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| Author: L. Bernstein | Social Accountability Accreditation Services | Issue: 1 |
| Approval: R. Zaid | SAAS Global Procedure 200 | Effective: December 7, 2007 |



**SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ACCREDITATION SERVICES**

REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AND MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

SAAS CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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Foreword

SA8000 is an international standard for improving working conditions around the world. It is based on the principles of thirteen international human rights conventions and is intended to help apply these norms to practical work-life situations. SA8000 expands on the eight conventions of the ILO's Declaration of Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work and the management systems requirements of SA8000 move beyond a checklist approach, encouraging managers to make sustainable systemic changes in how they run their business.

Once an organization has implemented the necessary improvements, it can earn a certificate attesting to its compliance with SA8000. This certificate provides a report of good practice to consumers, buyers, and other companies and is a significant milestone in improving working conditions. Maintaining and improving the systems put in place to achieve SA8000 certification is an ongoing process and substantive worker participation can be the best means to ensuring systemic change. The benefits of adopting SA8000 are significant and may include improved staff morale, more reliable business partnerships, enhanced competitiveness, less staff turnover and better worker-manager communication.

Purpose

This document has been written for use by SAAS when accrediting Certification Bodies undertaking assessments of organizations against the SA8000 Standard, and as the certification process requirements to be used by those Bodies. The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide documentation to assure continuity and consistency of the SA8000 certification process;
- Establish consistent SA8000 certification procedures, requirements and methodology for accredited Certification Bodies to operate in a consistent and controlled manner; and
- Provide transparency that is required of an international accreditation body.

This document prescribes the procedures, criteria and methodology that a certification body must undertake in carrying out assessment of an organization that submits for compliance with SA8000 certification. The assessment of an organization for compliance with SA8000 is a voluntary procedure and it is the responsibility of any such organization to provide sufficient evidence that SA8000 certification is justified.

The term "shall" is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions that are mandatory. It is expected that the requirements stated in this document will be integrated into the procedures/processes of the accredited certification bodies.

This procedure shall be updated from time to time and is subject to regular oversight by SAAS and its Board. Additional procedures and requirements may be promulgated in the form of Advisories. Those Advisories shall be considered requirements for implementation by Certification Bodies and integrated into the procedures/processes of the accredited certification bodies.

Supporting Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with additional procedures and guidance documents that provide other details in the form of guidance. These documents are:

- SA8000 Standard: 2001
- Guidance Document for SA8000
- SAAS Procedure 201: Accreditation of Certification Bodies of Social Accountability Systems
- SAAS Procedure 304: For Making a Complaint or Appeal
- SAAS Procedure 406: Fee Schedule
- SAAS Procedure 426: Use of the SA8000 Accreditation Mark

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Social Standard Implementation Requirements

These requirements specify procedures with regard to accreditation to and certification of organizations to social standards. They deal with certification body audit processes, auditor qualifications, procedures and certificates. These requirements are binding to certification bodies accredited by SAAS for performing SA8000 certification as determined by SAAS. These rules are subject to periodic review and may be modified at any time at the sole discretion of SAAS after consultation with appropriate stakeholders.

Breach of these rules by any part of an accredited certification body relevant to the certification process shall initiate the de-accreditation process and may result in cancellation of SAAS accreditation should the breach not be resolved in a timely manner.

In all cases, the current edition of a certification standard or normative document shall be the reference document in this procedure, per the standard's published rollout schedule.

****Requirements in this document apply specifically to SA8000 certification and will be supplemented for other social standards as required. See SAAS Procedure 211 for further details.**

Note 1: SA8000 certification is applicable in all countries, excepting Myanmar (Burma) until the ILO lifts its sanctions, put in place against that country on November 30, 2000 and reaffirmed March 24, 2005.

Note 2: SA8000 certification is applicable in all industries excepting maritime until such a time when SAAS may determine otherwise. Such circumstances would be released in a supplemental advisory. SA8000 use in maritime activities is under discussion and it is quite possible that certification of such activities, in accordance with applicable ILO conventions, might be approved in the future. At present, since the maritime conventions on hours averaging and other topics are not referenced in SA8000, no such organization can be certified.

