

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015



SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACCREDITATION SERVICES

SAAS Notification

Issue: 4A, revision 2
Date: August 25, 2015
To: All SAAS Accredited and Applicant Certification Bodies (CBs)
From: Rochelle Zaid, Executive Director, SAAS
RE: Transition Requirements for Certification of Organisations to SA8000:2014

As a result of review of comments received by stakeholders and CBs, this notification has been amended with revised timelines and requirements.

Status: This notification outlines the timeline and process for organisations to transition to SA8000:2014. It is applicable for organisations that are currently certified to SA8000:2008, as well as organisations seeking initial certification to SA8000:2014. This revised Notification 4A should be read in conjunction with Notification 4B, which describes the training requirements for existing and new SA8000 auditors and accredited training providers. All related documents can be downloaded from either the SAI or SAAS websites.

Relevant Dates	Required Activity
September 2015	SAI to release the SA8000:2014 Guidance Document and Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment and SAAS to release Procedure 200:2015 and Procedure 201A and 201B:2015.
October 1, 2015	Deadline: CBs SHALL fax or email acknowledgement of this revised Notification to SAAS.
November 1, 2015	Deadline: CBs SHALL develop a transition plan for integrating SA8000:2014, Social Fingerprint, ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and SAAS Procedure 201A and 201B:2015 into their management systems. This transition plan SHALL be submitted to SAAS for approval.
January 1, 2016	A CB MAY begin conducting SA8000:2014 audits provided it has received a document review and approval from SAAS . SA8000:2014 audits SHALL be conducted in accordance with the requirements found in ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and Procedure 201A and 201B:2015
January 1, 2016	SAAS SHALL begin accepting applications for CB accreditation to ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015, SAAS Procedure 201A:2015 and SAAS Procedure 201B:2015 to conduct SA8000:2014 audits.
March 31, 2016	Deadline: CBs SHALL amend all SA8000 system documents including: forms, instructions, contracts, policies and procedures. The revised documents SHALL reflect the normative requirements found in ISO 17021-1:2015, Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015 for conducting certification audit to SA8000:2014 including the Social Fingerprint process. SAAS shall conduct a document review prior to a CB undertaking SA8000:2014 audits.
April 1, 2016	Deadline: As of this date, all SA8000 certification audits of new clients SHALL be to SA8000:2014.
December 31, 2016	Deadline: As of this date, CBs SHALL be in compliance to ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and Procedure 201A and 201B:2015. This SHALL be confirmed by a successful Head Office Audit of the CB and at least one witness audit.
June 30, 2017	Deadline: As of this date, ALL SA8000 certified organisations SHALL have transitioned to SA8000:2014 and any existing SA8000:2008 certificates SHALL be invalid.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

1. SA8000:2014 was revised and published by SAI in June 2014. It incorporates minor changes to several elements, as well as the expansion and clarification of requirements in other elements.
2. **The deadline for all certified organisations to transition to the requirements of SA8000:2014 is June 30, 2017.** After that date, any SA8000:2008 certificates SHALL be invalid.
3. **Clients Currently Certified to SA8000:2008:**
 - 3.1 CBs may continue to conduct SA8000:2008 recertification and surveillance audits for existing SA8000-certified clients through June 2017. Currently certified clients due for recertification before June 30, 2017 may be recertified to SA8000:2008, but SHALL transition to SA8000:2014 by June 30, 2017.
 - 3.2 All currently certified SA8000:2008 clients SHALL transition to SA8000:2014 by June 30, 2017. In order to transition to SA8000:2014, a client SHALL complete a transition audit to the requirements of SA8000:2014 using SAAS Procedure 200:2015 (see below).
 - 3.3 All CBs SHALL inform their certified clients of these transition dates. SAAS SHALL review the relevant communications between CBs and their certified clients at the next CB head office audit.
4. **Process for Currently Certified Clients to Transition to SA8000:2014:**
 - 4.1 All SAAS-accredited CBs SHALL require SA8000-certified clients to identify and implement all changes necessary to their existing SA8000-related procedures, documents and policies in order to meet the requirements of SA8000:2014 and the integration of Social Fingerprint into the audit process. Wherever possible, SA8000-certified organisations SHALL implement those parts of SA8000:2014 without delay.
 - 4.2 Currently certified organisations SHALL conduct a gap analysis to understand the areas in their system that need to be revised. CBs shall have access to this gap analysis for review during the transition audit.
 - 4.3 CBs shall assess their clients' implementation of SA8000:2014 during an on-site transition audit which may be completed during normally scheduled certification, recertification and surveillance activities. Additional assessments are not required, but may be conducted if necessary as determined by the CB.
 - a. The on-site transition audit shall include an assessment of the implementation of the elements found in SA8000:2014 with a focus on the significant changes in the revised Standard. The transition audit shall include a focus on forced and compulsory labour; health and safety; and management systems, as well as a brief review of those elements with minor or no changes between SA8000:2008 and SA8000:2014 (as indicated by reviewing the Side-By-Side comparison document of SA8000:2008 and SA8000:2014, available on the SAI website).
 - b. The transition audit shall include a Social Fingerprint self-assessment by the organisation and independent evaluation by the CB.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

