A Policy Framework to Improve the State Audit Office of Vietnam to Meet the Auditing Standards of the Organization For Economic Co-operation And Development

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Abstract
The audit standards of the State Audit Office of Vietnam (SAV) are inadequate in several ways. This may have a negative influence on the quality and effectiveness of the performance of the SAV. The research aims to improve the SAV to meet international auditing standards of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The study will establish a set of best practices for auditing accepted by the most advanced OECD member countries as a direct comparison in order to identify revisions required for the auditing standards of the SAV to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards and propose a methodology to resolve these issues. The SAV auditing standard revisions are thus the key focus of the research. In this research, both document review and semi-structured in-depth individual interviews were employed in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the research problem. Thematic content analysis method was selected for the data analysis of the study. The research has identified, assessed and provide policy recommendations for the revisions required for the SAV auditing standards to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards. The standard auditing improvement of the SAV will enable the SAV to reduce the cycle time, to improve the employee productivity and satisfaction, to facilitate the implementation of audit engagements and to ensure the transparency, and effectiveness of public sector expenditure by following appropriate and effective OECD auditing standards.

Keywords: State Audit Office of Vietnam, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, auditor, auditing standards, and technology.

I. INTRODUCTION
The analysis of the current performance of the SAV shows that the SAV current auditing standards remain in an underdeveloped state. As the National Assembly Standing Committee of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam [17] states, the building of SAV auditing standards compatible with generally accepted international auditing standards is one of the crucial missions, and responsibilities of the SAV mentioned in the SAV Development Strategy to the year 2020. In fact, the establishment of a strong auditing standard framework may positively contribute to audit quality and ensure the robustness and stability of public sector auditing [38], and considerably reinforce public sector auditing so that it becomes an effective tool for government, economy, and society [32]. It can be said that the SAV has not yet equipped and has insufficient capacity to develop strong international auditing standards fully compatible with the advanced countries’ to realize its progressive ambition. This could be realized if a policy to improve the auditing standards of SAV to align with, say, the OECD auditing standards were implemented.

Thus this research addresses the research problem: “A policy to Improve The State Audit Office of Vietnam to meet ‘The Auditing Standards of The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.’” The problem of the research topic, then, is embedded in the research question “What Revisions are Required for The State Audit Office of Vietnam to be compatible with The Auditing Standards of The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development?”.

In order to answer the research question, the following objectives need to be achieved:

- Establish a summary of the OECD auditing standards based on the literature review;
- Identify revisions required for the SAV auditing standards to meet the OECD auditing standards;
- Propose a policy framework to resolve issues arising from the research in order to facilitate the implementation of the improvement.

The research outcomes may bring benefits and values to the community and the SAV. The following are the expected benefits and values of the research:

- The research which may be applied to the SAV could help the SAV improve its auditing standards;
- Developing effective international auditing standards for the SAV will strengthen audit quality and effectiveness of the SAV and, in turn, have a positive influence on transparency and effective public sector expenditure;
- Developing effective international auditing standards for the SAV will enhance the effectiveness and quality of work of SAV auditors and managers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overview of the objective of improving the SAV to meet the audit standards of the OECD
An examination of the SAV document [33] highlights that international auditing standards tend to be the most important driving force in the SAV development strategy. As the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions [14] notes, generally accepted international auditing standards should be applied by the government audit institutions, and the formation and development of the audit process must work towards the goal of effectively enforcing auditing standards. For example, according to the Swiss Federal Audit Office [37], the effectiveness of an audit process may be determined as an ability to build the ‘true and fair view’ principle and the requirement for
audit report that is suitable with the international auditing standards. It also indicates the potential relationship between international auditing standards and the quality control of audit process.

The OECD, which was founded in 1961 to enhance economic development and world trade [28], appears to be a good starting point to study and provide valuable information, experiences, and models for shifting the SAV auditing standards. This organization consists of 34 member countries, among which are the most economically advanced countries in the world [28]. The OECD member countries are listed in Table 1.

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Many of the OECD member countries, having access to highly developed technology, have developed auditing standards supported by information technology to enrich their audit quality. Many the OECD countries have developed high-quality software auditing and accounting standards that allows its member countries to strengthen the effectiveness and transparency of tax administration, reports, and audit, and improve the outcomes of audit engagements and facilitate in conducting joint audits [27].

Moreover, the most advanced OECD member countries have the capacity to update and develop effective and high-quality auditing standards to ensure audit quality and meet the increasing demands of auditing and accounting. The OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions has encouraged the OECD member countries to strengthen transparency and accountability in international business [29]. This, in turn, can create a favorable condition for developing strong international auditing standards in the OECD member countries. The most advanced OECD member countries such as the United States of America, England, and Australia, whose strong legislative frameworks and professional practices are recognized by almost all countries around the world, are likely to provide valuable and important change models for the SAV auditing standards. The United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia have established strong, effective and high-quality auditing standards in order to assure audit quality [38]. For example, United Kingdom auditing standards provide detailed guidance for all aspects of its audit activities and cover all audit quality control process in order to ensure quality and effectiveness of audit engagements [11].

Another important reason is that many of the OECD member countries have identified and improved inadequacies in their audit standards in a timely manner. For example, The Sarbanes-Oxley Act, enacted in reaction to auditing and accounting scandals involving well-known corporations in the United States of America, has improved financial transparency and audit quality and promoted financial market stability and development [39]. In addition, global financial and economic challenges have highlighted the role of strong international audit standards. For example, the global financial crisis may be a test of the standard auditing framework of Australia. As the Treasury of Australian Government [38] notes, in this crisis, the number of problems with financial reporting have increased at the international level and the audit regulation frameworks of a variety of countries have exposed limitations and weaknesses in detecting and preventing audit risks and poor performance of entities being audited. During the current uncertain economic conditions, however, Australia’s audit office has determined that its auditing standard framework has functioned effectively and stable [38]. Therefore, strong OECD auditing standards, established by the most advanced countries of the OECD, should be selected as SAV’s alternative auditing standards. The study aims to improve the SAV to meet the OECD audit standards.

2.2. Identifying the OECD auditing standards

Strong international auditing standards play an important role in establishing the SAV development strategy and are likely to bear key goal in the standard auditing improvement of the SAV. According to Hayes et al. [10], international auditing standards are considered to be the highest and best international representation of generally accepted auditing standards widely applied in most auditing organizations in the world. In addition, Treasury of Australian Government [38] notes that the formation of a strong auditing standard framework compatible with international best practice contributes to the robustness and stability of government audit offices and audit quality. Vuong [42] affirms that collaboration and the sharing of experiences between the SAV and other supreme audit institutions in the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions should be enhanced and promoted to increase the role of supreme audit institutions in governance and to improve the effectiveness of public sector audits.

Since the research aims to enable the SAV to meet the OECD auditing standards, a key requirement is that these standards need to be clearly identified. Since there are no official auditing standards agreed upon by the OECD, this section attempts to identify a set of best practices for auditing accepted by the most advanced OECD member countries. They are classified into three major groups of auditing standards as general standards, field work standards and standards of reporting.

2.2.1. General standards

General principles consisting of integrity, objectivity, independence, diligence, confidentiality, respect for technical principles and professional competence and behavior govern professional conduct are being applied in the auditing profession in Italy [31]. Judgments of the Portugal Court of Auditors only abide by the Portugal Constitution and law [30]. Independent status of the National Audit Office of Finland is clearly regulated and underpinned by the Constitution which strengthens its audit quality and transparency [19].
According to the Business Accounting Council of Japan [4], auditors utilizing other auditors' works, must assess the significance, scope, and level of reliance of these works and consider whether or not there is a consistency between their purposes and procedures and other auditors'. In addition, it indicates that if an auditor uses specialist works, the auditor must take their qualifications and objectivity and significance of the work into account.

