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A survey of internal auditors to establish the scope of the common body of knowledge study in 2006

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Abstract

Purpose – To present the results of a survey of internal auditors worldwide to determine the scope of the topics to be included in The IIA's Global Common Body of Knowledge Study (CBOK) 2006.

Design/methodology/approach – The researchers developed a prescope questionnaire and surveyed a small sample of experienced internal auditors worldwide. All three CBOK 2006 teams (Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe/Africa) participated in data gathering from internal auditors in their regions. The questionnaire contained topics that were adapted from The IIA Practice Standards, past CBOKs ands other relevant prior research. The questionnaire also provided space for inclusion of "Other" topics by respondents.

Findings – The respondents agreed with the inclusion of a majority of the topics listed in the prescope questionnaire in the global CBOK 2006 survey. Many "Other" topical areas were also suggested for inclusion.

Originality/value – The survey results are providing invaluable information to the researchers in their efforts to develop the questionnaire for global CBOK 2006.

Keywords Auditors, Internal auditing, Knowledge management, Standards

Paper type General review

Introduction



Managerial Auditing Journal Vol. 21 No. 8, 2006 pp. 854-868 © Emerald Group Publishing Limited 0268-6902 DOI 10.1108/02686900610703796 The common body of knowledge (CBOK) in internal auditing is growing at a rapid pace. The expanded scope in the definition of internal auditing (The IIA, 2004) and new regulatory requirements such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002 in the USA and the CLERP Act 2004 in Australia have increased the demands on internal auditing and at the same time, there is increasing recognition that the Internal Audit Function (IAF) plays an important role in improving control systems, analyzing risks, providing consulting services and reducing the cost of external audits.

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- Develop a summary of the global practice of internal auditing around the world.
 This will be a descriptive study of the current state of the art of internal auditing in various countries.
- Provide insights on the practice of internal auditing and how it has changed.
- Provide insights on the activities being performed by internal auditors and the knowledge, skills and technologies being used to perform these activities.
- Provide information about internal audit's role within organizations, governance structures, regulations, cultural issues and professional competencies.
- Create a database that can be updated on a periodic basis so that future changes in IA can be documented.

One of the first tasks the research teams undertook was the development of a prescope questionnaire to gather input from a sample of internal auditors worldwide. The objective of the prescope questionnaire was to determine the important topics for inclusion in the global CBOK 2006 survey. This paper presents the development process and findings from the prescope questionnaire. The researchers present the research method first, followed by a discussion of findings by topic.

Research method

Questionnaire

The prescope questionnaire was developed after reviewing *The Professional Practices Framework* (The IIA, 2004) and the current literature on internal auditing (see other papers in this issue). Based on discussions with knowledgeable internal auditors and the literature review, the following topics were selected for inclusion:

- percentage of time spent on different types of audits in 2005;
- internal auditing standards from The Professional Practices Framework;
- · specific areas of knowledge required of internal auditors;
- role of the Board of Directors and Audit Committee;
- · evaluation of staff;
- · emerging trends in internal auditing;
- · certification;
- · salaries;



- audit methods, tools and techniques; and
- · audit skill sets.

Each topic was followed by a request for the respondents to complete a section of "Other" topics to elicit responses from internal auditors on items missing from the listing.

To collect data from a small representative group of experienced internal auditors, the prescope questionnaire was sent out to a select number of internal auditors in various regions of the world by each of the three global teams. The respondents were asked to indicate which items listed on the prescope questionnaire should be included or excluded from a comprehensive listing in CBOK 2006 study. As mentioned above, the respondents were invited to list "Other" items that they thought should be included in each category of questions.

Responses

A total of 63 responses were received from nine countries. Table I indicates the number of responses from each country.

The Appendix presents the prescope questionnaire and the details of the responses.

In the remainder of the paper, respondents' "Other" items are summarized in tables to provide information by category of items respondents proposed for inclusion in the global CBOK 2006 survey. As shown in the Appendix, a majority of participants agreed with the inclusion in the study of most of the topics in the prescope questionnaire. The areas discussed in detail reflect the researchers' priorities for the final CBOK questionnaire.

Scope of audits performed

The respondents were asked to indicate whether or not CBOK should include the percentage of time spent on different types of audits in 2005. A majority of respondents (57 of 61) agreed with the list of audit scope topics provided. Outsourcing work done by consultants was the one item for which the respondents most disagreed. Five indicated that this item should not be included. Table II is a summary of the "Other" topics respondents would like to have included in scope of audits performed.

Countries	Respondents
Asia Pacific	
Australia	11
New Zealand	5
Malaysia	2
Europe/Africa	
Belgium	9
France	2
Italy	6
South Africa	1
UK/Ireland	13
USA	14
Total	63

Table I.Summary of respondents by countries

Review of the topics listed in Table II indicates the expansion of the internal auditor's role in many areas and suggests an increase in the demand for specialty audits.

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The international standards for internal auditing

When asked about adherence to standards, the majority of respondents expressed the importance of adhering to all the standards listed in the prescope questionnaire. Nearly all respondents (61 or 62) indicated that the five most supported standards are:

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- (1) 1000 purpose, authority, and responsibility;
- (2) 1100 independence and objectivity;
- (3) 1200 proficiency and due professional care;
- (4) 2400 communicating results; and
- (5) 2500 monitoring progress.

Surprisingly, seven respondents expressed the view that they did not think that standards 2010 (Planning) and 2240 (Engagement Work Program) should be included in the survey.

Table III lists the topics of concern that respondents had with adherence to the standards. It appears that respondents would like to see more specificity in the standards.

Current knowledge

Many respondents agreed with the listed areas of knowledge required of internal auditors. The topic with the most disagreement concerned the skills needed to qualify as an internal auditor. About 15 or more respondents did not believe that business terminology, costing methods/managerial accounting and economic theories should be included. Table IV provides a list of "Other" items that respondents suggested should be included in this topic.

Procedures development Information technology audit Compliance (non-SOX) Ad hoc/special audits Regulatory Benchmark analyses Probity Prevention of corporate crime Risk assessment Statistical analysis Table II.

Respondents suggested
"Other" areas for
percentage of time spent
on audits

Follow-up on implementation of critical recommendations

Calculation/estimation of "return" of audit work

Determination of IA as either a cost centre or profit centre

Calculation of cost savings and/or opportunity income gained arising from internal audit recommendations as part of reporting (estimation) and monitoring (actual)

2010-planning: how is the internal audit plan developed — on the basis of what information? What is the duration of the audit plan? How often is it revised?

2500-monitoring the "efficiency" of internal audit activities

Table III.
Respondents suggested
"Other" areas of concern
regarding adherence to
standards



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Suggested "Other" areas of knowledge include risk management, forensic accounting, and regulation.

Emerging trends

The participants did not have complete consensus on the emerging issues in internal auditing. A majority of the respondents agreed that emerging trends in internal auditing include use of intranets, utilizing computer assisted audit techniques (CAATs), and the increased use of groupware. Respondents disagreed with the inclusion of cycle time, utilization of groupware such as Lotus Notes, and review of electronic commerce as responsibilities of the internal auditor. These technologies may be common practice in some regions of the world and emerging trends for other parts of the world. Table V lists the respondents' suggestions for inclusion of "Other" topics as emerging trends.

The researchers noted that some of the comments are related to the expanding scope of internal auditing. Topics such as risk-based internal auditing, total quality frameworks, regulatory issues and control awareness for managers appear to reflect an expanded scope and regulatory focus on adequacy of control structures.

Tools and techniques

There was little disagreement about the importance of the listed tools and techniques as components of global CBOK 2006. However, 10-15 respondents disagreed with the inclusion of continuous auditing, whistle-blowing hotline and flowchart software as audit tools and techniques. "Other" topics suggested by the respondents are listed in Table VI.

Table IV.Respondents suggested "Other" areas of knowledge required of internal auditors

Internal auditing standards
Language skills
General management
Statistics and analytical techniques
Forensics accounting
Boardroom skills
Personnel management skills
Managerial skills
Resource management and planning

Various industries Risk management Bookkeeping Regulatory New legislation Specific technology systems Probity auditing Project management

Provide control awareness training for managers Regulatory

Introducing full risk-based internal auditing Emerging new technology and trends in business that impact audit

Attempts client privilege work

Attorney-client privilege work Implementing total quality related frameworks

Audit time recording system for allocation of audit hours

Globalization of auditing profession Analytical (audit) review New business organizational formations that affect audit capability Standardization of audit reports

Trend towards outsourcing/partnering

Web based training for personnel according to D.Lgs 231/01 requirements

Supporting internal control systems definition in BPR projects

Table V.Respondents suggested "Other" emerging trends of internal auditing



The list in Table VI includes knowledge management, risk assessment and process modelling software. Many of the topics suggested are information technology related. This is indicative of the reliance organizations place on technology and the need for internal auditors to have the knowledge and skills to use these tools and techniques.

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Skill sets 859

A vast majority of the respondents agree that internal auditors need the listed skill sets to be competent. Respondents' suggestions for "Other" skill sets are included in Table VII

Many of the items listed are communication skills such as influencing others, consensus building and teamwork. Other skills suggested relate to management of the audit. Examples include facilitation, time management and effective presentation of complex issues. A third set of skills focus on high level critical thinking such as judgment, strategic agility and synthesis. Many of these skills are developed through experience and are not found in a typical entry-level internal auditor.

Conclusion

The researchers are grateful for the time and thought the respondents from across the globe put into answering the CBOK prescope questionnaire. The responses have helped with the development of a comprehensive set of topics to be included in the global CBOK 2006 questionnaire. However, constraints such as sample size and time prohibit any generalizability from the prescope questionnaire.

For scholars looking for research topics in internal auditing, respondents' comments under "Other" items provide examples of a rich set of issues. How do internal audit, management and other control functions interact? How do you prepare internal auditors to influence the control culture and influence corporate culture? What are the effects of local culture on the practice of internal auditing? How do differences in knowledge and skill affect an internal auditor's performance?

Lotus notes Knowledge management Intranet portals Issue tracking repositories Outsourcing of highly technical/specialized reviews

PowerPoint presentations for audit Risk assessment Generic office IT tools/groupware Process modelling software

Table VI. Respondents suggested "Other" audit methods, tools, and techniques

Influencing
IT skills
Synthesis
Foreign language
Computer skills
Presentation of complex results
Consensus building

Facilitation Communications Time management Judgment Strategic agility Teamwork

Table VII.
Respondents suggested
"Other" internal audit
skill sets needed



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Reference

The IIA (2004), The Professional Practices Framework, The Institute of Internal Auditors Research Foundation, Altamonte Springs, FL.

Appendix. Pre-scope questionnaire for CBOK

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Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No
Demographics for respondents and companies		7
Percentage of time spent on different types of audit (scope) in 2005		
Operational	60	2
Financial (include work with external auditor)	58	2
Governance (ethics, control framework, Sarbanes-Oxley, linkage of strategy and		
company performance)		
The role of the internal audit in organizational governance	61	1
Consulting	60	3
Enterprise risk management (ERM)	59	3
Fraud investigations (forensic accounting/auditing)	59	3
Work done by consultants (outsourcing)	57	5
041		

Other

Belgium

Procedures development

Benchmark analyses

Role of internal audit in project management

IT audit

Direct operational responsibilities

UK Ireland

Work done by consultants (cosourcing)

Assurance work

US

I think the work spent with the external auditor should be its own classification With respect to Sarbanes Oxley, the governance component should be separate from the work done in an advisory capacity (i.e. monitoring separate from management documentation, testing and assessment)

Outsourced work may be better defined as subject matter expertise required versus outsourced internal auditing (i.e. is the IAF outsourced or complemented?)