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1.0 Certification Body

- 1.1 The certification body, or the organization of which it forms a part, shall be legally identifiable. A certification body that is part of an organization involved in functions other than certification shall be organizationally identifiable within the related organization. Where the certification body also supplies other services, the relationship between the certification function and other functions must be clearly defined and separation maintained.
- 1.2 The certification body shall retain authority and shall be responsible for its decisions relating to certification, including the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.
- 1.3 The certification body shall include in its operating procedures a description of the specific social standard certification processes for which SAAS has accredited it for, and the sequence in which they occur. The certification body shall perform internal audits of those certification activities using a process approach compliant with ISO 19011:2002.
- 1.4 Where a certification body has multiple offices involved in the social standard certification process, the following conditions shall be fulfilled:
- a. The certification body shall use a common management system requiring use of the same procedures for all its offices in the delivery of certification to the standard.
 - b. One of the CB staff shall be designated to interface with SAAS. This designated staff will be the direct contact with SAAS and will be responsible for the control of all the social standard certification related activities, except where necessary for scheduling and logistics. The office where this designated staff is based shall be visited annually, per Procedure 201, section 15.1.1
- 1.5 The certification body shall conform to ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996, "General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification of quality systems", and SAAS Procedure 200. SAAS will transition to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 to replace ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 and will accept compliance to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 in lieu of ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 at a time to be specified in an advisory to accredited organizations.
- 1.6 The certification body procedure for client, interested parties, and organization and worker complaints shall encompass at a minimum a documented investigation process, corrective action system (including root cause analysis, preventive action, and systemic corrective action) and a record of each complaint and its resolution. (See section 1.10 and 4.0 below and SAAS Procedure 304 for guidelines on complaints and appeals). SAAS shall be notified of each such complaint received within one month of receipt and will be appraised of its subsequent investigation and resolution as per 4.1.3.
- 1.7 In order to avoid conflict of interest, certification bodies whose related bodies have provided SA8000 or similar human resources management system consulting services within the prior two years to a particular company shall not contract as a certification body for that company or any of its sites. *This restriction includes related bodies of the same parent company or affiliates, where the validity or reliability of an audit can be questioned because of a consulting relationship.*

Note: Consulting is the provision of documentation development, or assistance with implementation of management systems to a specific organization. Training in a public forum is

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not considered consulting nor is an introductory session such as a 1-day awareness program at the Client's location.

- 1.8 The certification body may perform a "pre-assessment" or "pre-audit" which is an audit prior to the initial Stage 1 audit that generates non-binding findings at the certification body client's sites, without recommending solutions. The pre-assessment shall not be considered as part of the initial audit.
- 1.9 The certification body shall have a documented procedure to ensure the continuing effectiveness and competence of its social standards auditors and technical advisors. This procedure shall include an internal witness audit process, verification of continuing professional development, and the initial and continuing authority for the approval or rejection of the CB's auditors. This procedure and process shall be approved by SAAS in accordance with the requirements of section 3 in this document.
- 1.10 Certification bodies shall maintain, as a minimum, the following records:
- a. copies of scheduled audits showing time and assigned auditors,
 - b. auditor qualification records (full-time and sub-contract),
 - c. the quotation file to the organization, including the audit days and how they were calculated, and audit day fees,
 - d. notes/minutes from stakeholder consultations and other pre-audit research,
 - e. explanation of basic needs wage calculation,
 - f. pre-assessment reports, if conducted,
 - g. the report of the stage 1 readiness review, including the evidence that all the requirements of SA8000 and other applicable social standards are addressed by the certification applicant's processes,
 - h. the audit plan (agenda) demonstrating auditor itinerary details, time frames, subjects (processes) covered, and personnel involved,
 - i. the final audit report, including the opening and closing meeting attendance records, positive reporting notes and checklists completed by each auditor and the audit team recommendation regarding certification,
 - j. copies of all nonconformities issued, surveillance audit reports, follow up reports, and other documentation leading to the verification of the effectiveness of the correction of the nonconformities,
 - k. audit logs/notes as maintained by each audit team member,
 - l. a copy of the certification decision process,
 - m. a copy of the certificate issued,

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- n. the audit team members' initial assignment approval (see 1.9) and continuous performance evaluation,
 - o. client, interested parties, organization and worker complaints including the actions taken to resolve them,
 - p. a register of all SA8000 and other applicable social standards certified organizations.
- 1.11 All the records specified above, stored in hard copy or electronically, must be readily accessible during an office assessment by SAAS. This must be considered when establishing a decentralized office. The records specified above shall be retained for the life of the associated certificate plus at least 3 years.
- 1.12 Records shall be accessible at the designated office (see 1.4b) and remain legible, readily identifiable and retrievable. These documents must also be made available to SAAS to allow adequate review and oversight and to provide appropriate evidence of compliance by the CB and its personnel.
- 1.13 While documents should be in English, some smaller, regional organizations may maintain documents in their local language due to cost containment. In such cases, appropriate translation must be made available to assure that representatives from SAAS have the ability to evaluate the documents effectively. The certification body shall maintain an effective procedure that defines the controls for the identification, storage, protection, retrieval, retention time and disposition of records.

2.0 Audit Process

- 2.1 Any organization, excepting those in Myanmar and in the Maritime industry (per Note 1 and Note 2 on page 2) may elect to pursue third party certification to SA8000. Such organizations, however, shall have demonstrated capability to conform to all SA8000 requirements.
- 2.2 The certification process shall address all SA8000 requirements according to this Procedure and requirements from ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 [17021¹].
- 2.3 The initial certification audit shall be conducted in two stages: stage 1 – readiness review and stage 2 - site audit
- a. Stage 1 - Readiness review: see ISO/IEC Guide 17021: 9.2.3.1. The Stage 1 review shall usually be conducted during an on-site visit to the organization.
 - b. Stage 2 - Site audit: see ISO/IEC 17021: 9.2.3.2. Stage two audit day requirements are defined in this section.
- 2.4 Certification shall apply to all parts of a continuous process or premises. For example, in a situation with several assembly lines, all must be audited for certification. Similarly, in a continuous process of fabrication and finishing and packaging, the entire process must be compliant in order for certification to be granted.

