

e-Stewards Transition Plan Requirements for Transitioning from V3.1 to V4.0 of e-Stewards Standard

Published and effective June 18, 2020

IMPORTANT NOTE, applicable to all, regarding expiration of V3.1 certifications: As of close of business, Pacific Time Zone on August 24, 2021, the e-Stewards program administrator will withdraw Version V3.1 of the e-Stewards Standard and all accreditations and certifications to V3.1 must be withdrawn and will become invalid.

e-Stewards® Accreditation Bodies (AB), Certification Bodies (CBs), Certified e-Stewards Recyclers/Refurbishers (organizations), and organizations in application for becoming certified to the e-Stewards Standard must meet the following requirements for transition to the e-Stewards Standard Version 4 (V4.0):

1. For Certified e-Stewards Recyclers/Refurbishers (Organizations)

Certified e-Stewards organizations must have their systems certified to V4.0 by August 24, 2021, or lose certification on that date, and the e-Stewards Version 3.1 becomes obsolete at that time.

Certified e-Stewards organizations can obtain a copy of the revised e-Stewards Standard Version 4.0 on e-Stewards website. The Standard has been simplified by removing the ISO 14001:2015 language while still requiring accredited certification to the ISO 14001 standard, as well as some minor but key changes in performance and administrative requirements, and should be reviewed thoroughly. Measures to transition your existing e-Stewards management system to conform to V4.0 should be implemented as soon as possible. This is to ensure that your upgraded management system is implemented, with results recorded and reviewed by top management prior to the next regularly scheduled certification body audit, if possible.

Certified e-Stewards organizations that have surveillance or recertification audits scheduled before December 31, 2020 may choose to be audited to either V3.1 or V4.0 of e-Stewards Standard. All e-Stewards audits after December 31, 2020 shall be conducted to V4.0. The results of any V4.0 will not negatively impact the V3.1 certification status. Nonconformities written against V4.0 will not impact upon V3.1 certification as long as conformance with V3.1 is still demonstrated through August 24, 2021.

Also, please be aware that, following consultation with stakeholders and in order to minimize disruption to annual audit schedules, the e-Stewards program administrator has decided to allow CBs to conduct audits to V4.0 once each CB has determined they are able to support an audit to V4.0 (e.g., auditor competence, audit duration, etc.) but before they have fully transitioned their accreditation to V4.0 with ANAB.

However, a certificate to V4.0 shall not be issued until the CB has formally transitioned its accreditation to V4.0 with ANAB. Therefore, this could mean a delay in receiving a V4.0 certificate, if your CB has not yet completed its transition process with the accreditation body when they complete your audits. In this case, your V3.1 certificate may remain valid. Ask your CB about the status of their transition to e-Stewards V4.0 accreditation and proceed with an agreed-upon plan for transition to V4.0.

2. For Organizations in the Process of Initial e-Stewards Certification

These organizations may choose to be certified to either V3.1 or V4.0 until December 31, 2020.

However, it is essential to prepare for V4.0 certification months in advance of audits to ensure that the new management system is implemented, with results recorded and reviewed by top management prior to the initial audit. In addition, you may need time to close out any nonconformities following the CB audits. At this time, an incoming recycler/refurbisher would be well advised to set up their system and become certified to V4.0 at the earliest possible date.

3. For e-Stewards Certification Bodies

Accredited e-Stewards Certification Bodies (CBs) shall obtain a copy of the V4.0 Standard and review it thoroughly. To assure marketplace demands are met, CBs should implement the revised Standard within their own management systems within 2 months of the issue date of V4.0 and apply for and achieve transition/accreditation to V4.0 as soon as possible.

Due to a possible time gap between ANAB accreditation to V4.0 and each CB's regularly scheduled office assessment by ANAB, BAN reserves the right to conduct 'desk audits' with each CB after they transition.

The CBs will be required to apply to ANAB for accreditation to the revised and new requirements of V4.0. CBs will complete a transition application for processing and approval by ANAB. The application will include the requirement for the CB to develop and implement a written e-Stewards Transition Plan, ensuring its own e-Stewards V4.0 certification program is revised and its clients' V4.0 certifications are achieved by the deadlines. The CB's Transition Plan shall document with deadlines:

- a) Each aspect of the CB's transition necessary to fully implement V4.0 requirements for existing clients and for new clients, including having:
 - Adequate competent V4.0 personnel (see below);
 - Upgraded all relevant documents within the CB's management system, including, as appropriate, applications for certification, quotation templates, auditor time calculation formulae, audit checklist, audit report template, nonconformity report template, certificate template, etc.;
 - A process to assure all certificates issued to V3/V3.1 will expire by August 24, 2021;
 - A process to assure no V4.0 certificates are issued prior to accreditation for V4.0 by ANAB;
 - Management review and approval of the CB's transition plan to V4.0; and
 - CB's communication with existing clients regarding the process for transition to V4.0 with identified deadlines including internal deadlines defined by the CB.
- b) How the CB is monitoring the effectiveness of its transition to V4.0; and
- c) How the CB will confirm that its clients have fully implemented the requirements of V4.0 before a certificate is issued to V4.0.

All e-Stewards auditors, personnel that manage the e-Stewards certification program, at least one certification decision-maker, and at least one designated technical review person are required to attend and pass a mandatory e-Stewards V4.0 Lead Auditor training (an 16 hour training, with limited course offerings) or an Transition Auditor Training (a 8 hour training, with limited course offering; only available

to auditors, other personnel, decision-maker and technical review persons having successfully completed the V3 or V3.1 Transition Auditor Training), conducted by the e-Stewards program administrator. The same person may perform multiple roles, as long as there are no conflicts of interests. Please note that e-Stewards V4.0, Appendix C states that a CB must initially have at least two competent and fully trained e-Stewards lead auditors; this will be the required minimum number of auditors for a CB to transition to V4.0 and for the CB accreditation with ANAB.

The CB shall have a process to determine audit duration that supports e-Stewards V4.0, according to requirements in e-Stewards Standard V4.0, Appendix C.

CB audits of certified e-Stewards that occur prior to December 31, 2020 may be conducted to either V3.1 or V4.0 of e-Stewards Standard, as requested by clients. However, starting on December 31, 2020 all audits must be conducted using V4.0. Any nonconformities will be documented but the V3.1 certificate may remain valid so long as conformance to V3.1 is demonstrated.

Certification must be withdrawn from any e-Stewards client failing to transition and certify its system to V4.0 by close of business, pacific time zone, for the applicable CB on August 24, 2021.

In order to minimize disruption to annual audit schedules, the e-Stewards program administrator will allow CB audits to V4.0 prior to transitioning its accreditation to V4.0 but only after the CB has determined they are able to audit to V4.0 (e.g., competence, audit duration, etc.) and the CB has a process to ensure that only competent personnel are used in conducting any audit to the revised standard.

However, a certificate to V4.0 cannot be issued until the CB has transitioned its ANAB accreditation to e-Stewards V4.0. The CB is expected to keep all existing and new clients informed of its accreditation status and ability to issue accredited certificates.

4. For e-Stewards Accreditation Body

The e-Stewards Accreditation Body (AB) shall obtain a copy of the V4.0 Standard and review the changes thoroughly. All AB assessors and at least one designated technical review person are required to attend a mandatory e-Stewards Auditor V4.0 Upgrade Training or Lead Auditor Trainings conducted by the e-Stewards program administrator, and are expected to do so during one of the available courses.

AB shall accredit CBs via the transition application process, including verification of transition at its next regularly scheduled office assessment, if possible. All regularly scheduled AB witnessed audits and office assessments conducted starting December 31, 2020 shall be conducted using e-Stewards V4.0.

NOTE TO ALL: In order to encourage a shift to V4.0, Version 3.1 of the Standard will no longer be available on the e-Stewards website starting January 1, 2021. However, if needed after that deadline, V3.1 will be available by contacting info@e-stewards.org until August 24, 2021.