



UNDERSTANDING ISO 17025 CLAUSE 8.9 – MANAGEMENT REVIEWS

Why Management Reviews Matter – Leadership Oversight, Strategic Alignment and System Accountability

Clause 8.9 is the final clause of ISO/IEC 17025 — the leadership checkpoint where the entire management system is evaluated for suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Management reviews are not routine meetings. They are **strategic oversight** sessions where leadership confirms whether the system is functioning as intended, whether risks are controlled, whether improvements are effective, and whether the laboratory is positioned for **long-term stability**.

Management reviews protect competence. They ensure that personnel, training, supervision and technical capability remain aligned with operational needs.

Management reviews protect impartiality. They confirm whether decisions are made consistently, transparently and without undue influence.

Management reviews protect reliability. They evaluate whether results remain accurate, consistent and defensible.

Management reviews strengthen the management system. They integrate evidence from audits, corrective actions, risks, opportunities, client feedback, non-conforming work, equipment performance and resource needs. Clause 8.9 ensures that leadership sees the full picture — not isolated fragments.

The core principle: **Management reviews are not minutes — they are leadership decisions.** Clause 8.9 ensures that the management system is strategically overseen, not merely maintained.

Inputs to Management Reviews – Evidence, Performance and System Health

Clause 8.9 requires management reviews to be evidence-driven. **Inputs** must reflect the true health of the management system and technical operations. These inputs ensure that **leadership decisions are based on facts** — not assumptions.

Required Inputs Include:

- Internal audit results
- External assessment results
- Client feedback
- Non-conforming work
- Corrective actions
- Preventive actions
- Risks and opportunities
- Impartiality issues
- Resource needs
- Training/competence evaluation outcomes
- Equipment performance



- Method updates
- Improvement actions
- Changes affecting the management system

These inputs provide a complete, 360-degree view of system performance.

Why Inputs Matter

Inputs ensure that management reviews:

- Identify weaknesses early
- Confirm strengths
- Evaluate trends
- Support strategic decisions
- Strengthen risk-based thinking
- Reinforce continual improvement

Clause 8.9 ensures that management reviews are not opinion-driven — they are evidence-driven. Leadership must see the full operational picture to **make informed decisions**.

Outputs of Management Reviews – Decisions, Actions and Strategic Direction

Clause 8.9 requires management reviews to produce **meaningful outputs**. **Outputs** are the decisions, actions and commitments that strengthen the management system and guide the laboratory's future direction.

Required Outputs Include:

- Decisions on improvements
- Actions to strengthen processes
- Resource allocation
- Training/competence needs
- Equipment upgrades
- Workflow changes
- Documentation updates
- Risk mitigation actions
- Opportunity implementation
- Adjustments to policies or procedures
- Strategic direction for the coming period

Outputs must be documented, communicated and implemented.

Why Outputs Matter

Outputs ensure that management reviews:

- Lead to action — not minutes
- Strengthen system performance
- Address weaknesses



- Reinforce strengths
- Support continual improvement
- Align operations with strategic goals

Clause 8.9 ensures that leadership decisions are clear, traceable and effective. Outputs are the bridge between evaluation and improvement.

Conducting Management Reviews – Structure, Frequency and Leadership Discipline

Clause 8.9 requires management reviews to be conducted **at planned intervals**. They must be structured, intentional and aligned with the management system.

Structure of Management Reviews

Management reviews must include:

- A defined agenda
- Required inputs
- Evidence-based discussion
- Evaluation of system performance
- Decisions and actions
- Documentation of outputs



Structure ensures consistency and completeness.

Frequency of Management Reviews

Frequency must be:

- Planned
- Appropriate for the laboratory's size and complexity
- Aligned with risks and operational changes
- Sufficient to maintain system oversight



Leadership Discipline

Management reviews require leadership to:

- Engage actively
- Evaluate evidence critically
- Make decisions confidently
- Allocate resources responsibly
- Demonstrate accountability

Clause 8.9 ensures that management reviews reflect leadership maturity — not administrative routine.



Technician and Management Responsibilities – Insight, Evidence and Strategic Accountability

Management reviews rely on **contributions from both technicians and leadership**. Clause 8.9 emphasises shared responsibility — **operational insight from technicians** and **strategic oversight from management**.

Technician Responsibilities

Technicians must:

- Provide accurate records
- Report issues and trends
- Share operational feedback
- Support evidence gathering
- Highlight risks and opportunities
- Demonstrate processes when required

Technicians provide the operational truth that leadership needs.

Management Responsibilities

Management must:

- Evaluate system performance
- Review all required inputs
- Approve actions and decisions
- Allocate resources
- Monitor effectiveness
- Ensure continual improvement
- Set strategic direction

Management provides the **leadership discipline** that keeps the system aligned and effective.

Together, technicians and management form an **oversight structure** that protects stability, strengthens capability and ensures long-term resilience.

Leadership Oversight, Strategic Assurance and System Performance

Clause 8.9 – Management Reviews ensure that the laboratory's operations, risks, opportunities, resources, competence, impartiality and reliability are evaluated at the highest level. Clause 8.9 requires leadership to confirm whether the system is functioning effectively, improving and strategically aligned.



Why Management Reviews Matter – Leadership Oversight and System Accountability

Clause 8.9 ensures that leadership evaluates system performance, identifies weaknesses, confirms strengths, allocates resources and sets direction. Management reviews protect competence, impartiality and reliability.

Inputs to Management Reviews – Evidence, Performance and System Health

Inputs that feed into management reviews include audit results, client feedback, nonconforming work, corrective actions, risks, opportunities, impartiality issues, resource needs, training outcomes, equipment performance, method updates and improvement actions. Clause 8.9 ensures that leadership sees the full operational picture to make informed decisions.

Outputs of Management Reviews – Decisions, Actions and Strategic Direction

Management reviews produce meaningful outputs that include decisions on improvements, resource allocation, training needs, equipment upgrades, workflow changes, documentation updates, risk mitigation and opportunity implementation.

Conducting Management Reviews – Structure, Frequency and Leadership Discipline

Clause 8.9 requires defined agendas, planned frequency, documented records and active leadership participation. Management reviews demonstrate leadership discipline, strategic oversight and operational maturity. They ensure that the management system remains suitable, adequate and effective.

Technician and Management Responsibilities – Insight, Evidence and Strategic Accountability

Technicians provide evidence, data, feedback and operational insight. **Management** evaluates system performance, approves actions, allocates resources, monitors effectiveness and sets strategic direction. Together, they protect stability, strengthens capability and ensures long-term resilience.

Management reviews are the leadership commitment that keeps the management system aligned, accountable and strategically driven.