

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 1
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Procedure 201: SA8000 Advisory 200-8	Effective: April 15, 2010



SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACCREDITATION SERVICES

To: All SAAS Accredited Organizations and Accreditation Applicants

Subject: Length of Accreditation Cycle

Background:

Currently, SAAS accreditation policies state that the accreditation cycle for Certification Bodies (also known as conformity assessment bodies or CABs) certifying clients to SA8000 is for a period of 3 years – once a CB is granted accreditation by SAAS, the contract and accreditation certificate are valid for 3 years, pending successful surveillance audits by SAAS throughout those 3 years. Upon completion of the 3 years, the CB chooses to apply for reaccreditation and the cycle starts again. ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Clause 7.11.3b) permits SAAS to use accreditation cycles up to 5 years.

At this time, the SAAS Board of Directors, Advisory Committee and Accreditation Review Panel have agreed to extend the accreditation cycle from 3 years to 4 years. The purpose of this extension is to allow SAAS to manage the accreditation of its CBs by providing the same continued oversight but with less frequent disruption from the process of applying for reaccreditation. The evaluation and oversight of CBs will continue through the use of surveillance audits of the CB's offices (including annual audits at the head office designated in Procedure 200, 1.4a) and witnessed client audits, a combination of which occur at a minimum of semi-annual intervals. Prior to the completion of the 4 year accreditation cycle, SAAS will conduct a reaccreditation office audit at the office designated in Procedure 200 1.4a and a witnessed client audit.

This extension of the SAAS accreditation cycle will be phased-in for each currently accredited CB upon the conclusion of their current accreditation cycle. Upon receiving a positive reaccreditation decision, the CB's accreditation agreement and accreditation certificate from SAAS will be for a period of 4 years.

It should be noted that with the extension of the accreditation cycle from 3 years to 4 years, the reaccreditation application fees will be adjusted accordingly without an increase, at this time.

Status: SAAS Procedure 201:2008, shall be amended as follows:

15.2.2 shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

Complete reassessment of the accredited CB's compliance with accreditation procedures will begin within 3 months of the end of the accreditation term of four years, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Executive Director. The reaccreditation assessments shall involve the head office designated in Procedure 200, 1.4a and a witnessed audit and shall cover all elements and all steps of the accreditation requirements, as described herein and in SAAS Procedure 200. CBs applying for reaccreditation shall complete an application form, pay the required reaccreditation application fee, and submit any revised documentation in advance of the office assessment. See section 10 through 13 of this document for further details on the application process.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 1
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Procedure 201: SA8000 Advisory 200-8	Effective: April 15, 2010

Annex A: 15.1.1 d.ii.a shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

- ii. **Countries** with **5** or more SA8000 certifications:
 - a. SAAS requires a site visit at least once in the four year accreditation term.

Please complete the items below and fax back to SAAS by May 15, 2010 to acknowledge receipt of this advisory. SAAS shall implement this policy beginning April 15, 2010.

Signature:	Printed Name:
------------	---------------

Date:

Company Name:
