



To: All SAAS Accredited Organizations and Accreditation Applicants

## SAAS Notification

Issue: 1

Date: August 25, 2011

To: SAAS-Accredited and Applicant CBs and Accreditation Auditors

From: Rochelle Zaid, Executive Director, SAAS

RE: ISO/IEC 17021:2011 publication and SAAS Procedures Revision

ISO/IEC 17021 was revised and published on 1 February 2011. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO), in consultation with other bodies, has set the date for implementation of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 as 1 February 2013.

ISO/IEC 17021:2011 includes the existing text of ISO/IEC 17021:2006 and contains additional requirements for competence and the audit process and is applicable to the certification of all types of management systems and to the bodies providing these activities. Therefore ISO/IEC 17021:2011 will replace ISO/IEC 17021:2006 for required implementation:

- All Certification Bodies accredited by SAAS for SA8000 certification programs shall conform to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 by February 1, 2013.
- Organizations seeking accreditation whose applications have been accepted prior to January 1, 2012 will be required to conform to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 for their initial accreditation and upgrade to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 by February 1, 2013.
- Organizations seeking accreditation by SAAS to conduct SA8000 certification audits whose applications are received on or after January 1, 2012 will be required to conform to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 by the date of accreditation.

SAAS is taking the opportunity to coincide the update of its Procedure 200 and Procedure 201 in conjunction with the revision of ISO/IEC 17021:2011. Draft copies of these procedures will be circulated to all accredited CBs for comment by December 31, 2011. Transition to the revised Procedures 200 and 201 will be phased with that of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the review of compliance to these procedures will coincide with that of ISO/IEC 17021:2011.

Currently accredited and applicant Certification Bodies shall analyze and understand the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the SAAS Procedures and shall create a transition plan to determine the required changes and time frames required to execute the changes.

SAAS Accredited Certification Bodies and current applicants for accreditation are required to share their transition plan with SAAS and their SAAS client manager (if assigned) prior to December 31, 2011.

Progress against the transition plan will be monitored on a regular basis by SAAS to ensure effective management of the transition.

Wherever possible, a CB should implement those parts of ISO/IEC 17021:2011 that it can without delay.

Office assessment to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the revised Procedure 200 shall commence with head office audits in 2012. These audits will require an additional one day to be added to the annual head office audit (head office shall be defined per Procedure 200, element 1.4b). Where full implementation of specific clauses identified by the CB, and agreed in advance with SAAS, have not been completed by the end of the transition period, such changes shall be raised as OFIs and shall not adversely affect accreditation - provided that an implementation plan has been agreed and is on schedule. Any nonconformities identified shall be dealt with according to normal SAAS processes and must be cleared prior to February 1, 2013 for accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 to be granted.

On February 1, 2013, all accredited CBs shall be in full compliance with ISO/IEC 17021:2011 and the revised Procedure 200. Accredited and applicant CBs that are accredited to ISO/IEC 17021:2011 by other agencies shall make available the assessment reports of their other accreditors for review by SAAS auditors.