¹ Guide 17021 will replace ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 when it is formally accepted and approved by SAAS so that conformance to ISO/IEC Guide 17021 shall be required by SAAS. SAAS will transition to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 to replace ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 and will accept compliance to ISO/IEC 17021:2006 in lieu of ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 at a time to be specified in an advisory to accredited organizations.

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- 2.5 For multiple site audit schemes (multi-site sampling), sites shall be audited in accordance with defined sampling procedures (see Appendix II).
- 2.6 Audit planning and execution shall take into account all workers both on site and off site, including temporary and contract labor. The certification body audit plan shall address all elements of the standard at each location and during all shifts (crews) covered by the certificate.
- 2.7 The entire management system for SA8000 shall be assessed at a minimum of once every three years. The audit cycle shall be based upon the dates of the initial certification decision. The time interval between initial certification and re-certification or between two re-certification audits shall not exceed three years from issue, except that a grace period of up to 3 months may be allowed with proper documented justification.
- 2.8 All requirements of SA8000 shall be audited (verified under ISO/IEC 17021:2006) during the stage 2 site audit of the initial audit and re-certification audit.

Each on-site surveillance audit shall include an audit of:

- a. management systems including management review, internal audits and corrective actions;
 - b. complaints and organization response;
 - c. worker training and worker awareness on the SA8000 system and its impact on individuals;
 - d. effectiveness of the corrective actions and verification since the last audit;
 - e. overall health and safety risk assessment, including incidence of accidents and fatalities;
 - f. worker representative role and activities to date;
 - g. working hours (including during high season, if any);
 - h. basic needs wage.
- 2.9 Every audit shall include auditing on all shifts (all crews). However, in cases of small companies where only one or two audit days apply, the auditing of all shifts may be covered in surveillance audits during the 3 year period.
- 2.10 The audit plan shall be adapted to the processes and working environment of the organization and shall include all requirements of the organization's social management system.
- 2.11 The audit plan shall include evaluation of all of the organization's social management system requirements for effective implementation of SA8000 as well as for effectiveness in practice. Assessment shall evaluate the effectiveness of the system, its linkages, its requirements and its performance. Part of the evidence required is the results of internal audits of the organization's social policies and procedures to identify strengths and weaknesses, followed by a management review. The plan shall also be developed in light of information gathered from local and regional experts and stakeholders, per 2.11.b, below.

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- a. Wages: The CB shall have a documented and implemented process to determine the sufficient wage level, per SA8000, section 8.1 and the Guidance Document for SA8000:2004.
 - b. NGO and Trade Union consultation: The CB shall have a documented and implemented process to effectively obtain, maintain and use in audit planning and audit process information about working conditions regularly gathered from regional interested parties, NGOs, trade unions and workers.
 - c. Language needs: The CB client application form shall include a question about the languages spoken by personnel at the facility, and the proportion speaking each. The certification body shall record this information before accepting a client, to ensure its capacity to communicate with employees of the applicant.
 - d. History of organization: The CB shall use due care to ensure that the applicant does not have a history of violations in the area of freedom of association, child labor, and other elements of the SA8000 standard. The process utilized by the CB to obtain this information and the results of the process shall be documented by the CB and included in the client file records. This process shall include, at a minimum, an investigation of grievances, legal proceedings and other complaints for a period of time of at least six months before the stage 1 audit.
 - e. Client files: The CB's individual client files shall include an appropriate summary of the above a-d, research on wages and conditions, and a demonstration that the information was used in the audit process.
- 2.12 Evaluation of effectiveness of the SA8000 management system includes an assessment of how well the system is deployed, as evidenced by workplace policies, including whether it is implemented within the company's overall objectives. At least 30% of the on-site audit time shall be used to conduct worker interviews for all audits, including the initial stage 2 audit, surveillance audits and the recertification audit. Interviews shall include both individual and group interviews.
- 2.13 An audit nonconformity (Corrective Action Request – CAR) finding shall have three distinct parts:
- a. a statement of nonconformity,
 - b. the requirement, or specific reference to the requirement in SA8000,
 - c. the objective evidence observed that supports the statement of nonconformity.
- 2.14 A major nonconformity is one or more of:
- a. the absence of, or total breakdown of, a system to meet an SA8000 requirement. A number of minor nonconformities against one requirement can represent a total breakdown of the system and thus be considered a major nonconformity;
 - b. a nonconformity that judgment and experience indicate is likely either to result in the failure of the social management system in meeting its goals and expectations or to materially reduce its ability to assure control of its policies and directives in the workplace to protect its workers;

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- c. a nonconformity that poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of workers.
- 2.15 A minor nonconformity is a failure to comply with SA8000 which, based on judgment and experience, is not likely to result in the failure of the social management system or reduce its ability to assure the ongoing viability and effectiveness of policies and procedures to protect its workers' rights. It may be one of the following:
- a. a failure or oversight in some part of the organization's social management system relative to SA8000 which is not systemic in nature;
 - b. a single observed lapse in following one item of a company's social management system;
- 2.16 All nonconformities shall be recorded. Nonconformities may not be closed during the audit in which they were issued. The certification body shall require the organization to submit root cause analysis and evidence of systemic corrective action for each nonconformity issued.
- 2.17 Social management systems shall not be certified to SA8000 if any open major nonconformities to SA8000 exist. Minor nonconformities may remain open for a specified period, not longer than 6 months, to allow sufficient time to close them effectively.
- 2.18 If an audit must be terminated for lack of proper or adequate system implementation, a re-audit must be done from the beginning of the process.
- 2.19 All SA8000 certified facilities must undergo a surveillance audit every six months. The surveillance scheduling shall include at least those issues defined in section 9.3.2.1 in ISO/IEC 17021
- 2.20 Each surveillance audit shall re-examine, in addition to the items mentioned in 2.8 above, additional SA8000 elements, so that all have been re-examined within each three year cycle. The audit report shall clearly show the part(s) of the system that was audited.
- 2.21 All Certification Bodies will conduct a minimum of one unannounced audit in any three year certification. The second surveillance audit will be the mandatory unannounced audit. A major CAR (or persistent issues) may indicate the need for an additional unannounced audit during the period of certification.² Certification bodies with existing SA8000 client contracts in effect at the time of this rule introduction will not be required to implement the rule until the second surveillance audit of the subsequent contract period.
- 2.22 Every re-certification audit shall re-assess the effectiveness of the policies and actions defined in the social management system and the overall effectiveness of the management system in its entirety taking into consideration internal and external changes which may have affected the social management system.

² SA8000 clients who have already had a second surveillance audit shall have an unannounced audit scheduled as soon as possible after April 2007. This footnote only applies to facilities certified prior to 2006. All facilities certified after July 1, 2006 shall comply with the schedule set out in 2.21.

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3.0 Audit Team Requirements

3.1 Lead Auditors:

The certification body shall evaluate all lead auditors in the process of qualifying them to perform SA8000 audits and regularly thereafter, and shall have evidence available to demonstrate the competence of each one. Each such auditor, as a minimum, shall be as follows:

- a. qualified by a SAAS accredited certification body,
- b. qualified ISO 9001:2000 or equivalent lead auditor by a SAAS accredited certification body or by a recognized auditor certification body,
- c. trained at SAAS approved courses as specified in 3.7 below for both basic and continuation curriculum,
- d. experienced, demonstrated by having:
 - 1) satisfactorily served as a lead auditor on at least three accredited ISO 9001 or 14001 certification audits or equivalent,
 - 2) participated in at least three SA8000 certification or surveillance audits (or equivalent) as a team member.

3.2 Team Auditors:

The certification body shall evaluate all auditors qualified to perform SA8000 audits and shall have evidence available to demonstrate competence, at a minimum, as follows:

- a. be employed by or under contract to a SAAS accredited certification body,
- b. qualified ISO 9001:2000 or equivalent auditor by a SAAS accredited certification body or by a recognized auditor certification body,
- c. trained at SAAS approved courses as specified in 3.7.a below for both basic and continuation curriculum,
- d. have conducted as a team member at least three accredited ISO 9001 or 14001 or equivalent audits,
- e. participated in at least one SA8000 audit as an observer.

3.3 Audit Teams:

All SA8000 audit teams shall satisfy the following:

- a. consist of SAAS auditors qualified to conduct audits in the name of the certification body,
- b. at least one member of the team is a qualified SA8000 lead auditor,
- c. at least one member expert in interviewing workers on human rights issues and familiar with local and national labor and human rights issues and legislation,

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- d. at least one team member, or subject matter expert, shall have relevant sector specific experience as defined in the certification body's documented procedures for the scope of certification at that site,
 - e. team should have appropriate gender mix as appropriate based upon workforce demographics,
 - f. language skills appropriate to the assignment,
 - g. no member of the audit team shall have provided consultancy for the client in the two years prior to the audit.
- 3.4 It is desirable to retain at least one auditor/expert with background working for trade unions, and/or NGOs that address worker rights or worker training.
- 3.5 The certification body shall evaluate auditor performance at least biennially in determining effective implementation of SA8000 requirements, including the internal witness audit process (see 1.9). Such evaluations shall also include feedback from SAAS witness audits, post-audit surveys, and feedback from organizations audited and their clients.
- 3.6 The certification body shall maintain personnel records documenting that auditors have appropriate skills and experience for specific audit teams. This shall include a documented procedure for ensuring auditor possession of appropriate language and interview skills, impartiality, and gender assignment.
- 3.7. Audit personnel qualifications related to training, interview expertise, and language skills are as follows:
- a. Training requirements: The CB shall document and demonstrate to SAAS that it satisfactorily ensures that audit personnel, including those (irrespective of job title) who make certification decisions and provide technical assistance to field auditors, are trained and proficient in the elements and application of SA8000 and the SA8000 Guidance Document.
 - i. At minimum, the CB shall demonstrate successful completion by all such personnel of: an SA8000 four or five day auditor course, accredited or formally approved by SAAS; a 3-day SAAS approved course, as detailed below; plus such continuing professional development courses as required by SAAS³.
 - ii. SA8000 auditors shall be required to successfully complete a 3-day SAAS approved course within 2 years of having taken the 5 day basic course.
 - b. Skill requirements: the CB shall document and demonstrate to SAAS satisfactory procedures for selecting a qualified team of auditors per 3.3 above. Additionally, the CB shall document how its auditing staff: a) obtains factual information in a manner sensitive to local cultural norms, and ensures that any audit team can so conduct employee interviews, and b) how it protects the confidentiality of workers who are interviewed.
 - c. Assignment criteria: the CB shall maintain personnel records documenting that auditors have appropriate skills and experience for specific audit teams. Where a subcontractor, auditor or

³ SAAS shall issue an advisory supplementing these requirements, providing further detail on continuing professional development.

