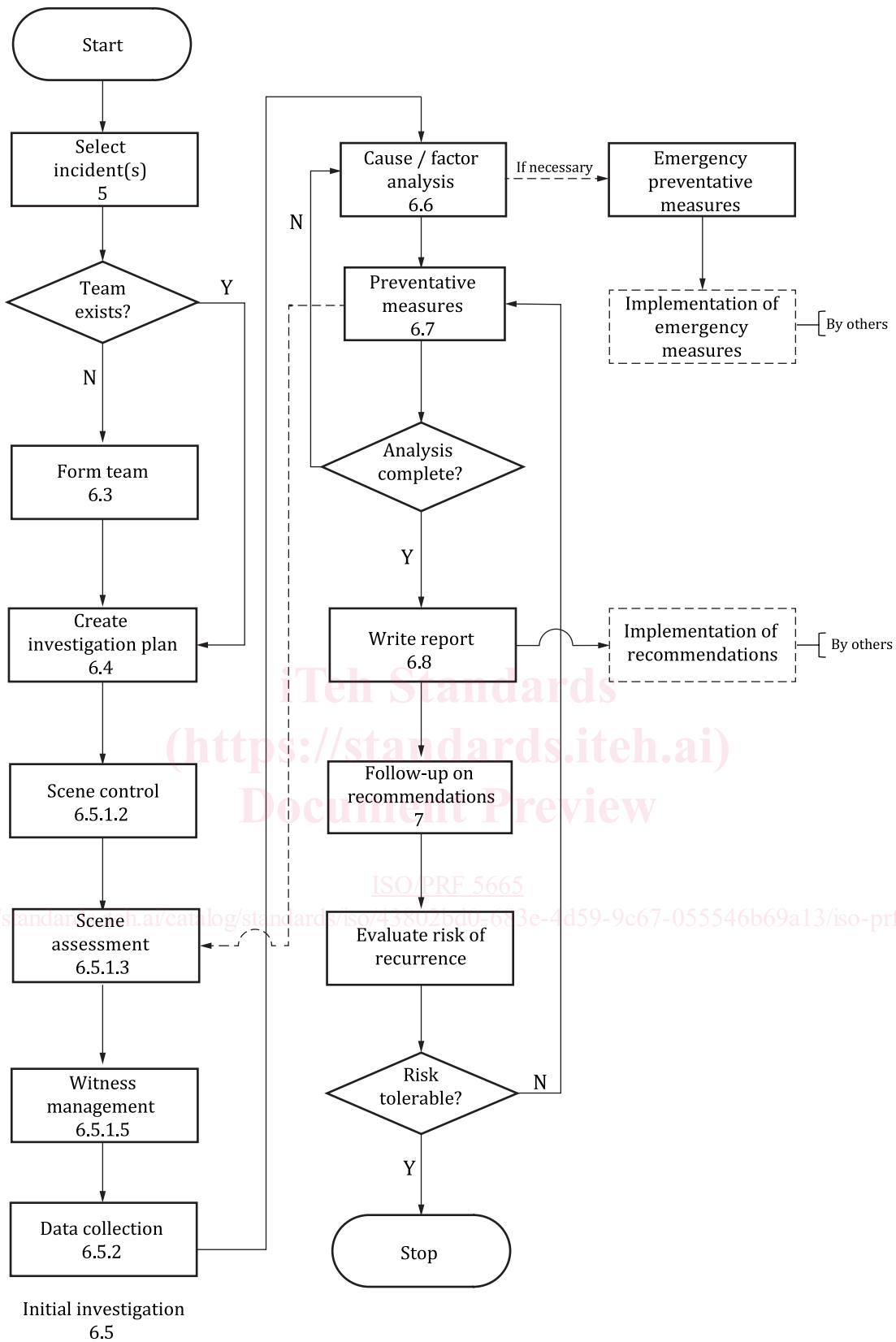


Figure 1 — Consumer incident investigation process

## 4.2 Objective

The sole objective of the investigation of an incident is the prevention of further incidents. It is not the purpose of this activity to apportion blame or liability.

## 4.3 Mission

The mission of an incident investigation team is the identification of hidden risk factors, improvement of the safety of the organization, prevention of the recurrence of incidents widely and ultimately to contribute to the advancement of safety in society.

The mission of the incident investigation team is encapsulated in these goals:

- the analysis of the causes and factors related to the incident under investigation,
- the determination of safety measures to prevent the recurrence or to reduce the severity of the same or similar incidents,
- to make recommendations to the organization, department regulatory authorities, standardization bodies and those involved in the incident where appropriate, and
- to verify the results after making recommendations.

Through these activities the incident investigation can contribute to the improvement of consumer safety.

In addition to investigating the cause of the incident, the mission shall clarify the factors contributing to the increase in damage.

NOTE See ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 4.1 and 4.2 for guidance on the use of the terms “safety” and “safe”.

The incident investigation team shall achieve the mission goals by following the evidence as far as possible before coming to any conclusions.

Recommendations shall include at least one of the following two types:

- a) measures to prevent recurrence in a narrow sense: measures to prevent the recurrence of the same or similar incidents based on the various factors constituting the cause of the incident;
- b) measures to prevent recurrence in a broader sense: measures to eliminate organizational and system risk factors (dangerous events such as oversights, defects and the existence of triggers for human errors in various aspects from design to maintenance and operation) that revealed during the investigation, even if they are not related to the cause of the incident.

The conclusion of the incident investigation report shall reflect the purpose of the investigation.

## 4.4 Incident investigation organization and incident investigation team characteristics

### 4.4.1 General

Effective incident investigation organizations and incident investigation team share certain common characteristics. These teams shall have the minimum characteristics as described in [4.4.2](#) to [4.4.5](#).

### 4.4.2 Independence

The incident investigation team shall be independent.

The incident investigation team shall be able to conduct its own investigation and make its own judgments without influence from any source whose mission is different than described in this document. To ensure independence, the incident investigation team shall have the necessary authority to investigate the incident.

#### 4.4.3 Impartiality

The incident investigation organization and the incident investigation team shall maintain impartiality during an investigation and the delivery of the investigation report.

To maintain impartiality, the incident investigation organization and team shall avoid influence by organizations or individuals who can have a stake in the outcome of the investigation.

The actions of the incident investigation organization and incident investigation team during the investigation shall not raise any suspicion that such influence has occurred.

#### 4.4.4 Expertise

The incident investigation team shall include members with the required expertise to conduct the investigation.

The expertise of incident investigation team members should include expertise in the following areas:

- relevant technical fields, e.g. product or service, sustainable development, economy,
- incident investigation techniques and methods,
- information collection,
- data analysis,
- human factors, and
- medical.

Over-reliance on expertise can lead to overlooking the perspectives and targets that are necessary for the investigation. To avoid these effects, the perspectives of non-experts, such as victims of incidents, should be taken into consideration during the investigation. See [4.5](#).

#### 4.4.5 Resources

The incident investigation team shall be provided with sufficient resources to complete the investigation in an effective and efficient manner.

The resources can include:

- personnel,
- time,
- funding,
- technical and physical resources,
- access to the incident site,
- access to witnesses identified during the initial assessment of the incident,
- access to data and records related to the incident, and
- data and records from national and international sources.

### 4.5 Respect for victims and victims' families

The understanding developed through the incident investigation is not possible without the involvement of the victims in the incident. The victim's viewpoint is particularly useful in discovering factors leading to increased damage and in developing measures to reduce or eliminate it in future.