Compliance (non-SOX)

Regulatory

Technology

Audit of IT function

Asia Pacific

IT audit

Probity auditing

Information technology audit

Ad Hoc/Special audit

Compliance programs for the prevention of corporate crime: risk assessment, compliance audit, monitoring, compliance programs updating

South Africa

Integrated assurance services (audits that combine financial, operational, ICT, and governance)

(continued)





Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No	A survey of internal auditors
Adherence to The International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal			internal auditors
Auditing (Standards) (The IIA, 2004):			
1000 purpose, authority, and responsibility			
Charter outlining nature of assurance and consulting services	62	1	
1100 independence and objectivity			861
Reporting structure administratively and functionally			
Support of upper management			
Support of the audit committee	61	1	
1200 proficiency and due professional care			
Level of education required of entry level auditors			
Certifications	CO	0	
Skills required of each audit position	62	0	
1230 continuing professional development – number of hours required	53	5	
1300 quality assurance and improvement program			
How often internal quality review is performed	ΓO	4	
How often external quality review is performed	59	4	
2000 managing the internal audit department CAE – rotating or permanent position			
Written policies and procedures			
Staff rotation policy	58	5	
2010 planning	50	J	
Percentage of audit budget spent on planning activities	56	7	
2210 Engagement objectives	00	•	
Set audit objectives during the planning stages of the audit	58	5	
2240 engagement work program			
Percentage of audit programs written specifically for each engagement			
Percentage of audit programs from prior audits			
Percentage of purchased audit programs	56	7	
2400 communicating results			
A written audit report is prepared for what percentage of engagements			
Audit report includes a grade or score for the audit process	62	1	
2500 monitoring progress			
Follow up procedures are performed on what percentage of audits			
Audit department has the support of upper management to ensure improvements	20	_	
are made by auditee	62	1	
Other:			
Belgium Follow on an involve of mid-al accommodations			
Follow-up on implementation of critical recommendations Calculation/estimation of "return" of audit work (through implementation of audit			
recommendations or through audit review as such on, e.g. double payments:			
savings achieved; double disbursements prevented or corrected; etc.)			
UK Ireland			
Adherence to The International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal			
Auditing			
Adherence to national or sectoral standards, based on the standards			
Adherence to national or sectoral standards, not based on the standards			
USA			
Determination of IA as either a cost centre or profit centre			
Calculation of cost savings and/or opportunity income gained arising from			
internal audit recommendations as part of reporting (estimation) and monitoring			
(actual)	(1	1	T-11 41
	(conti	inued)	Table AI.

MAJ	Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No
21,8	Specific areas of knowledge required of internal auditors: Traditional business school topics (finance, operations,		
862	accounting, marketing) Business terminology Technology Financial reporting Costing methods/managerial accounting Economic theories Accounting standards Auditing standards	52 45 57 50 45 25 49 54	11 16 6 12 17 35 14 8
	Other Belgium Language skills IT knowledge and skills (company ERP package) UK Ireland Internal auditing standards Statistics and analytical techniques General management USA Should there be more in the way of operational and compliance auditing? The above categories seem traditional and exclusive to the operational and compliance COSO components Should technology be more specific as to systems etc- should there be some additional requirements as to ERM, ERP, etc. Should there be more in the "Other" areas such as forensics, fraud, money laundering, etc. Statistical analyses, Six-sigma, etc. Regulatory Various industries Fraud Regulation relevant to the industry Asia Pacific Record keeping electronic Risk management practices Italy Statistics New legislation (SOX, D.Lgs 231/01) South Africa Legislation		
	Role of the Board of Directors and Audit Committee How often the CAE reports to the audit committee Board's role in governance issues Audit committee/Board role in review of annual audit plan	60 57 59	2 5 3
	Other Belgium Board's role in the definition of "risk" as used by the internal auditor in his risk assessment Audit committee support for IAF, internal audit		

Table AI. (continued)



