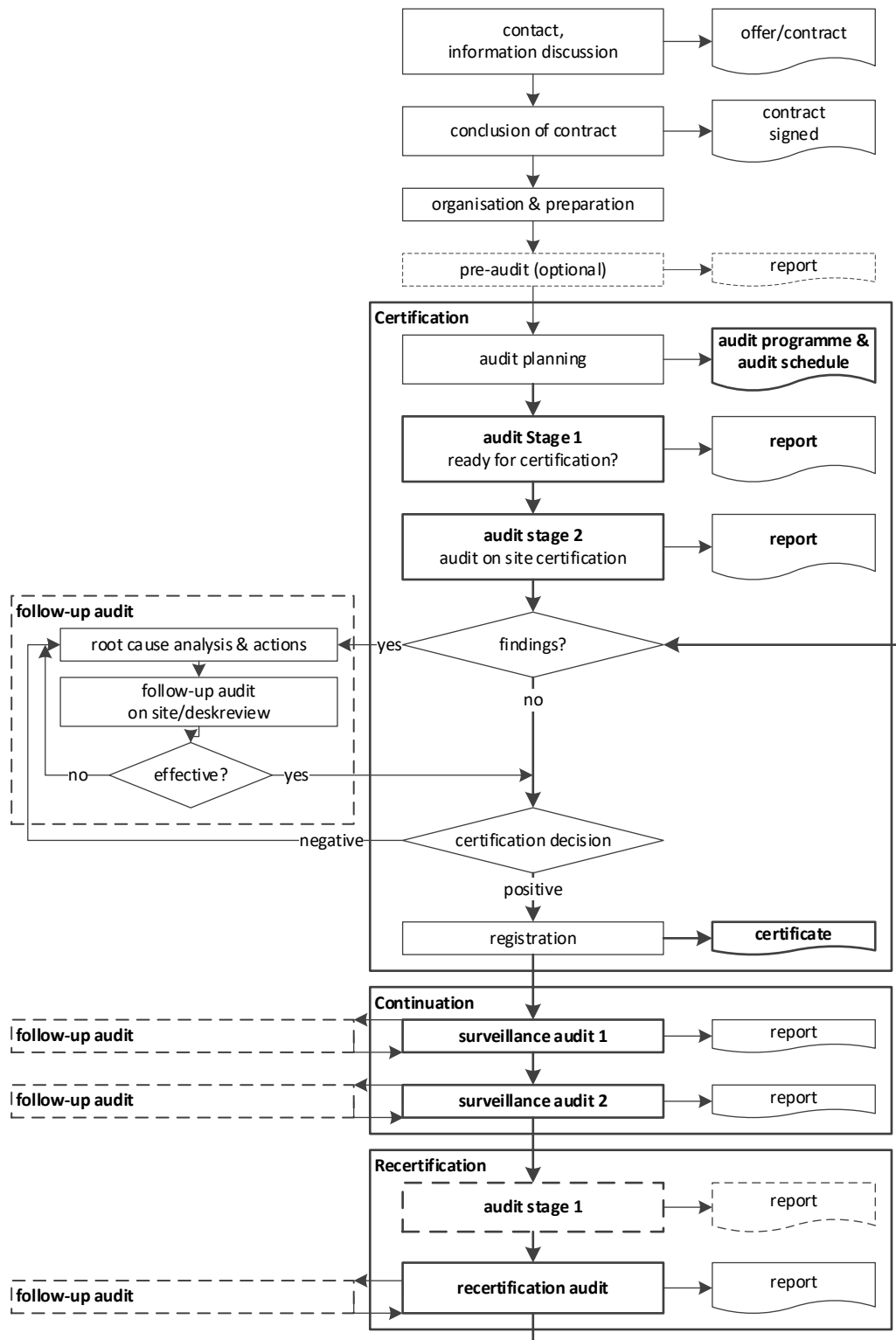


**General conditions**  
for the  
**certification**  
from  
**Management systems and products**



# General conditions for the certification of management systems and products

## Overview



# General conditions for the certification of management systems and products

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# General conditions for the certification of management systems and products

## 1 Content and scope of application

The 'General Terms and Conditions for the Certification of Management Systems and Products' contain the rights and obligations of the parties and information on the certification process.