### 2.2.2. Fieldwork standards

**a) Financial auditing**

The National Audit Office of Denmark [18] shows that audit planning of the National Audit Office of Denmark covers purposes, scope and anticipated outcomes of a financial audit. According to the Swedish National Audit Office [36], evaluations of risk and materiality are emphasized in financial audits and define their purpose and scope. In addition, it notes that financial audits aim not only to provide a fair evaluation of financial statements of entities being audited but also to prevent and reduce identified risk. The National Audit Office of Denmark develops a list of financial audit packages such as audits throughout the year involving internal control assessment of entities being audited and specific audit packages specializing in salaries and subsidies [21].

**b) Compliance auditing**

According to the National Audit Office of Finland [20], the compliance audit aims to assess whether or not entities being audited comply with relevant regulations and legal documents promulgated by authorized organizations. In addition, this office states that compliance audits can be used to examine predetermined activities of entities being audited involved with policies, mechanisms and highly appreciated management principles.

**c) Performance auditing**

The International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions [13] suggests that performance auditing should play a key role and be fully reflected in the key documents of public audit offices. This suggestion may be especially important for the most advanced OECD member countries. As Office of the Auditor General of Canada [24, p. 13] notes, the scope of the performance audit covers 'the examination of the economy, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and environmental effects of government activities; procedures to measure effectiveness; accountability relationships; protection of public assets; and compliance with authorities.' In addition, according to National Audit Office of United Kingdom [22], value for money auditing needs to consider a full evaluation of the government expenditure required for its specific projects and activities and what objectives and outcomes need to be achieved. Determining potential environmental risks such as emissions, discharges and wasteful use of natural resources and these impacts on particular performance audit subjects should also be taken into account in performance audits [26].

As Office of the Auditor General of Canada [24, p. 13] notes the scope of performance audits can include 'a government entity or activity (business line), a sartorial activity, or a government-wide functional area.' For example, In the GAO, performance audits involve various subjects such as the evaluation of internal control systems, project and business operation effectiveness and legal compliance of organizations [41]. In addition, as the United States Government Accountability Office [41] notes, performance audits can be conducted with a diversity of methods. For instance, performance auditing applies both quantitative and qualitative methods in audit engagements, including assessment of financial data and management information, documentary analysis, interviews with organization personnel, surveys of customers of entities being audited and comparing the quality and effectiveness of the entities with other entities [22]. In the Netherlands Court of Audits, the nature, scope, methodology, and procedures of performance audits are openly and responsively communicated to auditees in order to strengthen the transparency of these performance audits and auditees’ cooperation [16]. Dependent on specific audit purposes, performance audits could or could not be combined with financial audits in conducting audit engagements [18].

**d) IT auditing**

According to Office of the Auditor General of Canada [25], IT auditors must have adequate and appropriate professional and skills in information technology and the auditing field and be able to deal with the complicated IT systems of organizations being audited. In addition, since IT auditing covers a broad scope of business operations, on conducting IT system environment audits, auditors must obtain an understanding both of organizational structure and operations and of IT infrastructure-related aspects of the organization such as software, hardware, security and networks [40].

As United States Government Accountability Office [40] notes, IT auditors conduct analysis and assessment with both general control systems and business process control systems. General control systems include policies, documents and procedures involving IT system security management, computer resource access controls, IT system security support software, individual authority over sensitive computer-related operations, and service stability [40]. The factors requiring evaluation and testing in business process control systems include application-level general controls, business process controls, interface controls and data management system controls [40].

According to United States Government Accountability Office [40], those controls are presented as follows:

- Application level general controls: IT auditors should analyze and evaluate general controls at the business performance level. The analysis and evaluation should focus on business process application security.
- Business process controls: IT auditors should analyze and evaluate whether or not transactions and business operation data are complete, accurate, valid and reliable.
- Interface controls: IT auditors should analyze and evaluate the accuracy, timing, and completeness of information process of IT systems.
- Data management system controls: IT auditors should analyze and evaluate the process of collecting, storing and managing business data and information and data management systems and controls.
e) Audit documentation

According to the Supreme Audit Institution of Germany [35], the Supreme Audit Institution of Germany has developed a database system including sources, contents, and guidelines of documents. The Supreme Audit Institution of Germany [35] notes that the database system covering a wide range of documents involving observations, reports, results and other documents of audit activities supports auditors in searching, collecting and extracting required documents and supporting information. In addition, audit planning and the information system facilitates auditors in conducting all phases of the audit process and identifying audit evidence [35].

The Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board [2, p. 9] defines audit documentation as ‘the record of audit procedures performed, relevant audit evidence obtained, and conclusions the auditor reached (terms such as “working papers” or “workpapers” are also sometimes used).’ Auditors can utilize their working papers to assist in the making of professional judgments [24]. Although audit documentation may vary considerably in different audit engagements, it should be incorporated in best auditing practices [43].

As the United States Government Accountability Office [41] notes, audit documentation should cover all phases of the audit process, be sufficiently detailed and be appropriate for the specific audit engagement. In addition, audit documentation, which must be compatible with international auditing standards and established on a timely basis, and consist of a set of adequate and correct records and appropriate evidence, aids auditors to perform several of aims such as planning and conducting audit engagements, supervising and accounting for audit tasks and keeping it as important archives [12]. Appropriate evidence of audit documentation must address relevant, reliable and valid information [24]. Moreover, the criteria for and descriptions of audit documentation for various audit engagements are clearly identified and portrayed in the audit documentation standards of the most advanced OECD member countries.

g) Audit methodology

The most advanced OECD member countries have introduced effective and scientific audit methodologies. According to The United States Government Accountability Office [41], audit methodology should incorporate clearly identified methods, procedures, techniques, assumptions, criteria and sampling systems used to achieve the audit purposes. The United States Government Accountability Office notes that criteria for identifying principles, standards, professional practices and expected outcomes, are determined by audit purposes [41]. While the Spanish Court of Audit uses a combination of various types of audits in audit engagements in order to assess different perspectives of entities being audited, each type of audit aims to obtain dissimilar purposes [21].

According to the Austrian Court of Audit [3], in order to assure implementation of audit engagements according to audit quality standards, a customer survey may aid audit organizations in strengthening their independence, credibility, and objectivity. In addition, it shows that peer review, which is an external evaluation conducted by other audit organization to an audit organization, helps organizations that have been reviewed to have objective insight into its performance. Through this peer review, audit organizations reviewed have a better understanding of their performance and may find the best way to improve their performance in the future. According to the Swiss Federal Audit Office [37], horizontal audits indicate good audit practices and should be emphasized. In addition, it notes that by conducting comparative evaluations of one specific audit aspect involving at least two units or departments of one entity being audited or entities being audited having the same functions and activities, horizontal audits can provide an overall picture of that audit aspect and persuasive suggestions and recommendations for improvements.

Auditors should take the application for IT to audit engagements into account in order to establish appropriate and effective audit planning [4]. Auditors of the French Court of Auditors can partially conduct audit engagements at the Court because France’s state accounting and auditing systems are so strongly supported by IT that auditors of the Court can mostly access online the needed computer files of entities being audited or access the accounts and required documents of these entities storable at their computers [21]. However, the online environment may have potential risks needing to be adequately and appropriately managed.

h) Audit quality control

According to the European Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions [8], audit quality control standards, which tend to be very complicated and qualitative, comprise crucial guidelines and specific assessment criteria that form the basis of auditors’ reports and audit assessment collections. These standards also enable relevant stakeholders to assess the quality of an audit conveniently.

According to The United States Government Accountability Office [41], quality control systems of audit organization includes perspectives regarding leadership, and audit quality control procedures and policies. While leadership focuses on implementing effective audit quality control standards and undertaking audit quality management for the audit entities [41], audit quality control procedures and policies aim to enhance auditors’ independence, ethics, professionalism and accountability, ensure appropriate personnel assignment in audit organizations and provide detailed guidance, assistance and audit quality monitoring methods [1]. The United States Government Accountability Office [41] recommends that audit quality control procedures and policies be documented, provided to audit organization personnel and periodically assessed to identify issues requiring improvement or change in a timely manner. The United States Government Accountability Office [41] also notes that the quality control systems of an audit organization require appropriate external peer review and supervision to ensure that the organization’s personnel comply with these procedures and policies.

Quality control establishes policies and procedures that cover all phases of the audit process and monitor the ethics and
professional work of all individual audits such as auditors, assistants, and personnel [1]. According to the Controller and Auditor-General of New Zealand [5], quality control for annual audit engagements must be taken into account and audit engagement quality control reviewer needs to conduct a comprehensive consideration of following specific aspects:

- Having an understanding of objectives, performance, and risks of entities being audited;
- Judgments of auditors in accordance with materiality and risks;
- Assessment of sufficiency of audit planning and;
- Required consultations;
- Auditors’ response to material inconsistencies;
- Whether or not there are significant unresolved matters and any significant unresolved issues identified must be properly solved before signing the audit report;
- Appropriateness and adequacy of judgments and audit conclusions;
- Assessment of interrelation between documentation used and judgments of auditors;
- Communication between auditors and auditees about appropriate issues;
- Auditors’ opinion with respect to professional standards.

2.2.3. Standards of reporting

The audit report is required to trustworthily reflect opinions of entities being audited and provide clear and appropriate judgments for entities being audited [18]. Further, audit reports include a full assessment of materiality and risk, an internal control system, and legal compliance and financial statements, and may include additional reports addressing more detailed and specific evaluations of relevant issues [41].

2.2.4. Remarks

The OECD auditing standards chosen as the alternative auditing standards are identified as the goal that the SAV needs to achieve in order to improve its performance. After the strong audit practices of various OECD member countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italia, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland have been analyzed and discussed, they provided suggestions and recommendations to form the OECD auditing standards. The major feature of these standards is that they are strongly supported by technology and operated on a technology-driven system.

A summary of the OECD auditing standards identified by the literature was sent to participants to serve as interviews. The following are the main focus of the OECD auditing standard model:

- Independent status of the supreme audit institution is clearly regulated and underpinned by the Constitution, and judgments of auditors only abide by the constitution and law;
- IT auditors must have adequate and appropriate professional skills in information technology and the auditing field and be able to deal with the complicated IT systems of organizations being audited;
- A combination of various types of audits such as compliance audits, financial audits, performance audits and IT audits are used in audit engagements;
- Establishing a list of financial audit packages including audits throughout the year involving internal control assessment of entities being audited and specific specialized audit packages;
- It is necessary to use both quantitative and qualitative methods in performance audit engagements;
- A fully computerized audit environment and an online audit database are established;
- Audit documentation is recorded on paper or on electronic or other media that includes assessment criteria relating to audit evidence, adapted for appropriate audit procedures, and identifies significant issues in audit engagements;
- The application of the Computer Assisted Audit Techniques (CAATS). IT audit techniques such as the financial audit software, standard electronic audit files, electronic data management systems and interrogative and data mining software. Electronic auditing software must be specialized for auditing public sector entities;
- Development of electronic databases in which audit documents are stored, direct connection of the laptop computers of field auditors to client information data and the document verification and integration of field audit work with the statistical sampling packages of the CAATS;
- Accounting and auditing systems are strongly supported by IT so that auditors can access online the needed computer files of entities being audited or access the accounts and required documents for these entities. These files are on the auditor’s computer;
- A sample of finalized audit reports, following international audit report standards as exemplars of appropriate auditing and reporting practices, needs to be established.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to identify revisions required for the auditing standards of the SAV to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards. Using a single methodology to solve a complicated research problem relating to multiple disciplines may involve inherent limitations that can be overcome through a combination of different methodologies [6]. Moreover, any particular data source, investigator, and method tend to have inherent biases that can be diminished if combined with other data sources, investigators and methods [7]. In order to meet the research objectives, the study adopts qualitative approaches to gather data in the form of feedback from different participants concerning the proposed change management process. The key collection technique is semi-structured in-depth individual interviews, but document review provides supplementary data.

