



“Erik Action”
Focus on SA8000:2000 Social Accountability Management System
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The SA8000

- FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1997
- REVIEWED IN 2001
- LAST REVISION 2008

WHAT IS THE INTENT?

to promote worker's rights and enable employers to sustainably implement a systems-based approach to ensuring decent work and working conditions.

The standard draws on:

- international human rights norms and national labour law to promote worker's best interest, with a view to a **sustainable** livelihoods and employment.
- ISO-based principles, with extensive management system requirements and a view to continuous improvement.

SA8000 is based on the principle that ensuring workers' rights and well-being is not a "burden" for employers, but rather an investment in human resources that leads to healthy and sustainable workplace for all.

Last but not least....

It is a valid instrument to demonstrate to interested parties that company work promoting a sustainable environment.

History and intent



The SA8000

PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

The intent of SA8000 is to provide a standard based on international human rights norms and national labor laws that will protect and empower all personnel within a company's scope of control and influence, who produce products or provide services for that company, including personnel employed by the company itself, as well as by its suppliers/subcontractors, sub-suppliers, and home workers.

This language leaves no doubt that everyone employed by the company – within their scope of control and influence – direct-hires, suppliers & subcontractors, sub-suppliers, and home workers, are covered by the standard.

PROTECT & EMPOWER - CONTROL & INFLUENCE

Protect & Empower: indicate that SA8000:

- Delineates employer responsibilities;
- Provides a tool for workers to claim their rights

Scope of Control & Influence:

- Will require case by case analysis;
- Requires good faith effort to promote rights throughout supply chain
- Companies are not, however, assumed to be all powerful in their control and influence

The SA8000 Standard

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

SAI
SA8000®:2001 and SA8000®:2008

Social Accountability 8000

2001 and 2008 Versions Side By Side Comparison
SA8000 – 2008, published May 1, 2008



SA8000® is a registered trademark of Social Accountability International

The SA8000 Certification Process: Preliminary Phase

HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION:

Before the audit, certification body makes a research 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 to obtain this information will be based prior on web-consultation but more extensive investigation is expected, in case of critical situation.

The SA8000 Certification Process: STAGE 1

Scope of Stage 1 is the following:

- Familiarize the audit team with issues pertinent to the client organization
- Gain an understanding of the client's SA system and its state of development
- Determine client's awareness and recognition of the local norms, regulatory and legal requirements
- Review the company' method of determining local Living wage
- Determine whether the SA8000 system is adequately implemented and responding to relevant communication from external interested parties.
- Provide a focus for planning of the Stage 2 audit by gaining an understanding of the system

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The SA8000 Certification Process: STAGE 1

CONSULTATIONS WITH INTERESTED PARTIES

- Consultations with Stakeholders shall be implemented and maintained in order to support any SA8000 certification. The interested stakeholders to be consulted can include contacts with trade unions, research institutions, NGOs, community organizations, labor experts....
 - a. **Trade Unions:** Meetings with trade union representatives should be in addition to – not a substitute for – interviews with trade union representative at the facility being audited. Auditors should meet with national, regional and local union representatives
 - b. **Community organizations, NGOs and other labor experts:** There is a wide variety of organization, NGOs and other labor experts, that may be able *to provide valuable information about local labor conditions*. Auditors should carry out background research on the common problems they may confront. *It is best if this information is as locally-specific as possible.*
 - c. **Documentation of Consultations:** Local office should have a list of contacts available with the names of representatives from (legally recognized) NGOs or unions, which have been consulted.

The SA8000 Certification Process: STAGE 2

Scope of Stage 2 is the following:

- Verify compliance with standard. Verify adequacy of MS to satisfy Social Accountability Policy, company goals, and compliance with SA standard and local laws.
- The audit shall address all aspects of the SA standard (using sampling criteria).
- The audit team shall not only evaluate the effectiveness of management systems controls and performance controls, but also the level of demonstrated conformity to the performance requirement of the standard
- In addition to evaluating overall conformity with the standard, the auditor shall specifically focus on the following aspects:
 - Issues known within the locality or industry sector
 - Issues of particular concern to interested parties
 - Issues relating to applicable laws and regulations
 - Other issues identified as significant during stage 1
 - Establishing that the system and scope of certification addresses all parts of a continuous process or premises.

These requirements apply
equally to labor suppliers,
including temporary employment
agencies and home workers.

FOCUS ON: SUPPLIERS, SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUB-SUPPLIERS CONTROL

9.7 9.8 - 9.9 – 9.10

CONTROL OF SUPPLIERS/SUBCONTRACTORS & SUB-SUPPLIERS AND HOME WORKERS (NEW NUMBERING)

INTERPRETATION:

- Rigor of evaluation is commensurate with the significance of the supplier, subcontractor or sub-supplier. It is not **realistic to expect that all suppliers**, subcontractors or sub-suppliers will be fully compliant with SA8000 standard, especially in terms of formal policies and documentation requirements. As a **first step**, the company may focus on the qualifications and performance of their **primary suppliers** and subcontractors and those where they have a **significant amount of control or influence**.
- Companies are now asked to evaluate and select their suppliers based on their performance and commitment to comply with SA8000. A certified facility must do more than receive letters of commitment to conform from suppliers; they must also seek, within reason, to monitor their compliance
- Monitoring activities should be conducted periodically and monitoring reports should be maintained appropriately.
- Demonstrates suppliers', subcontractors' and sub-suppliers' compliance is tracked through mechanisms such as:
 - audits,
 - contractual agreements,
 - communications,
 - corrective action plans and follow-up to those plans. Home workers are afforded at a similar level of protection as formal employees
- Identities of home workers should be documented
- SAAS recommends unannounced monitoring visits as a highly effective tool for verifying compliance; nevertheless, the company should respect the privacy of home workers and their family members, and obtain approval from (or at least) those workers of an acceptable format for such monitoring activities.

Focus on...

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FOCUS ON: SUPPLIERS, SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUB-SUPPLIERS CONTROL

9.7 - 9.8 - 9.9 - 9.10 CONTROL OF SUPPLIERS/SUBCONTRACTORS & SUB-SUPPLIERS AND HOME WORKERS

INTERPRETATION:

- To better assess a company's performance, auditors should focus on the company's plan of implementation, and verify that there is a system for the evaluation and selection of suppliers and subcontractors on the grounds of social accountability policy. Auditors are going to investigate:
 - a. how the company **selects business partners** in the supply chain;
 - b. how it **engages and encourages** its suppliers, subcontractors and sub-suppliers to seek compliance;
 - c. **what training and support** the company is providing for **staff making the selection**; and
 - d. How it contributes to the suppliers', subcontractors' or sub-suppliers' plan to meet the intent of the standard, such as ensuring adequate lead times on orders, **establishing better contractual terms in return for demonstration of** (or substantial advances towards) compliance with the standard's requirements.

Focus on..

FOCUS ON: INTERVIEWS WITH WORKERS

- A particular SA8000 audit methodology is interviews with workers, covering all SA8000 aspects, but focus particularly on areas where there has been an indication of problems or potential problems
- ***30% of time should be spent in interviewing workers.***
- ***Once that this time is respected, it is also necessary to guarantee also for this activity a representative sample of workers in terms of numbers; about 10 – 20% of total number of workers.***
- They can be individual or in groups (focus group)
- Protecting worker confidentiality is critical.
- For this purpose the audit team composition is crucial

FOCUS ON: SURVEILLANCES

- **Once certificate is obtained the company has to demonstrate the maintenance of conformity and the continuous improvement, both proper of the standard.**
- The auditor(s) conducting the surveillance visit is the same auditor(s) who conducted the initial audit. After several audits, however, rotation is a useful way to assure the independence of auditors and to bring fresh eyes and ears to the audits. Typically, one fourth of the system should be reviewed at each surveillance audit – in addition to CARs follow-up
- All SA 8000 certified facilities must undergo a surveillance audit every six months.
- One unannounced audit (the second surveillance audit) will be conducted during the 3-year validity of the certification. This audit can occur between 4-8 months , after the first surveillance and it should not be on the exact six months date, as to assure no prior knowledge of audit date. A major CAR (or persistent issues) would indicate the need for an additional unannounced audit during the period of certification.
- Audit planning and execution shall take into account all workers both on site and off site, including temporary and contract labor. Audit plan shall address all elements of the standard at each location and during **all shifts**. Every audit shall include auditing on all shifts; if crews are dedicated and non – rotating, then all crews shall be audited.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Guidance Document for Social Accountability 8000 – 2° Edition (2004)
- Documentation from SAAS Training Courses
- SSC GPP. 37 issue 8
- SAAS procedure 200
- Standard SA8000:2008 (draft)
- SSC Global Procedures
- SAAS witness & office audit reports
- Initial & Surveillance Reports Analysis of the SGS SA 8000 Certified Companies

YOU ASK,
WE SOLVE.

For further information, please contact

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WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

