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Use of Specialists in the Audit

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Issues

- Planning specialist involvement and scope
- Supervision, co-ordination and review
- Definition of specialist and engagement team
- Other



Planning/Scoping

- Modularization of audits
- Participation initiated by engagement team; specialist role passive (and unsatisfying)
- Multiple specialist integration in planning/scoping meetings not consistent
- Distinction between involvement and scope of involvement



Supervision, Co-ordination and Review

- Gaps communication/co-ordination
- Auditors may assume review is done by specialist but that review may not address all relevant issues
- Specialist may accept audit work at face value; may not have the capability to review audit/accounting decisions/disclosures
- Auditors may not have the capability to effectively supervise/review the work of specialists



Definitions

- Definition of specialist – “other than accounting or auditing”
- Arbitrary exclusion of tax, IT, forensic
- The “engagement team” –
 - Why is it important?
 - Barriers to “team” spirit



Other

- Risk of gradual deskilling of regular audit staff
- Employed specialists may have limited accounting and auditing knowledge and limited understanding of professional ethics
- Employed specialists may be more skeptical than auditors