- c. The audit process requirements found in SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and ISO 17021-1:2015 SHALL be used for assessing clients and process requirements for conducting the SA8000:2014 audit, including the revised audit day table, audit criteria, etc.

5. Process for Clients Not Yet Certified to SA8000:

- 5.1 After March 31, 2016, CBs SHALL not conduct any audits for initial certification to SA8000:2008. Beginning April 1, 2016, all SA8000 initial certification audits of new clients SHALL be to SA8000:2014 and SHALL include an evaluation of the organisation using Social Fingerprint.
- 5.2 All SA8000:2014 certification audits SHALL be conducted using the requirements and processes found in Procedure 200:2015 and ISO 17021-1:2015. Therefore, the CB SHALL conduct the SA8000:2014 audits using amended documents, forms, instructions, contracts, policies and procedures to reflect the normative requirements of certification to SA8000:2014, including those found in ISO 17021-1:2015, Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015.

6. Social Fingerprint and the SA8000:2014 Certification Process:

- 6.1 Beginning April 1, 2016, all audits of new clients to SA8000:2014 SHALL include Social Fingerprint.
- 6.2 Currently certified organisations and new clients interested in certification to SA8000:2014 may take the Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment beginning September 2015. The Self-Assessment will be available via the SAI website.
- 6.3 All CBs SHALL inform their clients of the availability of this tool. SAI will provide further guidance (webinars or written instructions) to CBs about the use of the Social Fingerprint online tool.
- 6.4 **SA8000:2014 Social Fingerprint Process for Clients Not Yet Certified:**
 - a. Organisations SHALL complete the Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment through the SAI online training center prior to the initial SA8000:2014 Stage 1 Audit.
 - b. During the initial SA8000:2014 certification cycle, SA8000 auditors SHALL conduct a Social Fingerprint Independent Evaluation at the following audits:
 - 1. Initial Stage 1 SA8000:2014 audit
 - 2. Initial Stage 2 SA8000:2014 audit
 - 3. Surveillance 2 (As per Procedure 200:2015, Surveillance 2 is not required to be an unannounced audit. See section 16.2 of Procedure 200:2015 for further clarification.)
 - 4. Surveillance 4
 - c. After the initial SA8000:2014 certification cycle, the Social Fingerprint process (self-assessment and independent evaluation) occurs at the recertification audit (every 3 years). See Figure 1 in this document for further guidance on integrating the Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment and Independent Evaluation in the SA8000:2014 audit process.

6.5 SA8000:2014 Social Fingerprint Process for Clients Currently Certified to SA8000:2008 that transition to SA8000:2014 at Recertification:

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

- a. Organisations SHALL complete the Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment through the SAI online training center before the Stage 2 recertification audit.
- b. During this cycle, SA8000 auditors SHALL conduct a Social Fingerprint Independent Evaluation at the following audits:
 1. Recertification Stage 2 SA8000:2014 Audit
 2. Surveillance 2 (As per Procedure 200:2015, Surveillance 2 is not required to be an unannounced audit. See section 16.2 of Procedure 200:2015 for further clarification.)
 3. Surveillance 4
- c. After the initial SA8000:2014 certification cycle, the Social Fingerprint process (self-assessment and independent evaluation) occurs at the recertification audit (every 3 years). See Figure 1 in this document for further guidance on integrating the Social Fingerprint Self-Assessment and Independent Evaluation in the SA8000:2014 audit process.

