



HB 203:2012 Managing environment-related risk



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HB 203:2012

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Handbook was prepared by Joint Technical Committee OB-007, Risk Management. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 8 February 2012 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 13 March 2012.

This Handbook was published on 30 March 2012.

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Handbook

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Originated as HB 203:2000.
Second edition 2004.
Third edition 2006.
Fourth edition 2012.

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ISBN 978 1 74342 059 1

PREFACE

This Handbook was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Task Group, Environmental Risk Management, operating under and with guidance from Committee OB-007, Risk Management, to supersede HB 203:2006.

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The Handbook was initially published in 2000, revised for reissue in 2004, and in 2006.

These three editions referred to AS/NZS 4360, *Risk management*, which subsequently formed the bases of ISO 31000:2009, *Risk management—Principles and guidelines*. The International Standard was then adopted as AS/NZS 31000:2009.

AS/NZS ISO 31000 ('the Standard') describes the principles, framework and process for managing risk effectively. The Standard recommends that managing risk should be integrated within an organization's processes for overall governance, management, reporting etc. This Handbook expands on and explains these elements and provides advice about applying the standard to activities involving environment-related risk.

The vocabulary in this Handbook is aligned with defined terms in the Standard, and other terms in ISO Guide 73, *Risk management vocabulary*. The Handbook uses some specific terms from AS ISO 14050, *Environmental management—Vocabulary*, and these are attributed in the text. These, and other terms, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix B).

The Handbook contains illustrative examples. Care is needed in directly applying these to particular situations or risk management activities where the context of their intended use should be carefully considered and, where appropriate, modifications or adjustments made to these tools.

This Handbook is intended to help individuals and organizations to—

- develop a clear understanding of environment-related risks;
- manage environment-related risk effectively and in a manner that is integrated with other risks across the organization;
- make well informed decisions associated with environment-related risks; and
- provide a consistent terminology when discussing the environment, environment-related risk and risk management.

The audience for this Handbook includes organizations that may have very different environment-related objectives:

- Organizations with defined responsibilities for protecting the environment, typically government regulators and planning organizations. The scope of what is included in the environment for these bodies will be defined by legislation.
- Commercial and other organizations whose activities may have an impact on the environment.

- Organizations whose activities necessarily create environmental impacts.
- Communities of people who wish to protect the environment in which they live.
- Groups that take on roles to protect the environment or part of it.
- Organizations that may be affected by the environment.

This Handbook also aims to communicate with the very large population of regulators, scientists, environmental scientists and environmental engineers who use a different risk paradigm and a different language from the one in the Standard. Many of them operate within the risk-based frameworks of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the European Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical Substances (REACH) Regulation, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Standards, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CODEX) Standards, amongst others. This document uses language that will be understood by these practitioners while still conveying the structure and overall message of the Standard. Appendix D contains a comparison with terminology used in these jurisdictions.

Section 1 introduces fundamental concepts and principles for managing risk effectively. It explains the meaning of 'environment' as used in this Handbook, outlines the distinctive characteristics of environment-related risk that impact on decision-making in organizations and criteria that need to be considered during decision making.

Section 2 discusses the risk management principles outlined in the Standard and how they apply to managing risks related to the environment. It also describes the 'Framework' needed to reflect these principles and provide the intent and capability to consistently apply the risk management process.

Section 3 describes how to apply the risk management process specified in the Standard where the organization has environment-related objectives or where the environment represents a source of risk.

This Handbook contains a glossary of terms as part of a series of Informative Appendices.

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