In the study, 30 individual interviews were conducted with the SAV auditors and managers. After interviews, the interview transcripts will be analyzed by thematic content analysis method, which is described as a process of encoding qualitative information. The thematic content analysis focuses on pinpointing both themes on the data and repeated patterns [9]. As Leininger [15] notes that thematic content analysis also looks for interactions: whereas partial analysis adopted for each of components or fragments of ideas or experiences tends to be
pointless, combining these into interaction analyses might reveal themes. The combination of some participants’ views and desires might, for example, lead to the emergence of the theme. In this stage of the study, the themes and patterns, which tend to be uncertain, will be identified by reading all the data and annotating it with codes. Thus, after different themes are made clear, models, reasonable arguments or ideas in the direction of improving the SAV to meet the OECD audit standards might emerge.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS
In this section, the research findings detail discussions with reference to relevant documents identified by the document review. Although research findings derived from analysis of interview transcripts is primary, outcomes of the document review help to supplement the overall data and validate and enrich the research findings. Based on the literature review and analysis of interview transcripts, the study indicates the revisions required for the auditing standards of the SAV to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards. The research findings are organized into six themes; these six themes include: revised performance audit standards, revised IT audit standards, revised standards of audit documentation, revised audit methodology standards and revised audit quality control standards and revised standards of reporting.

Theme 1: Revised performance audit standards
As a number of participants note, whereas the performance auditing of the most advanced OECD member countries is regarded as effective and practical, this is still a new and complex audit type for auditors in Vietnam and needs support and specific guidance from the SAV international auditing standards. In fact, the SAV [33] notes that the current auditing standards of the SAV only regulate financial audits and compliance audits as functions of the public audit but do not fully cover performance audits. In addition, the SAV has not yet developed and promulgated its performance audit standards in order to create a legal framework, which is an important basis for establishing detailed guidance for performance audits [32].

Theme 2: Revised IT audit standards
Many participants contended that auditing methodology and standards strongly supported by IT software may be different from the SAV traditional audit methodology in the aspects of the nature, time and scope of audit procedures. A study of the SAV auditing standard documents ([17], [32] and [33]) notes that IT audit standards are not mentioned by the SAV.

Theme 3: Revised standards of audit documentation
Analysis of the interview transcripts discloses that differences in audit documentation standards between the SAV and the most advanced OECD member countries are highly significant. An examination of a document of the auditing standards produced by the SAV [33] reveals that the SAV audit documentation standards focus on the assessment’s forms rather than its contents. A variety of procedures, materials, and terms in the audit documentation standards are not clarified through detailed guidance for specific audit engagement circumstances. There may be significant delays between changes in auditing standards and law, which need to be updated in a timely manner for audit engagements, and corresponding changes in auditing practice guidance documents [32].

Theme 4: Revised audit methodology standards
Unlike the audit methodology of the most advanced OECD member countries, however, as an analysis of a document of the audit standards produced by the SAV [33] notes, the current audit methodology standards of the SAV, which has not delved into risk and materiality assessment and audit procedures, are unlikely to adequately provide detailed guidance for auditors on how to make an audit plan, to conduct an audit and to make audit reports.

Ngo [23] states that the criteria descriptions of the methodologies for compliance audits have not yet been identified, nor have adequate assessments relating to the internal control system or the link between objectives, risks, control procedures and criteria. As multiple participants contended, despite the complexity of performance audits, assessment and performance methodologies have been minimally represented in the auditing standards. The auditors, therefore, depend significantly on individual understanding to apply international performance audit standards and methods.

Theme 5: Revised audit quality control standards
A study of a document of the SAV [34] disclosed that the audit quality control standards of the SAV do not cover specific quality control requirements. Likewise, analysis of the interview transcripts discloses that audit quality control standards do not adequately provide audit quality assessment criteria applied to supervise and review all of the audit processes phases. As Ngo [23] states, the criteria descriptions of the audit procedures for compliance auditing have not yet been identified, nor have adequate control procedures for internal control system assessment or links between objectives, risks, criteria and control procedures.

