



SLOVENSKI STANDARD SIST ISO 18128:2024

01-november-2024

Nadomešča:

SIST-TP ISO/TR 18128:2018

Informatika in dokumentacija - Tveganja v zvezi z zapisi - Ocena tveganja za upravljanje zapisov

Information and documentation — Records risks — Risk assessment for records management

Information et documentation — Risques liés aux documents d'activité — Appréciation du risque pour la gestion des documents d'activité

Ta slovenski standard je istoveten z: ISO 18128:2024

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/6ad0e78d-cff2-4e1c-a298-7133fb7d0a7f/sist-iso-18128-2024>

ICS:

01.140.20	Informacijske vede	Information sciences
03.100.01	Organizacija in vodenje podjetja na splošno	Company organization and management in general

SIST ISO 18128:2024

en,fr



**International
Standard**

ISO 18128

**Information and documentation —
Records risks — Risk assessment
for records management**

**First edition
2024-03**

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

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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).

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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.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 11, *Archives/records management*.

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.

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Introduction

Successful organizations identify and manage all their business risks. Identifying and managing the risks to records processes, controls and systems (records risks) is the responsibility of the organization's records professionals.

This document is intended to help records professionals and people who have responsibility for records in their organization to assess records risks.

This is distinct from the task of identifying and assessing the organization's business risks to which creating and keeping adequate records is one strategic response. The decisions to create records or not in response to general business risks are business decisions, which should be informed by the analysis of the organization's records requirements undertaken by records professionals together with business managers. The premise of this document is that the organization has created records of its business activities to meet operational and other purposes and has established at least minimal mechanisms for the systematic management of the records.

The consequence of records risk events can be the loss of, or damage to, records, which are therefore no longer useable, reliable, authentic, complete, or unaltered, and therefore can fail to meet the organization's purposes.

The document provides guidance and examples based on the general risk management process established in ISO 31000 (see [Figure 1](#)) to apply to records risks, including information on relevant risk assessment tools and techniques. It covers the risk assessment components:

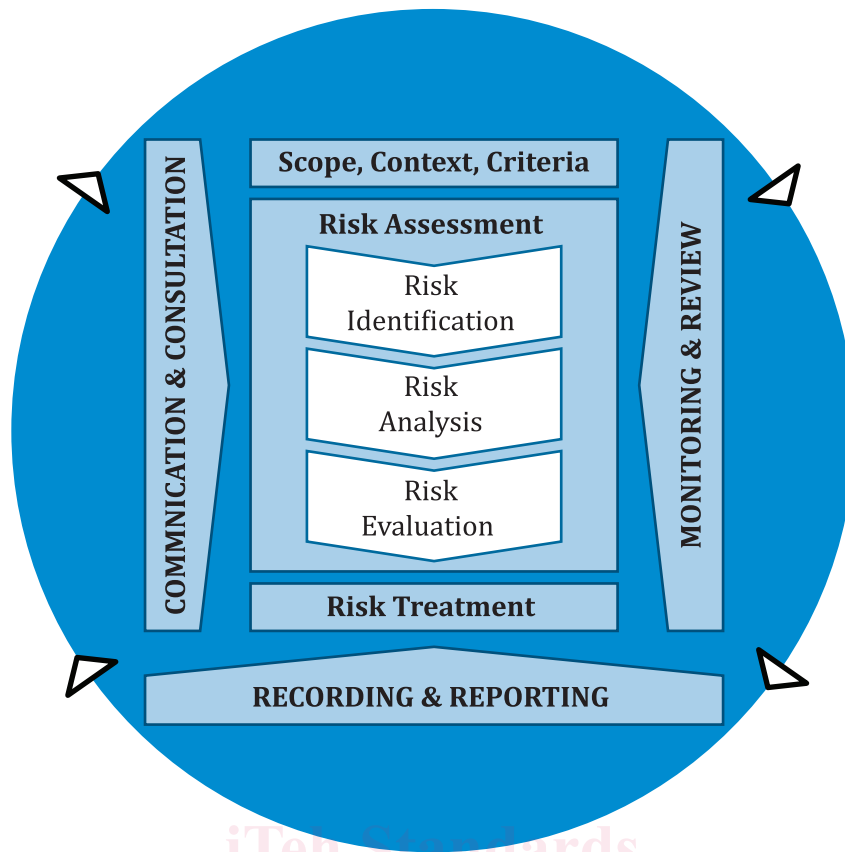
- a) risk identification,
- b) risk analysis, and
- c) risk evaluation.

This document introduces and explains selected techniques from IEC 31010 that are applicable in a records management environment (see [Table A.2](#) for the list of techniques).