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translator is engaged, the CB shall have procedures to confirm that person's impartiality, including that such subcontractor is not an employee or recent ex-employee of the auditee.

- 3.8 The audit team shall provide a full report on the client's activities and operations audited within 20 working days of each initial, surveillance, and recertification audit unless otherwise agreed by the client. The lead auditor is responsible for ensuring that comprehensive reporting notes and checklists are completed and kept as a record of the audit.
- a. From time to time, SAAS will issue examples of an audit report format.
 - b. In general, audit report formats shall follow ISO/IEC 17021 section 9.1.10 (ISO/IEC Guide 62, section 3.4 in the interim).
 - c. Each SA8000 element shall be addressed in the report as a macro-area of assessment, and more specific and descriptive notations should be provided for those issues (single requirements) that are relevant to the specific facility/area, for example:
 1. Overtime. e.g. if there is no overtime problem, auditors will report the evidence supporting compliance with the working hours criteria of SA8000, for example that the factory has adequate equipment and staff to fill the orders it has accepted. Similarly, if there is excessive overtime, the corrective action plan shall be attached to the report along with a summary of overtime in the last month.
 2. Status of control of suppliers. Include a brief summary on the status of "control of supplier" programs. e.g., a brief description of the plan and current results in terms of suppliers certified, demonstrated compliance or pending certifications.
 3. Wages. Provide basic wage information as an example of wages paid. This could be accomplished with a payroll sheet and a brief explanation of wage method utilized.
 4. Homework. Include a brief description of homework if/when it is encountered, with an emphasis on the method of control and number of workers involved.
 5. Freedom of association. Freedom of association issues (SA8000 element 4) arise very often. Therefore, provide a brief description of how any worker representatives, both trade union and SA8000 representatives, were elected. Include any evidence of meetings, minutes, negotiations, and whether workers know who their representative is.
 6. Health and safety. Confirm conditions compliant.
 - d. Make notations of any decision by the audit team where the team had to accept a deviation from either the law or the standard. This is intended to provide the CB's oversight function with adequate information to accept or reject the decision made.
 - e. Include a brief overall description of the facility being evaluated, with some information on the nature of the business, the size, number of employees and make-up of the facility, and attach the CB's regional background research materials.
 - f. Note 'interview formats' used—along with reports of information (i.e. number of interviewees per group, number of groups, on or off site).

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3.9 SAAS shall continue to review and evaluate best practices for auditor and audit team requirements and may issue supplemental advisories on these requirements.

4.0 Complaints

4.1 Complaints Sent Directly to CB:

4.1.1 Upon receipt of a complaint within the scope of SAAS accreditation, the CB shall at a minimum:

- a. Initiate its complaints procedure.
- b. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant within 5 working days.
- c. Determine the acceptability of the complaint based on evidence received.
- d. If the complaint is accepted by the CB, the CB shall conduct an investigation as detailed in 4.1.2 through 4.1.4 below.
- e. If the complaint is not accepted, the CB shall notify the complainant of the reasons for not accepting the complaint and provide instruction on the CBs appeals process. The complainant shall also be given the opportunity to provide additional evidence to support the complaint.

4.1.2 Complaints shall be reviewed by designated CB staff for relevance to provisions of SA8000 and for inclusion of documented evidence of non-compliance of the SA8000 client by the CB. An investigation shall be undertaken and may be aided through the undertaking of an unannounced audit and interviews with outside stakeholders, such as: trade unions, NGOs, and the complainant, at a minimum. The investigation shall cover all elements identified in the complaint.

4.1.3 The CB shall submit a report to the complainant on the conclusion of its investigation. The report shall present the resolution of the complaint and the reasons for that conclusion, summarizing the documented evidence submitted unless the appellant has requested it be held confidential in whole or in part, and summarizing a response – if any – from the management of the facility. If the facility has agreed to corrective action, that commitment shall be included in the report. When the facility's implementation of the corrective action has been confirmed, that too shall be reported. Every 6 months, each CB shall provide a detailed report to SAAS of all complaints received.

4.1.4 The CB client's management shall have the right to submit a written response to the allegations and to have that response, or a summary of it, included in the report. The report shall be written so as not to breach the confidentiality agreement in effect and shall be issued within 10 days of the rendering of the decision.