The present 'General Terms and Conditions for the Certification of Management Systems and Products' and the Terms and Conditions of Swiss Safety Center are inseparable parts of the contract.

## 2 General conditions

The Swiss Safety Center AG, hereinafter referred to as SSC, offers interested organisations, among other things, its services for the certification of management systems. The organisations can thus provide proof of compliance with the requirements of specified (standard) requirements by a neutral, independent and objective certification body.

The prerequisite for the granting of a certificate by SSC is the initial assessment of the effectiveness of the client's management system with regard to the fulfilment of specified verification requirements (based on ISO 9001, ISO 14001 or other standards such as eduQaa, FSSC 22000 or for products, as in the case of the Berg & Alp Regulation) in the form of a certification audit completed with a positive result.

The SSC is a public limited company entered in the commercial register. It belongs to the SVTI, a 'not for profit' organisation. The SSC assesses and certifies the management systems of product manufacturers and service providers. The commitment and assurance of the independence and impartiality of the appointed auditors is guaranteed by SSC. SSC fulfils the requirements of an accredited certification body.

## 3 Duties and responsibilities

### 3.1 Duties and responsibilities of SSCs

The certification body of SSC undertakes to treat all information made available to it about the client's company as confidential and to utilise it only for the agreed purpose. Documents made available will not be passed on to third parties. This excludes detailed reporting to the arbitration board in the event of disputes. The client has the right of appeal. Complaints must be submitted in writing to the head of the certification body. The latter will deal with the complaint. If no solution can be found with the client, the complaint will be forwarded to the SVTI Group's legal department. The SVTI legal service will make the final decision. The client may release the SSC certification body from its duty of confidentiality for certain reasons. The description of the complaints/appeals procedure is publicly accessible. Complaints can be objections to a certification decision, complaints/grievances against the auditor or otherwise justified complaints/grievances. Information about the complainant is treated confidentially.

SSC shall only be liable to the client or third parties to the extent prescribed by law in the event of wilful intent or gross negligence. Further claims are excluded.

It is desired that the certified organisations publicise the certification and also use it for advertising purposes. The SSC certification body is obliged, within the scope of its possibilities, to ensure that the certification is correctly presented in advertising measures by the client.

SSC maintains a list of certified clients with details of the respective scope of validity. The certification body provides information on the validity of the certificates it has issued.

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The SSC certification body keeps records of

- the assessment (certification),
- the maintenance (monitoring),
- Repeating the assessment (recertification)

of management systems for products, processes and services, from which the performance of the service is evident. The retention period for these documents is at least five years after expiry of the validity of the certificate.

The SSC certification body shall inform certificate holders in an appropriate manner about changes to the certification and surveillance procedure or changes to the standards on which the certification is based and any applicable transition periods.

The SSC certification body is authorised to disclose names, addresses, valid certificates and their scope of validity as part of its duty to provide information.

The audit report and the certificate remain the property of the certification body.

## 3.2 Duties and responsibilities of the client

In order for an organisation to be awarded a certificate, it must be ready for certification. This means that the management system must be complete at the time of certification, both in terms of content and system. A subsequent reworking to a complete system within the framework of continuous improvement contradicts the meaning of the (standard) requirements.

The certified organisation undertakes to comply with the certification requirements at all times, including any changes notified by the certification body.

If the certification applies to ongoing production, it ensures that the product requirements are met.

For its part, the client must ensure within the scope of its document control that the management system documents applicable at the time of the audit can be made available on request.

All documents relating to the management system (including records) must be made available to the SSC certification body (transfer or inspection).

The client names an audit representative to the SSC certification body and grants the auditors access to the relevant positions in the company.

The certified client undertakes to inform the SSC certification body of all important changes to its management system, as well as changes to the company structure and organisation that have an influence on the management system, within a reasonable period of time. This applies in particular to:

- the legal status and organisational form, economic circumstances and ownership structure,
- Organisation and management,
- Contact address and locations,
- The area of activity covered by the management system,
- significant changes to the management system and processes,
- for food and medical device manufacturers: reportable incidents, e.g. recalls.

In addition, the certified client is obliged to archive the specification documents valid at the time of certification and to make them available to the certification body of SSC or the accreditation body upon request.