The results of the assessment of records risk should be incorporated into the organization's general risk management framework. Consequently, the organization will have better control of its records and their quality for business purposes.

This document does not deal with risk treatment. Once the assessment of records risks has been completed, the assessed risks are documented and communicated to the organization's risk management section. Response to the assessed risks should be undertaken as part of the organization's overall risk management program. The priority assigned by the records professional to the assessed risks is provided to inform the organization's decisions about managing those risks.

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NOTE Source ISO 31000:2018, Figure 4

Figure 1 — Risk management process

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Information and documentation — Records risks — Risk assessment for records management

1 Scope

The document:

- a) provides methods for identifying and documenting risks related to records, records processes, controls and systems (records risks);
- b) provides techniques for analysing records risks;
- c) provides guidelines for conducting an evaluation of records risks.

This document intends to assist organizations in assessing records risks so they can ensure records continue to meet identified business needs as long as required.

This document can be used by all organizations regardless of size, nature of their activities, or complexity of their functions and structure.

This document does not directly address the mitigation of risks, as methods for these vary from organization to organization.

It can be used by records professionals or people who have responsibility for records and records processes, controls and/or systems in their organizations, and by auditors or managers who have responsibility for risk management programs in their organizations.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements 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.

ISO 30300, *Information and documentation — Records management — Core concepts and vocabulary*

ISO 31000, *Risk management — Guidelines*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 30300, ISO 31000 and the following 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/>

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3.1 Terms specific to risk

3.1.1

risk

effect of uncertainty on objectives

Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and threats.

Note 2 to entry: Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

Note 3 to entry: Objectives can have different aspects and categories, and can be applied at different levels.

Note 4 to entry: Risk is usually expressed in terms of risk sources, potential events, their consequences and their likelihood.

Note 5 to entry: In the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L, the definition of risk and the Notes to entry are slightly different.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.1.26]

3.1.2

risk management

coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regards to risk

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018, 3.2]

3.2 Terms specific to records

3.2.1

authoritative record

record (3.2.2) which possess the characteristics of authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.2.3]

3.2.2

record

information created or received and maintained as evidence and as an asset by an organization, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the course of conducting business

Note 1 to entry: to entry; Records are normally used in plural.

Note 2 to entry: In a management system standard (MSS) implementation, the records created to conduct and direct the management system and to document its implementation are called documented information.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.2.10]

3.2.3

records control

instrument for helping in the conduct of *records processes* (3.2.5)

EXAMPLE Examples of records controls include metadata schemas for records, business classification schemes, access and permission rules, and disposition authorities.

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.5.6]

3.2.4

records management (preferred term)

recordkeeping (admitted term)

field responsible for the efficient and systematic governance of *records* (3.2.2), using *records processes* (3.2.5), *records controls* (3.2.3) and *records systems* (3.2.7)

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.4.12]

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3.2.5

records process

set of activities for managing authoritative records

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.4.13]

3.2.6

records requirements

requirements for evidence of a business function, activity or transaction and for records processes including how, and how long, records need to be kept

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.3.2]

3.2.7

records risk

risk (3.1.1) related to records (3.2.2), records processes (3.2.5), controls (3.2.3) and systems (3.2.8)

Note 1 to entry: Risk management of records is associated with appraisal and records requirements

3.2.8

records system

information system that manages records (3.2.2) over time

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2020, 3.6.4]

4 Core concepts

4.1 Issues and concerns about uncertainty

Uncertainty is a term which embraces many underlying concepts. Commonly recognized forms of uncertainty include decision uncertainty, which has particular relevance to risk management strategies, and which identifies uncertainty associated with value systems, professional judgement, organizational values and societal norms.

Examples of uncertainty include:

- uncertainty as to the truth of assumptions, including presumptions about how people or systems might behave;
- variability in the parameters on which a decision is to be based;
- uncertainty in the validity or accuracy of models which have been established to make predictions about the future;
- events (including changes in circumstances or conditions) whose occurrence, character or consequences are uncertain;
- uncertainty associated with disruptive events;
- the uncertain outcomes of systemic issues, such as shortages of competent staff, that can have wide ranging impacts which cannot be clearly defined;
- lack of knowledge which arises when uncertainty is recognized but not fully understood;
- unpredictability;
- uncertainty arising from the limitations of the human mind, for example in understanding complex data, predicting situations with long-term consequences or making bias-free judgments.

Not all uncertainty is able to be understood and the significance of uncertainty might be hard or impossible to define or influence. However, a recognition that uncertainty exists in a specific context enables early