recommendations

Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No	A survey of
USA Directors Loan Committee and Trust Committee interaction Board appointment of CAE, salary determination, etc.			internal auditors
Administrative chain of command AC structure and experience			0.00
Reporting relationships, agendas			863
Asia Pacific			
Induction program for Audit Committee members			
Board review of IA performance Italy			
Audit committee/Board role in budget definition			
Evaluation of staff			
Questionnaire at end of audit by auditee	53	10	
Staff evaluated at end of each audit	55	8	
Other			
Belgium Stoff evaluations mid year and year and rotation/sersor expertunities inside the			
Staff evaluations mid-year and year-end: rotation/career opportunities inside the company or audit staff			
Evaluation of the overall IAF			
USA			
Staff evaluation at certain minimum hours if audit is long-term? Other internal audit quality metrics and measurements			
Core competency development			
Goal achievement (results)			
Performance evaluation (annual or more frequent)			
Asia Pacific Preference for annual survey of Branch performance			
South Africa			
Ethics			
Emerging trends in internal auditing			
Laws requiring companies to have an IAF	56	7	
Internal auditors in advisory role for strategy development Implemented an internal control framework (COSO, COSO-ERM, Cadbury, or CoCo)	50 57	11 4	
Utilize self-directed, integrated work teams.	48	14	
Involved in corporate directives to introduce ERP – Enterprise Resource Planning	10		
Software such as SAP, Oracle, Peoplesoft, BAAN, and JD Edwards	45	16	
Implement computer library (web or CD-ROM) for audit reports, workpapers, and	EE	7	
reference materials Implement knowledge management systems	55 49	7 13	
Work with management to develop ERM system	52	11	
Provide training to audit committee	47	14	
Share audit programs with "Other" companies' internal			
audit departments	53	8	
Introduce improvements in cycle time Utilize groupware such as Lotus Notes	44 36	19 26	
Review electronic commerce applications	43	19	
Utilize CAATs	56	6	
Develop Intranet site to educate company personnel about internal controls, risk		_	
management, Sarbanes Oxley requirements, etc.	55	7	
	(conti	nued)	Table AI.



MAJ	Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No
21,8	Other Belgium Provide control awareness trainings to managers (new recruited managers: as part		
864	of company introduction program; newly promoted managers – individually; newly acquired company management team;, etc.) Implementing total quality related frameworks (e.g. EFQM) UK Ireland		
	Refocused internal audit on role of providing objective assurance in context of organization's overall assurance framework Introducing full risk based internal auditing		
	USA Analytical (audit) reviews Is there a need to address independence if internal audit is used to "introduce ERP", implement knowledge systems and develop ERM – how to audit? Regulatory		
	Attorney client privilege work Asia Pacific		
	Audit time recording system of allocation of audit hours Italy		
	Supporting Internal Control System definition in BPR projects Web-based training for personnel according to D.Lgs 231/01 requirements		
	Certification Need for certification exams for audit managers and CAEs above CIA certificate Other Relation	45	17
	Belgium Need for a CIA more oriented towards non-profit organisations UK Ireland Need for provide qualification or certification for interpol quality as		
	Need for specific qualification or certification for internal auditors Need for certification for practicing internal auditors USA		
	Certifications for seniors (level below managers) Skills needed – CISA, CFE, etc. Asia Pacific		
	Asia Facilic Specialized internal auditing certifications CGAP for public sector, CFSA for Financial Services Auditor Italy CPA, ACFE, CSA		
	Salaries Entry level salary at each audit position	42	18
	How internal audit salaries compare with managers at similar levels in the organization	45	16
	Other UK Ireland	40	10
	How internal audit salaries for those with internal audit qualifications compare USA		
	Does IA have possibility to rotate to another position within the company? How often does it happen? What is the average time IA stays within the IA function? Staff levels to include in bonus and Option programs Mobility within the organization – how many transfers to the departments,		

Table AI. functions? (continued)



Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No	A survey of internal auditors
Changes too often and varies globally Incentive compensation- bonuses, stock options Asia Pacific Essential criteria for CAE's and staff, i.e. degree			internal auditors
Italy Other benefits			865
Audit methods, tools, and techniques ACL, Idea, SAS Control self assessment Continuous auditing Electronic workpapers Sampling Data mining Whistle blowing hotline Comparisons of performance measures to targets in entity's objectives Flowchart software	59 57 52 58 59 54 49 52 46	3 6 11 3 4 8 13	
Other	46	15	
Belgium Generic office IT tools/groupware USA Outsourcing of highly technical/specialized reviews Lotus Notes Issue tracking repositories Intranet portals Knowledge management Asia Pacific PowerPoint presentations for audit Italy Process modelling software Risk assessment (no control risk self assessment audit method) South Africa Include ERM, Benchmarking, QAR, the IA process – procedures, e.g. compliance, substantive and analytical – refer PA 2320 Auditee skill set (at each level)			
Organization Interpersonal Writing Critical thinking Ability to do root cause analysis Negotiation Conflict resolution Interview	56 57 57 56 53 56 57	7 6 5 7 9 7 6 5	
Other Belgium IT skills (knowledge of company ERP capabilities and control features + use of system to prepare projects and substantiate findings) Synthesis: know how to extract just that information that is necessary to put context around a finding and recommendation	(acasti	nued)	Table AI.



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Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following

Yes

No

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UK Ireland

Influencing

Presentation of complex results

USA

Computer skills

Foreign languages

Strategic agility

Facilitation

Consensus building

Teamwork

Asia Pacific

Communication

Time management

Judgment

Business acumen

Italy

Corporate crime, fraud

France

Courage

Other topics

Belgium

Interaction between internal and external audit

Co-sourcing/outsourcing

Auditor's career: recruitment into internal audit and/or internal move "in"/career path with internal audit and/or internal move "out"/external move "out"

UK Ireland

Knowledge areas are too narrow: should include governance, ethics, ethnographic methods

Involvement in corporate social responsibility

Benchmarking regarding I.A. size (i.e. number of employees, mixture of qualified and non-qualified staff, types of qualification of I.A. staff, etc.)

USA

How is the internal audit plan developed, on the basis of what information (scoping using risk assessment, particular needs of BU, fraud investigation, what is the percentage of each component)

What is the duration of the audit plan (1 year, 3 years, etc.). How often is it revised? Whom does the IA report to (audit committee, CEO, CFO, etc. . . . are they independent?

How is the IA founded: special budget, re-invoiced to BU, etc. . .? What is the budget?

What are the yearly training expenses?

Does IA use any indicator to measure its performance? If yes, what are they? The views expressed are solely my own and do not necessarily reflect to the position of fidelity investments or its associates

Trend towards outsourcing/partnering

Resource management and planning

Internal audit department structure and geographic locations

Global focus

Reporting relationship of CAE to Board/Audit Committee,

CEO, CFO, "Other"

Table AI. (continued)



Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following

Yes No

A survey of internal auditors

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Frequency of private meeting of CAE and Board/Audit Committee

chair/committee – never, once per year, etc.

Asset size of company/annual sales

Number of internal auditors

Annual audit department salaries and benefits

Public/private/other org.

Core competency framework

Soft skill development

Training and development

Career pathing

Knowledge management

Asia Pacific

Will 1312 review be completed by January 1, 2007

Probity auditing

Project management

Standardization of audit reports

Freedom of information/privacy concerns

Performance indicators for internal audit

Standardization of ranking audit

Balanced scorecards for internal audit

Disclosure and confidentiality principles for internal audit

International Auditing Standards (Global)

Globalization of auditing profession

Academic qualifications for internal audit in tertiary institutions

Career planning for internal audit

Marketing of the IAF

"Recognized Professional Association"

Benchmarking of internal audit

Introduce CAE within organization for sign off on internal controls

Ratio of internal audit cost vs external audit cost

Board room skills

Personnel management skills

Managerial skills

Split information required for financial audit between financial control work and

supporting/interacting on external audit work

Emerging new technology and trends in business that impact audit

New business organizational formations that affect audit capability

Italy

Information about staff and outsourcing

Role of the Collegio Sindacale

The relationship between the collegio sindacale and the internal audit unit

(collegio sindacale is a specific body of the Italian corporate governance system).

The features involves in this relationship could concern:

The support of the collegio sindacale to the internal audit independence

The review of the audit plan

The communication of audit results to the collegio sindacale

Ither

Planning and priority setting

Role of the collegio sindacale in the Italian corporate governance system and the relationship with the internal audit department

(continued)

Table AI.



MAJ	Do you agree that the Global CBOK scope should include the following	Yes	No
21,8	France How do IA, MA, compliance, quality control, and "Other" control functions fit		
	together?		
	What are the job positions in internal auditing?		
868	How can we go from one position to another? How to be prepared to get out of the audit department to disseminate the control		
	culture		
	South Africa		
	Environmental auditing		
	QAR		
	ISO standards relating to internal auditing, e.g. ISO 14000, etc.		
Table AI.	Note: Not all respondents answered all questions		

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