

**INFORMATIVE CIRCULAR** Ref. DC2023OC020

**DATE** Milan, 01-03-2023

To all MS accredited and applicant Bodies  
To the associations of conformity assessment bodies  
To all ACCREDIA assessors and experts

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**SUBJECT**                    **Certification and Inspection Department**  
**Informative circular DC N° 10/2023 - Provisions regarding accreditation for the PAS 24000:2022 certification scheme - Social management system.**

## **FOREWORD**

In September, BSI published PAS 24000:2022 which provides requirements for social management systems.

The PAS, designed according to the ISO Annex SL, specifies the minimum requirements for a social management system (SMS) and the specific criteria for social services enabling their auditability and certifiability.

PAS 24000 defines:

- requirements to ensure the quality of the due diligence process;
- minimum social performance requirements, as defined by the document on the SSCI benchmarking requirements, part III.

The document issued by BSI applies to any organisation, regardless of its type or size, or the products and services it produces or supplies.

The implementation of the system may be of interest to organizations for managing and reporting their performance in the social sphere.

The implementation of the system makes it possible to respond to the expectations of the interested parties also in the medium-long term with a view to continuous improvement in one of the areas of sustainable development.

The social management system comprises the policies, processes and procedures used by an organization to ensure the implementation of the actions required to achieve its social objectives.

These objectives must ensure fair treatment of workers and a safe working environment that does not harm their health and that complies with legislative and normative requirements.

Minimum requirements are defined in order to ensure a minimum level of social performance which includes labour relations, human rights, health and safety and corporate ethics.

The document provides that the organization refers both to the "minimum salary", established according to the collective agreement, and to the "decent salary", i.e. the remuneration received for ordinary work, established by contract, sufficient to allow the worker to sustain a standard of decent life for her/him and her/his family.

In fact, PAS 24000 provides that the organization pays its workers according to the "decent wage", in cases where this is higher than the "minimum wage".

The PAS 24000 uses the process approach, the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle and the principle of risk based thinking.

The process approach enables an organization to plan processes and their interactions in order to define roles and responsibilities within it.

The PDCA cycle enables the organization to ensure that processes are managed and adequately resourced and that opportunities for improvement are identified and implemented.

Risk based thinking enables an organization to determine the factors that could affect the achievement of planned results, to implement advance controls, to minimize negative effects and to maximise the benefits of opportunities.

The PDCA cycle applied to the social management system requires the organization to:

- plan: determine and evaluate social risks and opportunities and establish the social objectives and processes necessary to obtain results in accordance with the organization's social policy;
- do: implement processes as planned;
- check: monitor and measure processes with regard to social policy, including the organization's social commitments and objectives, and report the results;
- act: take actions to correct deviations from expected results and continuously improve social performance to achieve expected results.

At the time of publication of this circular, the suitability for accreditation of the scheme FSSC 24000, proposed by the Food Safety System Certification Scheme Foundation, which incorporates the specifications of FSSC and of PAS 24000, is currently being evaluated, in order to offer a certification scheme, for the audit and certification of social sustainability management systems applicable to the production and processing sector (food and non-food), including the provision of related services to the consumer goods industry and to the supply chain.

## CERTIFICATION RULES

<b>Accreditation standard</b>	UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015																	
<b>Certification standard</b>	PAS 24000:2022																	
<b>Competence criteria of the audit team</b>	<p>The audit team must have knowledge of the requirements of PAS 24000:2022, the requirements to ensure the quality of the due diligence process and the minimum social performance requirements, as defined by the SSCI benchmarking requirements document, part III.</p> <p>The audit team involved in the auditing process must have a level of competence that includes those described in Annex A of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</p> <p>The audit team must also have knowledge of the issues and processes that relate to the social performance requirements set out in Annex A of PAS 24000:2022.</p>																	
<b>Audit times and frequency</b>	<p>For the calculation of the duration, refer to Annex A of the document IAF MD 5:2019. For the risk categories, in place of the examples given in Table QMS 2, the following material elements must be considered which can be consulted, for each reference sector, at <a href="#">Materiality Finder SASB</a>:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area of development</th> <th>Material element</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Social capital</td> <td>Human Rights &amp; Community Relations</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Human capital</td> <td>Labour Practices</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employee Health &amp; Safety, Employee Engagement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diversity &amp; Inclusion</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">Business model &amp; innovation</td> <td>Product Design &amp; Lifecycle Management</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Model Resilience</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supply Chain Management</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Materials Sourcing &amp; Efficiency</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Leadership Governance</td> <td>Business Ethics</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management of the Legal &amp; Regulatory Environment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Critical Incident Risk Management</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Organizations belonging to a sector that has 3 or more material elements among those in the table are considered <u>high risk</u>.</p>	Area of development	Material element	Social capital	Human Rights & Community Relations	Human capital	Labour Practices	Employee Health & Safety, Employee Engagement	Diversity & Inclusion	Business model & innovation	Product Design & Lifecycle Management	Business Model Resilience	Supply Chain Management	Materials Sourcing & Efficiency	Leadership Governance	Business Ethics	Management of the Legal & Regulatory Environment	Critical Incident Risk Management
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	<p>Organizations belonging to a sector that has at least 2 material elements among those in the table are considered <u>medium risk</u>. Organizations belonging to a sector that has 1 or no material element among those in the table are considered <u>low risk</u>.</p> <p>In the case of audits integrated with other management systems, reference must be made to IAF MD11:2013.</p> <p>In the case of the presence of a management system in accordance with SA8000, it is possible to consider reductions for the integration of the systems only if this system is certified under SAAS accreditation.</p> <p>Maintenance surveillance activities must be performed on an annual basis. Any modifications must be justified and recorded by the CAB.</p>
<b>IAF documents</b>	All IAF documents apply, in addition to those already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, relating to management systems.

## PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION

Various cases may be presented, based on the ACCREDIA accreditations already possessed by the CB that applies for accreditation or extension.

The requirements of RG-01 and RG-01-01 for the granting of accreditation and extension remain unchanged.

CBs already accredited to ISO/IEC 17021-1 do not need to have already issued certificates in this scheme to apply for an extension of accreditation.

The accreditation certificate does not indicate the relative accreditation sectors.

If the CB already has accreditations issued by other bodies, an assessment must be conducted on a case-by-case basis, based on the applicable EA/IAF MLA agreements.

<b>A</b>	CB already accredited for the scheme ISO/IEC 17021-1:2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review of 1 day.</li> <li>• 1 witness assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	CB not yet accredited for the scheme ISO/IEC 17021-1:2012, but accredited for other accreditation schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review of 1 day.</li> <li>• On-site assessment at the CB's premises of 2 days.</li> <li>• 1 witness assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>C</b>	CB not yet accredited for any scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review of 1 day.</li> <li>• On-site assessment at the CB's premises of 4 days.</li> <li>• 1 witness assessment.</li> </ul>

For the documentation to be presented to ACCREDIA for document review, refer to the current revision of the application for accreditation:

- DA-00 – Accreditation application;
- DA-01 – Accreditation application for CBs.

#### **MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION**

To maintain accreditation, throughout the accreditation cycle, except for special situations (e.g. management of complaints and reports, changes to the certification scheme, changes in the corporate structure of the Body, involvement in legal cases...), the following assessments shall be undertaken:

- if the CB has issued fewer than 50 certificates in the certification scheme, 1 witness assessment and 1 on-site assessment specific to this scheme must be performed; however, in the case of a small number of certificates (<10), it is possible to perform only one assessment in the cycle (on-site or witness);
- if the CB has issued between 51 and 200 certificates in the certification scheme, 2 witness assessments and 1 on-site assessment specific to this scheme must be performed;
- if the CB has issued more than 201 certificates in the scheme, 2 witness assessments and 2 on-site assessments must be performed for this scheme.

On an annual basis ACCREDIA shall perform an assessment at the CB's head office to assess compliance with ISO/IEC 17021-1.

We remain available for any clarifications.

With kind regards,

**Dott. Emanuele Riva**

Director Department  
Certification and Inspection