6.6 SA8000:2014 Social Fingerprint Process for Clients Currently Certified to SA8000:2008 that Transition to SA8000:2014 during a Surveillance Audit:

- a. Organisations SHALL complete the Self-Assessment through the SAI online training center before the transition audit.
- b. SA8000 auditors SHALL conduct a Social Fingerprint Independent Evaluation at the following audits:
 1. The surveillance audit that serves as the transition audit to SA8000:2014.
 2. TWO additional audits in addition to the next recertification audit (timing is dependent on when the transition audit occurs in the certification cycle). See Figure 1 in this document for further guidance on integrating the Self-Assessment and Independent Evaluation in the SA8000:2014 audit process.
- c. After the initial SA8000:2014 certification cycle, the Social Fingerprint process (self-assessment and independent evaluation) occurs at the recertification audit (every 3 years) except for organisations that transition to SA8000:2014 during a Surveillance 4 or 5 Audit. See Figure 1 in this document for further guidance.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

7. Transition Process for SAAS Accredited CBs:

- 7.1 All SAAS Accredited CBs SHALL identify and implement all changes necessary to existing procedures, documents and policies related to SA8000 in order to incorporate the changes in SA8000:2014, ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and SAAS Procedures 201A:2015 and 201B:2015. The deadline for compliance with ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015, Procedure 201A and 201B:2015 shall be December 31, 2016.
- 7.2 Wherever possible, an accredited CB should implement those parts of ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015 without delay. Assessment by SAAS shall be in 3 parts (a document review, an office audit and a witnessed audit) and shall cover the CBs plans for effectively managing the transition to the new requirements.
- 7.3 Plan of Action: All SAAS Accredited CBs SHALL submit a plan of action to SAAS for integrating SA8000:2014, ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and SAAS Procedure 201A:2015 into their audit processes by November 1, 2015.
- a. SAAS SHALL review the plan of action and provide formal feedback, including questions for clarification.
 - b. Upon review of the plan and acceptance by SAAS, the CB SHALL undertake the necessary revisions to amend their documents, forms, instructions, contracts, policies and procedures to reflect the normative requirements of certification to SA8000:2014, Social Fingerprint and those found in ISO 17021-1:2015, Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015.
- 7.4 Document Review: A document review of the CBs revised procedures SHALL be conducted by SAAS prior to the CB undertaking any SA8000:2014 audits. This review SHALL assess compliance with ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015, SAAS Procedures 201A:2015 and 201B:2015 and to ensure that the CB has integrated the Social Fingerprint process into its policies and procedures.
- a. These document reviews SHALL be scheduled between November 1, 2015 and March 30, 2016, upon receipt by SAAS of the required procedures, forms and documentation from each accredited CB. The document reviews SHALL be conducted on a first come, first served basis.
 - b. Upon successful completion of the remote document review, SAAS shall issue a letter to each CB confirming that the CB is now authorized to deliver SAAS Accredited SA8000:2014 certification. This acceptance from SAAS SHALL be received prior to any SA8000:2014 audits being undertaken.
 - c. Therefore, the CB SHALL conduct the SA8000:2014 audits using amended documents, forms, instructions, contracts, policies and procedures to reflect the normative requirements of certification to SA8000:2014, including those found in ISO 17021-1:2015, Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015.
- 7.5 Office and Witnessed Audits: From January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, SAAS SHALL monitor the CBs' implementation of their transition plans through head office audits, regional/local office audits and witnessed audits, as regularly scheduled surveillance audits, with additional time as needed.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

- a. Integration of ISO 17021-1:2015 and SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015 SHALL be confirmed through a successful head office audit and at least one witness of an SA8000:2014 audit.
 - b. In setting this transition period, SAAS have taken into account that the transition will require changes to procedures, setting up new training curricula, and revision of software systems, as well as implementation of new systems, policies and procedures to demonstrate compliance.
- 7.6 Upon review and confirmation of compliance with the new requirements through December 31, 2016 (through the document review, office audit/s and witnessed audit/s in 2016, resulting in no major CARs), SAAS SHALL issue a new accreditation certificate and agreement to each CB, indicating their accreditation by SAAS to the new requirements.
- 7.7 CBs SHALL report all transitions of their existing clients and new applicants to SA8000:2014 in line with the reporting requirements stated in SAAS Procedure 201A using SAAS Form 616A.
- 7.8 Training Requirements for SA8000 auditors are described in SAAS Notification 4B.
- 8. New Applications for SAAS SA8000 CB Accreditation:**
- 8.1 SAAS has not accepted new applications of accreditation for certification to SA8000:2008 and SAAS Procedure 200:2007 since the SA8000 revision process began in 2012.
- 8.2 As of January 1, 2016, SAAS SHALL begin accepting applications for CB accreditation to conduct SA8000:2014 audits in compliance with ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015, SAAS Procedure 201A:2015 and SAAS Procedure 201B:2015. Applications SHALL not be considered for CBs seeking accreditation to deliver SA8000:2008 audits.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