4.2 Complaints Received by SAAS Regarding CB and CB Clients:

4.2.1 CBs shall follow 4.1.1 through 4.1.3, as detailed above.

4.2.2 In addition, the CB shall at a minimum:

- a. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint from SAAS.
- b. Have 10 days to report to SAAS with a plan of action, with subsequent reports every 30 days after that.
- c. Be in contact with the complainant as part of the investigation.
- d. Complete the investigation within 90 days or sooner, unless otherwise agreed to by the SAAS Director of Accreditation.

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4.2.3 SAAS may elect to investigate the Accredited Certification Body's actions in investigating the complaint through an additional audit of the organization by SAAS

4.3 All worker interviews conducted by the CB auditor shall include information regarding how the worker can communicate with the CB and SAAS regarding a concern or additional information related to the audit. The auditor shall provide such contact information.

4.4 All complaints shall be logged, actioned, records kept and shown to the SAAS auditor during their visit. All CBs within the SAAS accreditation system shall keep records of complaints and appeals and its responses to each for a minimum of 10 years after the resolution of the complaint.

5.0 SA8000 Certificate Content Requirements

5.1 Certificates may be issued in the local language of the client. However, an English version shall be available upon request.

All SA8000 certificates shall contain the following:

5.2 Scope statement(s) including the certified site address(es) and all activities for related products and services;

5.3 The edition of the SA8000 Standard to which certification applies; date of certification decision; and date of expiration (date of certification plus 3 years maximum);

5.4 The certified client's name and address;

5.5 Any remote sites which are part of the social management system, including both their locations and scopes;

5.6 The SA8000 mark (equal prominence with other marks);

5.7 For multi-site certification, each site shall receive a separate certificate, with a common certification body certificate number plus suffix, or, as an alternative, a single certificate to the Corporation may be issued with names and addresses of the sites covered under the certification set up in an annex;

5.8 A unique certification body certificate number for tracking purposes.

5.9 Certificates shall not reference other documents for which the certification body is not accredited by SAAS (e.g. ISO 9001:2000).

5.10 For additional criteria, refer to SAAS Procedure 426.

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6.0 Obtaining and Maintaining Accreditation

- 6.1 The certification body, prior to issuing any SA8000 certificate, shall have been granted SAAS accreditation. Steps in the accreditation application process are detailed in the SAAS accreditation procedure 201.
- 6.2 Ongoing accreditation of the certification body shall be verified through SAAS oversight activities including conducting ongoing surveillance office and witness audits per the requirements set out below and in SAAS Procedure 201, sections 8-15:
- a. All fees are due upon acceptance of the accreditation and surveillance audit fee schedule and must be paid in advance of the audit. Failure to pay required fees in advance of the scheduled audit and in a timely manner will constitute a material breach of the Accreditation Agreement and shall be grounds for termination of Agreement.
 - b. Accredited CBs shall provide all necessary and timely assistance in arranging and scheduling the required accreditation and surveillance audits, and shall give sufficient notice to SAAS of upcoming audits so as to allow confirmation and travel for a SAAS auditor.
 - c. Scheduling and conducting audits of SA8000 accredited certification body offices shall take into account all countries where certificates are issued;
 - d. Scheduling and conducting ongoing surveillance witness and office audits shall be conducted so as to observe as many different auditors as possible across all certification body offices;
 - e. Global surveillance audits shall be conducted, at a minimum, on a semi-annual schedule. Witness audits are to be conducted, at a site, witnessing a CB audit team during an SA8000 audit to verify certification body conformance with all requirements of ISO Guide 62 (17021), SA8000 procedures, annexes and any SA8000 advisories subsequently issued, and shall be scheduled per SAAS Procedure 201, section 15.1.1.
 - f. Each witness audit shall include an audit of the certification body's audit planning process including stakeholder consultation, audit team qualifications and audit plan preparation.
 - g. The global distribution of these witness audits should be in proportion to the SA8000 certificates issued by country and/or region, per SAAS Procedure 201, section 15.1.1c.
 - h. The certification body shall provide a schedule of SA8000 client certification and surveillance audits upon request from SAAS and provide background documents on witnessed sites.
- 6.3 Major (minor) nonconformities issued by SAAS during office or witness audits shall be closed by the certification body within 90 (120) days. A SAAS lead auditor shall verify the effective implementation of the corrective action taken and send a copy of the closed corrective action for file with the certification body. Such verification may occur electronically via documentation review, at a follow-up audit or at the next office or witness audit. When a certification body cannot close issued nonconformities within 90 (120) days, the CB may request that the SAAS Secretariat extend the period with special monitoring activities. SAAS reserves the right to

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undertake additional activities in response to corrective action follow up, or based upon performance.