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All necessary changes to the certification requirements must be made within the period specified by SSC. Complaints on the part of the SSC certification body and their rectification must be recorded.

Prior to each surveillance and recertification, the client shall make the valid management system documents, in particular the process descriptions, available to the SSC certification body. The changes made should be traceable.

The organisation provides insight into complaints and claims and the documentation of the root cause analysis and the measures taken.

The Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS) and the owners of standards have the right to accompany an audit at any time or to carry out an independent audit as part of the corresponding certification programme; they are also subject to a duty of confidentiality.

The certificate holder may use the SSC certificate for business purposes, e.g. as proof to purchasers and authorities, for advertising purposes, as proof of due diligence in product liability cases. In the case of advertising measures, it must be mentioned that certification has been carried out by SSC, e.g. by using the certification mark.

Any misleading use of the certificate, e.g. in misleading extracts or in such a way that a system certification gives the impression of a product certification, is not permitted. This also includes the use of the certification mark outside the scope of the certificate and all subsequent restrictions of the same. This also applies in particular to advertising material that refers to the certification. If certification documents are passed on, this must be done in the respective entirety of the document, e.g. certificates including any appendices with descriptions of the locations, products or similar.

The client recognises the price list of the certification body of SSC in its currently valid version.

The client must also refrain from doing anything that could bring the SSC certification body or the certification system into disrepute.

## 4 Procedure for processing the service

### 4.1 Information meeting

On request, the SSC certification body will conduct an information meeting with the company interested in certification before the order is placed. The following points, among others, can be discussed:

- Aim and benefits of certification,
- Basic requirements for certification,
- Procedure of the certification process,
- Basis of the standard, verification level, scope of application,
- Estimated costs,
- Appointments.

### 4.2 Conclusion of contract

The order for the provision of services is placed by the client by countersigning the offer signed by SSC's certification body.

For certifications according to special standards, SSC must receive additional data from the client as a basis for calculating the certification costs and the quotation. For example, in the case of medical

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products (ISO 13485) or food producers (Suisse Garantie, FSSC 22000). The client receives a questionnaire for this purpose, which must be completed truthfully and returned to the certification body. The questions include information such as company size, activity, shift work and risk categories.

### 4.3 Organisation and preparation

The client can find a checklist for individual assessment and preparation for an audit of SSC on their websites (shop). The client is free to edit the list.

The client informs the SSC certification body of the information required for certification. This also includes the scope in the languages in which the certificate is required.

Furthermore, the auditors are named. It is ensured that the auditors have not performed or will not perform any consulting activities regarding the establishment of a management or product certification system for the commissioning client for at least three years before the planned audit and one year after the certificate is issued. This complies with the requirement for independence of the certification body and the auditors.

If special, technically specific processes need to be analysed in order to assess the system or the audit takes place in a regulated area (where EC directives or regulations exist), an appropriate technical expert can be called in. The auditor we appoint has the relevant expertise and experience in the client's area.

In principle, it is possible for the team of auditors to consist only of the audit manager. The decision is made by the head of the certification body. The criteria for deploying only one auditor are the type and size of the company and the complexity of the procedures, e.g.:

- Craft or small businesses with a small number of employees,
- Production or service consists of simple and straightforward manufacturing or service,
- the degree of organisation is a straightforward vertical structure with a small number of managers.

This is always a case-by-case decision by the head of the SSC certification body, but is based on the specifications of the accreditation body. The reasons are documented and submitted with the certificate application at the latest. The auditor appointed is always the lead auditor.

When awarding the contract, the client has the right to reject one or more nominated auditors. At the request of the client, the client shall be informed of the certifications in which the members of the audit team have participated in the last two years prior to the planned audit date.

The certification body of SSC points out that the higher-level accreditation body can send 'assessors' and 'assessors in training' to the audits at any time.

### 4.4 Pre-audit (optional)

Pre-assessments can be arranged by the certification body. These include

- a) Assessment of the management system on the basis of submitted documents. The purpose of this pre-assessment is to identify weaknesses in the description of the management system in comparison with the requirements of the applicable standard. The client receives a report on the result of the pre-assessment. However, the scope of this assessment must not correspond to a gap analysis, as certification bodies are not permitted to carry out such an analysis.
- b) Carrying out a pre-audit.  
The purpose of this pre-audit is to identify weaknesses in the implementation of the management system. The scope of the pre-audit is determined in consultation with the client. The pre-audit is

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usually carried out by an auditor who is not part of the audit team for the certification audit. This is to avoid conflicts of interest. The results of the pre-audit must be communicated to the client in the form of findings in the final meeting. In addition, the client receives a pre-audit report.