9. Normative Documents:

- 9.1 **SA8000:2014:** The SA8000:2014 Standard was released publicly by Social Accountability International (SAI) in June 2014. CBs SHALL be responsible for disseminating the Standard to all their SA8000 auditors (including subcontractors) and other personnel. The Standard can be downloaded directly from SAI's website.
- 9.2 All SA8000:2014 certification audits SHALL be conducted in accordance with the requirements of **SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and ISO 17021-1:2015**.
- 9.3 **SAAS Procedure 200:2015:** The CB SHALL be responsible for integrating the requirements found in SAAS Procedure 200 into its internal processes and disseminating relevant information to all SA8000 certified clients, SA8000 auditors [including subcontractors] and other CB personnel. *Note: As detailed in SAAS Procedure 200:2015, CBs SHALL only raise non-conformities related to management system violations of a particular clause and/or sub-clause of SA8000:2014.*
- 9.4 **SAAS Procedure 201A:2015 and 201B:2015:** CBs SHALL be responsible for integrating the requirements of SAAS Procedure 201A:2015 and SAAS Procedure 201B:2015 into their internal processes. CBs SHALL also be responsible for disseminating relevant information from these Procedures to all SA8000 certified clients, SA8000 auditors [including subcontractors] and other CB personnel.
- 9.5 **ISO 17021-1:2015:** ISO 17021-1:2015 was published in June 2015. All SAAS accredited CBs SHALL be transitioned with the same timeline for implementation as SAAS Procedure 200:2015.
- 9.6 Deadline for transition by CBs to **ISO 17021-1:2015, SAAS Procedure 200:2015 and Procedures 201A and 201B:2015 SHALL be December 31, 2016**. This SHALL be confirmed by a successful Head Office Audit of the CB and at least one SA8000:2014 witness audit.

10. Guidance and Reference Documents:

- 10.1 **The SA8000:2014 Guidance Document:** CBs are responsible for disseminating the Guidance Document to all their SA8000 auditors (including subcontractors) and other personnel.
- 10.2 **The SA8000:2014 Performance Indicator Annex (PIA):** The PIA was released publicly by Social Accountability International (SAI) in November 2014. CBs are responsible for disseminating the PIA to all their SA8000 auditors (including subcontractors) and other personnel.
- 10.3 **The SA8000:2014 Drafters' Notes:** The Drafters' Notes were released publicly by Social Accountability International (SAI) in July 2014. CBs are responsible for disseminating the Drafters' Notes to all their SA8000 auditors (including subcontractors) and other personnel.
- 10.4 **The SA8000:2014 Certification Exclusion List:** The SA8000 Certification Exclusion List was released in November 2014. CBs are responsible for disseminating the Exclusions to all their SA8000 auditors (including subcontractors) and other personnel.
- 10.5 **Social Fingerprint:** The Social Fingerprint online platform SHALL be available for all SA8000 clients for the SA8000:2014 certification process via SAI's website. CBs SHALL be responsible for ensuring that their SA8000 auditors [including subcontractors] and other CB personnel have the appropriate access and ability to use this system.

Cycle Timeline to SA8000:2014

Figure 1

Legend

SA: Self-Assessment

IE: Independent Evaluation

Type	Stage 1	Stage 2	Surv. 1	Surv. 2	Surv. 3	Surv. 4	Surv. 5	Stage 2 (Recertification)	Surv. 1 through Surv. 5	Stage 2 (Recertification)	
New	SA + IE	IE		IE		IE		SA + IE		SA + IE	
Recertification		SA + IE		IE		IE		SA + IE		SA + IE	
Transition occurs in Surveillance 1			SA + IE		IE		IE	SA + IE		SA + IE	
Transition occurs in Surveillance 2				SA + IE		IE		SA + IE*	IE	SA + IE	
Transition occurs in Surveillance 3					SA + IE		IE	SA + IE*	IE	SA + IE	
Transition occurs in Surveillance 4*						SA + IE		SA + IE**	IE	IE	SA + IE
Transition occurs in Surveillance 5*							SA + IE	SA + IE**	IE	IE	SA + IE

*Companies that transition during Surveillance 2 and Surveillance 3 will be certified if they meet the requirements of SA8000:2014, but still need to conduct an additional IE anytime during their second recertification cycle.

** Companies that transition during Surveillance 4 and Surveillance 5 will be certified if they meet the requirements of SA8000:2014, but still need to conduct 2 additional IEs anytime during their second recertification cycle.

Author: L. Bernstein	Social Accountability Accreditation Services	Issue: 3
Approval: R. Zaid	SAAS Notification 4A: Transition Requirements For SA8000:2014	Effective: August 25, 2015

----- End of Document -----

Please complete the form below to acknowledge receipt of this updated Notification 4A. Please fax (to +1-212-684-1515) or scan and email (to LBernstein@saasaccreditation.org) this document to SAAS by October 1, 2015.

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

Date:

CB Name:
