

SAI Global Certification Authority members are responsible for the schemes/programmes to make certification decisions for granting or refusing certification, expanding or reducing the scope of certification, suspending certification, withdrawing, renewing and restoring certification

SAI Global Certification Authority members should not making certification decisions on the audits that they are involved with.

SAI Global Certification Authority members shall be employed by, or shall be under legally enforceable arrangement with either SAI Global or an entity under the organizational control of SAI Global.

### **Granting, maintaining and renewing the Certification**

For certification purposes, the following is mandatory:

- Initial Audit Stage 1 activities performed where a requirement.
- Initial Audit Stage 2 (Certification Audit) performed.
- Surveillance Audit (for maintaining the certification).
- Recertification Audit (for renewing the certification).
- Initial Certification, product update and license renewal for Product Services.
- Once a major nonconformity is raised, a follow up audit (on-site or desktop review) should be scheduled within 90 days after the nonconformity was raised or 10 days before the expiry date of the certificate (whichever comes first). Certification decision cannot be made until the follow up audit is completed.
- Once a minor nonconformity is raised, certification decision cannot be made until the client's correction and action plan for corrective action is reviewed and accepted by the auditor(s).
- If the implementation of corrective actions of any major nonconformity is unable to be verified within 6 months after the last day of the stage 2 audit, another stage 2 audit shall be conducted prior to recommending certification.
- When recertification activities are successfully completed prior to the expiry date of the existing certification, the expiry date of the new certification can be based on the expiry date of the existing certification. The issue date on a new certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision.
- If the recertification audit or the implementation of corrective actions for any major nonconformity cannot be completed prior to the expiry date of the certification, then recertification shall not be recommended and the validity of the certification shall not be extended. The client shall be informed and the consequences shall be explained.
- Following expiration of certification, the certification can be restored within 6 months provided that the outstanding recertification activities are completed, otherwise at least a stage 2 shall be conducted. The effective date on the certificate shall be on or after the recertification decision and the expiry date shall be based on prior certification cycle.

Ensure that:

- Client details including surveillance plan are finalised.
- The frequency of visits is not more than twice per year or once per year whenever possible for overseas or clients in remote areas.
- The duration of visits has been adjusted to full days, or half day in exceptional circumstances (refer to QGD08 requirements).
- Any additional visit required shortly after certification to monitor actions on any minor nonconformities considered necessary is clearly specified in the Client Details.
- Sufficient time has been planned in the first visit after certification to verify client's corrective action resulting from certification audit.
- Audit duration and audit time is formally documented and any reductions are justified.
- Any off-site surveillance methods of monitoring certified client's performance are acceptably documented on the Client Details.
- Where an SAI Global Certification Authority member has participated in the audit, an independent delegate shall carry out the review and approval.
- Where the submission review requires additional technical input or technical review, the SAI Global Certification Authority shall nominate appropriate Program Expert, Industry Specialist, technical expert etc.

The review process should consider the following:

- Client's commitment and performance.
- Scope of certification
- Added value to the client
- Geographical location
- Multi-site Policy

Certification Authority (assisted by program technical experts, where applicable) shall review and approve submitted documentation when there is no conflict of interest during submission process.

The submission documentation should be written in the language, so that it can be read in full by the relevant Certification Authority. If the audit documentation has been completed in the local language of an international office, but requires certification by the English speaking Certification Authority then the relevant documentation is to be translated into English for understanding and appropriate review or a translator engaged in the review process. This also can be achieved by utilising translated evidence of local reviews.

Certain Verifying Auditors/independent reviewers have been appointed on a program-by-program basis and given specific authority (by Certification Authority and Program Technical Expert) to review submitted documentation. Where such a Verifying Auditor has participated in the audit, the report shall be reviewed and approved by a different appropriately qualified Verifying Auditor.

SAI Global Certification Authority reserves the right to require an amendment to the audit report (a copy of which may have been left with the client), following review and discussion with the Team Leader. Any amendments or changes from the previous report shall be submitted to the client, with supporting explanation, if required.

When reports are revised as a result of reviewer comments, the Audit Team Leader shall arrange for latest revision to be forwarded to client.

Guidelines for Review of Audit Reports:

- Application details are available for auditors
- Completeness of the reports - all necessary forms are completed
- Audit trail is evident - sample size/ depth / duration of audit / number of documents/ personnel/ records.
- Report is legible.
- Findings are supported by objective evidence.
- Reporting style is acceptable.
- Auditor's recommendation is correct - fair and true to the results.
- All certification issues have been completed.

### **Refusing Certification, Suspension or Withdrawal of the Certificate**

If the SAI Global Certification Authority is not satisfied after review of the client's application and assessment of the Client's products, process or service in accordance with the applicable certification procedures, then the Certification Authority reserves the right to refuse certification. Where certification is refused the audit Team Leader and Customer service representative shall be informed and they will inform the client of the result.

When client is not conducting audits as per schedule or addressing non-conformances in the allotted time, client's certificate will be temporary suspended (usually 90 days, up to 6 months). Note that some standards have own rules for suspension (i.e. Automotive – immediate suspension if major NC raised, etc.). Other reasons for temporary suspension: non-payment, construction at site, closure of site, no production due to no contracts for a prolonged period (more than a year), force majeure (Acts of God, natural disaster, war, terrorism, national emergency, labour disputes, shortage of material, fire, earthquake, flood or any other event beyond the reasonable control of client, provided that client uses reasonable efforts under the circumstances to notify SAI Global, and to resume production as soon as possible)

Letter of suspension signed by a certification authority will be issued and sent to the client; if suspension is triggered during the audit, auditor will include the recommendation for suspension in the audit report summary, and brief client on suspension process. Describe the consequences of suspension:

*"Please understand that upon suspension being approved, you will be required to remove from letterhead, signage, business cards, and elsewhere in promotional material all references to SAI Global and representations of the 'five ticks' StandardsMark. In the*

*event that you failed to do so, SAI Global reserves the right to commence legal proceedings against you and your company for damages and legal costs.”*

In some circumstances it may be permitted by Certification Authority to reduce the scope of a certification as an alternative to suspension, e.g. remove an activity (i.e design) from the scope of certification or a site from a multi-site certification. It should be noted that scope reduction is not applicable to all Standards – consult with Certification Authority.

After the issue which created the suspension was resolved (i.e payment, closure of NCs, resume production, etc.) suspension can be lifted. Depending on the reason for suspension, this can happen immediately or via a Special audit to verify and validate issues resolved. Exceptions must be approved by Certification Authority.

If suspension is not lifted within 90 days (or 6 months) as per the suspension letter, then de-registration/withdrawal of certificate shall occur. Other reasons for withdrawal could be: client doesn't wish to continue certification, completed transfer to another registrar, client did not transition to a new version of the standard within the transition period or certificate expired and a re-certification audit was not conducted before the expiry date

Advise client of the Appeals Procedure. Any appeal by the client against the decision to suspend or withdrawn a certificate must be directed to Regional Manager, Risk and Compliance.

### **Notice of changes by SAI Global**

- SAI Global shall give its certified clients due notice of any changes to its requirements for certification.
- SAI Global shall verify that each certified client complies with the new requirements.

### **Changing, Expanding or Reducing the Certification Scope**

SAI Global shall have legally enforceable arrangements to ensure that the certified client informs the certification body, without delay, of matters that may affect the capability of the management system to continue to fulfil the requirements of the standard used for certification. These include, for example, changes relating to:

- a) the legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership;
- b) organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff);
- c) contact address and sites;
- d) scope of operations under the certified management system;
- e) major changes to the management system, product and processes.

SAI Global shall take action as appropriate:

- For change of the legal identity, ownership etc. a new legally enforceable agreement will be signed with the client.
- Organisation and management changes: Certification Authority needs to review changes and auditor recommendation - based on risk, additional auditing may be required.
- Address and other site changes Certification Authority will decide if an audit will be required prior to the change of address and recommend duration of the audit.
- Change to the scope of operations, if a reduction of scope; make the change with no audit required. For an increase of scope, additional audit time will need to be included, certification authority will recommend duration based on type of changes and risk to the client's management system. This audit should not influence the client certification lifecycle. Major changes to the management system, products and processes, once SAI Global is informed,

a decision will be made by a Certification Authority as to whether additional audit time is required based on risk to the client's management system .

### Restoring Certification

The following scenarios apply for restoring certification after expiration:

1. Recertification activities initiated, but **not completed before** expiry date and decision taken **after** the expiry, but before 6 months from expiration – New certificate starts from the date of certification decision and is valid 3 years from the expiry date. There is a gap in the certification, which will be indicated on the certificate by the following information:
  - a. Last certification cycle expiry date
  - b. Start and End Date of recertification audit
2. Recertification activities **completed before** expiry date and certification decision taken **after** the expiry but before 6 months from expiration – New certificate starts from the date of certification decision and is valid 3 years from the **previous** expiry date. There is a gap in the certification, which will be indicated on the certificate by the following information:
  - a. Last certification cycle expiry date
  - b. Start and End Date of recertification audit
3. Recertification activities **not completed before** expiry and **not before** 6 months from the expiry. Client will be treated as new – Stage 1 and Stage 2 is required