The services under a) and/or b) can be commissioned as required, but are not a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the certification procedure. The pre-audit must not take on the character of a consultation in the sense of setting up the system, neither in terms of the time spent nor in terms of content. This would mean that the independence for certification would no longer be given. The client cannot derive any entitlement to certification from the performance of a pre-assessment of the management system documents or a pre-audit.

From our experience, we recommend carrying out another internal audit or an audit with an external consultant instead of a pre-audit with the certification body.

### **4.5 Audit stage 1: Providing and analysing the system documentation**

The Stage 1 audit determines whether the organisation is ready for an on-site audit. This is intended to avoid unnecessary costs. This audit usually takes place at the location of the organisation to be certified. Exceptions must be justified in the report.

The level 1 audit comprises the following activities:

- The valid management system documents of the client (management manual and any other applicable documents such as process descriptions, work and test instructions) are checked by the auditors for fulfilment of the agreed standard requirements, taking into account the scope of application. The basis for this is the audit question list of the SSC certification body.
- Familiarise yourself with the location so that special conditions can be taken into account in the audit schedule for the Stage 2 audit.
- Obtain information on the applicable laws and guidelines.
- Ensure that the internal audits and the management review are carried out in accordance with the requirements.
- Planning of audit priorities based on existing activities and risks.
- Planning of personnel and time requirements for the Stage 2 audit (audit schedule).

The client receives a report.

There must be no more than 6 months between the Stage 1 audit and the Stage 2 audit.

If the management system documents do not fulfil the requirements, an additional meeting can be arranged at the client's request to discuss the next steps.

For certification in accordance with ISO 14001, the following areas in particular are checked in the Stage 1 audit are checked:

- the environmental aspects identified and the associated impact on the environment as well as the definition of the significant environmental aspects,
- an overview of the legal requirements (incl. authorisations, etc.),
- the planned measures for continuous improvement,
- Structure and effectiveness of the internal audit process,
- the documentation,
- the planned steps for implementing the management system up to the certification audit.



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For individual certifications, the Stage 1 audit is covered on the one hand by the questionnaire and on the other by the on-site assessment of the documentation.

### **4.6 Audit programme and audit planning**

After certification, an audit must take place every calendar year (surveillance or recertification).

The audit is planned by the lead auditor on the basis of the client's system documentation and the organisational and operational structure contained therein. The lead auditor draws up an audit schedule for the certification audit, which is agreed with the client.

SSC reserves the right to charge 30% of the agreed on-site time in the event of last-minute cancellations of audit appointments, i.e. less than 2 weeks before the audit.

The audit planning of product certification audits is based on the respective standard.

For organisations with several sites, the rules for multi-site audits are applied. In special cases, a random sampling procedure can be selected for all locations. Various requirements must be met for this, e.g. there must be central management with authority to issue instructions for all sites, internal audits must be controlled centrally and a joint management review must be carried out. The procedure is usually considered for around 20 locations or more. If not all sites are audited every year, the certified organisation must ensure that the findings made by the certification body at one site are checked for their relevance to other sites and take appropriate measures to ensure that improvements are implemented throughout the organisation and not just where a finding was made.

### **4.7 4.7 Audit stage 2: Certification audit at the client's company**

The stage 2 audit must take place no later than 6 months after the stage 1 audit. If this time is exceeded, the stage 1 audit must be repeated.

The certification audit is conducted by one or more auditors (lead auditor, second auditor, experts, etc.).

As part of the audit in the organisation, the auditors examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the management system introduced. The basis is the verification level of the agreed (standard) requirements. The SSC audit questionnaire serves as a guide and the auditors are obliged to carry out further interviews and investigations tailored to the specific activities of the organisation, insofar as these are related to the (standard) requirements.

The organisation's task during the audit is to demonstrate the practical application of its documented processes and their effectiveness in practice.

The auditors' task is to examine the practical application of the documented processes and assess whether they fulfil the (standard) requirements. The benefits of the system and its effectiveness are also discussed.