- 6.4 The certification body shall not operate as both a social management system certification body and as a social management system accreditation body.
- 6.5 Accredited certificates to SA8000 shall be issued by SAAS accredited certification body offices for a maximum validity of three years. Certificates must comply with the requirements of SAAS Procedure 201, section 5.0 and SAAS Procedure 426.
- 6.6 The certification body shall not subcontract SA8000 audits to another organization but may use auditor resources of partner organizations (under a contractual agreement) if the auditors conform to the certification body's rules and regulations. The SAAS-accredited certification body itself will be responsible for all phases of the certification process (see 1.2) including contractual arrangements, quotes, planning, auditing and review and approval of the audit report. The certification body shall issue the certificate to the client directly with its logo as well as the SAAS mark. No activity except the use of auditors and technical experts shall be sub-contracted.
- 6.7 If an organization certified to SA8000 by an accredited certification body elects to change its certification body and to continue certification to SA8000, then the following steps must be followed, in sequence, before any transfer can occur:
- a. The new certification body must be accredited by SAAS,
 - b. The existing certificate must be valid, with no open nonconformities,
 - c. The new certification body must perform a review of the previous audit report and all nonconformity findings issued by the existing certification body, including those closed out,
 - d. The new certification body must perform a basic document review and a review of key indicators of the social management system performance,
 - e. The new certification body must perform an on-site audit equivalent to a recertification audit to effect a transfer of certificate,
 - f. The new certification body must notify SAAS of the transfer upon scheduling the appropriate audit and before issuing the new certificate,
- 6.8 The certification body shall report to SAAS any new certifications, suspensions or withdrawals of its existing SA8000 system certifications(s) within 90 days through regular reporting on SAAS Form 616A. This report shall be submitted to SAAS no later than 20 business days after the end of each quarter.
- a. SA8000 certified facility audit reports shall be made available to SAAS upon request. These reports shall be made available to SAAS at any time, including outside of regular surveillance audits. SA8000 clients shall be made aware of this possibility. All reports shall be kept confidential, per SAAS's agreement with each accredited Certification Body.
- 6.9 Suspension and/or cancellation of SAAS accreditation of a certification body, in its entirety or limited by geographic scope, for SA8000 may occur if:

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- a. Corrective Action Requests (CARs) have not been closed out within the designated time limit and extension has not been granted.
 - b. A case of improper use of the Accreditation Certificate, e.g., misleading advertising, is not solved by suitable retractions or other appropriate remedial measures by the accredited body (see SAAS Procedure 209, Misuse of Certificates or Certification/Accreditation Marks).
 - c. There have been material changes in the personnel responsible for controlling the Management System without advising SAAS, and those changes have affected the CBs compliance with SAAS procedures and requirements.
 - d. There have been material changes to the internal structure of the certification body's organization without advising SAAS, and those changes have affected the CBs compliance with SAAS procedures and requirements.
 - e. The certification body has changed its scope of activity without advising SAAS.
 - f. There have been significant contraventions of SAAS Procedures and Policies.
 - g. There has been a violation of any provision of the Accreditation Contract.
 - h. There has been a violation of the requirements of this Procedure 200.
 - i. There has been a failure to conduct a minimum of fifteen (15) SA8000 site audits (initial, surveillance, recertification) by the first year of reaccreditation of the CB.
 - j. There has been a non-payment of fees.
 - k. There has been an inadequate response to complaints.
 - l. There has been inadequate performance as identified by SAAS.
- 6.10 In the event of loss of SAAS accreditation, the certification body is responsible for the remedies for their SA8000 certified organizations affected, including transfer of existing certifications to one of the SAAS accredited certification bodies of the organization's choice (see 6.7 above).

7.0 Other Requirements

- 7.1 Consultants to the applicant organization cannot participate in the audit but may observe the process.
- 7.2 The certification body shall support SAAS activities.
- 7.3 The certification body shall not infringe the copyright of any SAAS, ISO, or other standard-setter documents.

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APPENDIX I - AUDIT DAYS FOR CERTIFICATION TO SA8000

The overall time (stages 1 & 2) expressed in auditor days taken to audit an organization against the SA8000 standard includes the time taken to plan the audit, conduct offsite worker interviews where appropriate, review the documents, perform the on-site audit, write the report and manage the general aspects of the job. It is expected that the time deemed necessary and appropriate by the certification body to contact and consult with external parties/stakeholders will not be included in this period of time but that the necessary research and engagement will be conducted prior to the commencement of the stage one and stage two audit processes.

The certification body must calculate the time to spend on the audit by factoring in the sector complexity, perceived risk, number of employees, and offsite worker interviews to be conducted where appropriate. Particular attention must be paid when calculating the auditor days for the on-site audit as this is the most critical phase in the entire certification process.

- A. The following table defines the recommended audit days for the combined stages of the initial audit.
- B. The number of employees in the organization for use with the audit day table is calculated considering the total number of workers (including seasonal, part-time and temporary workers and subcontractors) paid by the client, either directly or through an employment agency. Calculation of the work force should be based on worker totals during the high season.