Theme 6: Revised standards of reporting
As an examination of the documents produced by the SAV ([32] and [33]) notes, even though the audit report standards of the SAV have been revised in order to be more compatible with international audit report standards, there is still a gap between the audit report standards of Vietnam and the most advanced OECD member countries. For example, research findings regarding standards of reporting disclose clear differences are found in the format of auditors’ reports and in the guidelines for making audit reports. However, the SAV has not yet produced any audit report samples. An examination of a document of the SAV [32] points out that a sample of finalized audit reports, which is fully effective as a practice statement to guide the SAV auditors in specialized audit areas, has not been developed in the SAV. Analysis of the interview data highlighted that the majority of SAV audits follow a standard form, for which such a sample would be of great use. The lack of these exemplars is likely to lead to inconsistencies in the format of SAV auditors' reports.

With regard to how audit report standards assist auditors in audit engagements, in contrast, an examination of a document of the auditing standards produced by the SAV [33] indicates that the SAV audit report standards present little guidance for auditors.
about whether or not material uncertainties need be discussed in the audit opinion. As Ngo [23] notes, the compilation of SAV auditors' reports depends on a significant extent on the auditors' experience and capacity rather than on the general guidance provided by report audit standards.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on suggestions and recommendations by participants and contributions acquired through the literature review and the consultation workshops, policy recommendations for improving the SAV to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards have been employed. The following are the policy recommendations corresponding to the six key themes identified above.

Revised performance audit standards
• Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the SAV should create strict and clear mechanisms and policies in relation to the development of OECD performance auditing standards to the SAV audit activities. It would appear; however, that the change management for SAV performance audit standards could be a long and difficult process.

Revised IT audit standards
• Recommendation 2: It is recommended that the SAV should build handbooks and manuals about the OECD IT audit standards and strengthen the application of the technological advances to the auditing field. A further study of IT auditing in the most advanced OECD member countries is required for the SAV when implementing the improvements in the auditing standards.

Revised standards of audit documentation
• Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the audit document standards of the SAV need to be supplemented with clear and specific explanations of audit documents and how the different audit teams are to apply audit documents in practice.

Revised audit methodology standards
• Recommendation 4: It is recommended that SAV audit methodology standards need to be amended to make them more detailed, scientific and up to date with technological advances in order to approach the audit methodology standards of the most advanced OECD member countries when implementing the change in the auditing standards.

Revised audit quality control standards
• Recommendation 5: It is recommended that the audit quality control standards of the SAV should be considered and perfected so that the SAV can implement the OECD auditing standards. First, the audit quality control standards must provide specific guidance for the roles and responsibilities of auditors and other participants in each phase. Second, the standards have to indicate clearly and give proof of the quality control criteria utilized for each phase and the criteria for evidence are to be collected. Third, during each phase of an audit process, the standards should provide quality control procedures suitable for each phase; the implementation of those procedures and the results need to be identified and proven clearly.

Revised standards of reporting
• Recommendation 6: It is recommended that improving the SAV auditing standards to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards requires a modification of audit report standards through assessing the gap between Vietnam and the most advanced OECD member countries in the format of auditors' reports and in the nature of the guidelines for creating audit reports.

6. CONCLUSION
The SAV auditing standards have inherent limitations and weaknesses that need to be addressed in order to keep pace with the SAV development. Thus the SAV audit standard improvement is an urgent requirement of the SAV and has the potential to contribute significantly to the SAV development. The purpose of this paper is to improving the SAV to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards. This paper presents literature underpinning the objective of the study and identify the OECD auditing standards. The research has dealt with and provided suggestions for revisions required for the SAV auditing standards to be compatible with the OECD auditing standards. Although, further study into these issues is not the purpose of the research topic, these shortcomings in the practice of auditing in the SAV provide the rationale for and background to the investigation of the change management processes required for the SAV to introduce the OECD auditing standards.

REFERENCES