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**Guide for Process to Determine Auditor Time for Initial Audit
(Auditor Time Chart)**

| Number of Employees Note 1 | Auditor Time for Initial Audit (auditor days) Notes 2+3 | Additive and Subtractive Factors | Total Auditor Time |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1-10 | 2 | | |
| 11-25 | 3 | | |
| 26-45 | 4 | | |
| 46-65 | 5 | | |
| 66-85 | 6 | | |
| 86-125 | 7 | | |
| 126-175 | 8 | | |
| 176-275 | 9 | | |
| 276-425 | 10 | | |
| 426-625 | 11 | | |
| 626-875 | 12 | | |
| 876-1175 | 13 | | |
| 1176-1550 | 14 | | |
| 1551-2025 | 15 | | |
| 2026-2675 | 16 | | |
| 2676-3450 | 17 | | |
| 3451-4350 | 18 | | |
| 4351-5450 | 19 | | |
| 5451-6800 | 20 | | |
| 6801 -8500 | 21 | | |
| 8501-10700 | 22 | | |
| > 10700 | Follow progression above | | |

NOTES TO TABLE:

1. The above mentioned days include both audit stages. It is expected that the first audit stage will in no case exceed two working days depending upon the size of the facility, the number of workers, the complexity of the sector and whether or not migrant or contract labor is used in the course of normal events. In some situations, e.g. micro businesses in Italy which are very small in size with small numbers of employees, a site visit for stage one may be unnecessary. Such exclusions must be justified by the certification body. To evaluate the level of risk associated with an applicant organization, the current table employed for estimating low, medium and high risk within the ISO 14001 guidance document may be used as a reference. Because of the degree of subjectivity entailed with risk assessment of the relevant social conditions with the multiplicity of factors involved, the certification body must assure that proper oversight of the bidding process is provided to minimize the possibility of unwarranted reductions in audit days.
2. The days indicated in the table should be followed and not be adjusted without evidence of one of the following:

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- An existing ISO scheme certification by the prospective certification body will justify up to a 15% day reduction,
 - A company which is deemed to be a “simple process” e.g. low risk product, processes involving a single general activity, a one site operation, will justify up to a 25% reduction in days but in no case shall the sum of reductions in audit days exceed 25% of the total audit days recommendation cited above,
 - When a translator is used, the audits days requiring translation shall be increased by a minimum of 20%.
3. An audit day is defined as a full normal working day of 8 hours. The number of audit days may not be reduced by scheduling longer hours per work day. The only exception is on days when shift work is being covered, see 2.9. Travel time shall not be included in the audit day time.
 4. For **surveillance audits**, the total time required on site visits is one third the time spent on the 2nd stage certification audit annually divided by two (two surveillance audits per year). Surveillance audits are normally conducted approximately every six months with the exception of unannounced visits which will be made in accordance with SAAS policy.
 5. For **recertification audits**, the total audit days must be at least 2/3 of the time spent for the second stage portion of the initial audit.
 6. Initial certification audits include audit stage 1 - readiness review (one to two days on site as required) and audit stage 2 - site audit (see table above for total audit days), but not pre-audit time.
 7. Each audit shall include auditing on all shifts except as noted in 2.9. If shifts are dedicated and non-rotating, then all shifts shall be audited.

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APPENDIX II: GROUP AUDIT SCHEME – SAMPLING

A "multi site" audit scheme can be applied where multiple sites are assessed together in order to provide a group or country certificate. The following rules apply before a certification body can apply a "Group" audit scheme for SA8000.

In order to adequately assess the social management system under this type of scheme, it is necessary to utilize a sampling plan to assure adequate assessments are conducted at the various company locations. A multi-site organization is one with various sites at which the same activities take place and where all sites operate under the same centrally managed system. It is also important that all sites in a "multi site" audit scheme be located within the same country and that they be certified by the same CB that has certified the company headquarters, the controlling location of the management system. The certification scope should be similar for all sites.

The following SA8000 requirements should be managed centrally:

- Control of suppliers
- Identification and management of training needs
- Control of system documentation
- Evaluation and control of corrective actions, including root cause analysis and preventive action
- Management Review
- Internal audit planning and evaluation of results

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APPENDIX III – SAMPLING TABLE *see sample key below

The table shown below is to be applied for selecting the number of locations for initial, surveillance and recertification audits.

| Number of sites | Sample size initial certification audit and recertification audit | Sample size surveillance audit | Remarks |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------------|---------|
| 1 - 3 | 100% | 1 - 1 - 2 **] | none |
| 4 - 7 | 3 - 3 - 4 - 4 | 2 - 2 - 2 - 3 | *] |
| 8 - 11 | 4 - 4 - 5 - 6 | 3 | *] |
| 12 - 19 | 40% minimum 6 | 4 | *] |
| 20 - 29 | 30% minimum 8 | 5 | *] |
| 30 - 39 | 25% minimum 9 | 6 | *] |
| 40 - 99 | 20% minimum 10 | 10% minimum 7 | *] |
| 100 – 199 | 15% minimum 21 | 9% minimum 10 | *] |
| 200 – 399 | 10% minimum 31 | 8% minimum 19 | *] |
| 400 – 699 | 7% minimum 40 | 7% minimum 33 | *] |
| 700 – 999 | 6% minimum 50 | 6% minimum 50 | *] |
| >1000 | 5% minimum 60 | 5% minimum 60 | *] |

*] Select minimum 25% of the sample size at random. The others should be selected in a manner that will assure as many different sites as possible are selected over time.

**] 1 site [sample 1]
 2 sites [sample 1]
 3 sites [sample 2]

Sampling Guide Key:

Number of sites in left column of chart is related sequentially to the number of sites listed in columns two and three. E.g., A five site company would have three sites visited during the initial certification audit and two sites visited during the surveillance audits. A ten site company would have five sites visited on the initial certification audit, three on surveillances and so forth.