At the end of the audit, the client is informed of the results of the assessment in a final meeting. Deviations are explained on the basis of the deviation reports prepared during the audit. The non-conformance reports are signed by the auditor and the person responsible for the organisation. The original remains with the organisation and the auditor takes a copy with them.

If the requirements for the award of a certificate are not met, the client must take appropriate measures for improvement. The effectiveness of these measures must be examined in a follow-up audit. Depending on the type of deviation, the follow-up audit can take place by correspondence or on site.

The dates for the completion of any necessary corrective measures to be defined and implemented by the organisation are jointly agreed.

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Finally, the client receives a comprehensive audit report with any deviation reports, notes, recommendations and positive points, as well as the assessment by the auditors.

If such serious deviations become apparent during a certification audit that the auditors cannot make a recommendation to issue a certificate from SSC, the audited organisation will be informed immediately. It then has the option of cancelling the certification audit or continuing it as a pre-audit. If the organisation opts for the pre-audit route, the further procedure is agreed with the company. The audit documentation is prepared by agreement with the organisation. The costs for the new certification audit are based on the contract concluded. The company will be charged at least the costs incurred up to the cancellation (including the report).

The audit process for the various certifications is shown graphically on the first page.

### 4.8 Post-audit

Follow-up audits are required to examine the fulfilment of scheduled deviations or if this is necessary due to extraordinary events, e.g. due to complaints or incidents and accidents.

If follow-up audits are required for parts of the management system, the date for the follow-up audit is set. The audit team for the follow-up audit is put together by the audit manager on the basis of the necessary expertise from the allocated team. In the case of initial certification, the certification procedure is suspended until these deviations have been rectified. The audit manager decides whether the follow-up audit is to take place on site at the organisation or by correspondence. The documentation of the follow-up audit is carried out in the same way as for the certification audit. The re-audit is remunerated on a time and material basis in accordance with the current price list. The end of the certificate's validity is determined by the date of the positively completed follow-up audit.

### 4.9 Granting of certificates

#### 4.9.1 Certificate

At the request (audit report) of the SSC team of auditors, the certification body manager decides on the granting of certification; in individual exceptional cases, the holder of the standard or a designated representative decides.

For this purpose, an audit report with any audit deviation reports and the auditors' assessment are submitted to the certification body with the application.

If certification cannot be granted, the organisation will be informed in writing. The decision will be justified. The organisation has the opportunity to rectify the situation within the given timeframe.

The period of validity of the SSC certificate is generally three years from the date of the certification decision. This takes place approximately two weeks after the last day of the certification or recertification audit at the company's site, provided that all critical non-conformities are eliminated and non-conformities are improved by analysing the causes and implementing an action plan. Certification is maintained on condition that the surveillance audits are carried out with positive results. In special, justified cases or at the request of the client, a shorter frequency for the surveillance audits can be agreed. In special cases, a new certificate is issued annually (e.g. BRC). The certificate remains the property of the certification body.

Before the period of validity expires, recertification must be carried out in the organisation to extend the validity of the certificate for a further certification cycle. Die Zertifikatserteilung und die Zertifikats-Gültigkeitsdauer richten sich nach den spezifischen Vorgaben des jeweiligen Standards. (z. B. SCC).

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The certification body of SSC has the fundamental right to schedule an audit at short notice or to conduct an unannounced audit.

If the customer makes certificates available to others, the entire certificate must be passed on, including any appendices. This also applies to audit reports and other certification documents.

### **4.9.2 Changes to the scope of application**

If the scope changes, a new certificate must be issued and usually a new contract as well.

If the scope is restricted (activity/qualification, location no longer exists), this is usually done without an additional audit.

If the scope is extended (new, additional activity, new locations, new procedures, etc.), an on-site audit must usually be carried out.

### **4.9.3 Loss of the certificate**

#### **a) Withdrawal of the certificate**

SSC has the right to withdraw a granted certificate if

- the certificate is misused,
- - the monitoring reveals that essential requirements that were met at the time the certificate was issued are no longer met,
- due to complaints and/or other incidents, it must be assumed that the requirements of the rules on which the certificate is based are no longer fulfilled,
- for all other reasons that arise specifically from these conditions or are formally agreed between the certification body of SSC and the client.

#### **b) Suspension of certification**

If certification is suspended in accordance with SSC's certification rules, the certified party loses the right to use the mark. In such a case, existing documents, media etc. bearing the mark may still be used for a maximum of one month from the date on which the suspension of certification takes legal effect. The suspension can be granted for a maximum of 3 months, after which the certificate will be withdrawn. This also applies if the client applies for suspension. After a certificate has been withdrawn, re-certification is possible. However, an audit comparable to an initial certification must be carried out (which results in additional work compared to recertification).

#### **c) Revocation of certification**

If certification is revoked in accordance with SSC's certification rules, the certified party loses the right to use the mark. In such a case, existing documents, media etc. bearing the mark may still be used for a maximum of one month after the revocation of the certification becomes legally effective.

#### **d) Other loss of the right to use the sign**

The right to use the mark expires both on expiry of the date of validity and in the event of wilful or grossly negligent infringement of the provisions of these regulations. If the right to use the

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mark expires, the user of the mark may continue to use existing documents, media and the like in which the mark is used for a maximum of one month from the date of expiry.

### 4.9.4 Certification mark

Holders of valid certificates from SSC are granted the right to use the SSC certification mark when the certificate is issued. The mark may only be used for business purposes. This includes documents for business correspondence, advertising, leaflets, brochures, company cars, etc.

The following rules apply to the representation of the sign (see appendix):

- The sign may only be displayed in the form approved by SSC and must be easily legible and clearly visible.
- The label must always include the standard according to which certification was obtained.
- The characters can be displayed in the specified colour (SSC = black/red) or in a different colour, but then only in one colour.

Der Zeichenbenutzer stellt sicher, dass die Benutzung des Zeichens in der Werbung oder in sonstigen Massnahmen im Rahmen dieser Vorgaben erfolgt. Die Verwendung des Zeichens ist auf juristische Personen beschränkt und darf nicht ohne Genehmigung der Zertifizierungsstelle von SSC auf Dritte oder Nachfolger übertragen werden oder Gegenstand einer Abtretung oder eines Verkaufes, noch irgendeiner erzwungenen Massnahme sein.

The user of the mark shall ensure that the use of the mark in advertising or other measures is in accordance with these specifications. Use of the mark is restricted to legal entities and may not be transferred to third parties or successors without the authorisation of the SSC certification body or be the subject of an assignment or sale, nor of any enforced measure.

The mark for certified management systems may not be used to label individual products or services, not even in close connection with the products in such a way as to suggest that the products or services themselves are certified.

The relevant requirements must be complied with when labelling products.

The use of the mark is limited to the scope of the company's certification as stated in the certification document.

The accreditation refers to SSC.

### 4.10 Surveillance audits

Surveillance audits are generally due every 12 months. The date of the first surveillance audit following **the initial certification may not be more than 12 months after the last day of the stage 2 audit or any subsequent audit**. The exact date is agreed between the auditor and the client. The deadline is calculated from the date of the certification decision and a multiple of 12 months.

When monitoring, the design of performance-oriented processes, such as environmental performance, product and service quality, have a higher priority than the design of administrative and organisational elements. Simply developing the management system further without improving performance does not fulfil the requirement of continuous improvement.

Random samples are taken in the following areas as part of the monitoring audits:

- Effectiveness of the management system in terms of achieving the objectives and realising the policy/strategy,

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- Evaluation by management (management reviews),
- internal audits,
- Proof of continuous improvement in performance,
- Investigation of the benefits and effectiveness,
- Completion of the deviations,
- Procedure for the periodic assessment of compliance with legal requirements,
- Changes to the management system and the organisation,
- correct use of the certification mark.

To enable the auditor from the SSC certification body to prepare, the client sends him the relevant documents for the random samples. These include the assessment by the management (management review), reports from internal audits and an overview of the changes to the system to be analysed.

The surveillance audit is usually carried out by an auditor, in larger organisations by an audit team. The client receives a written report.

The monitoring audits are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the respective standard.

### **4.11 Conclusion of contract for the subsequent period**

In order to ensure a smooth service and to be able to take the client's needs into account in the best possible way, contracts for recertification are discussed in advance during the last surveillance audit before recertification, which is usually the second surveillance audit. If there are no changes, the contract is extended in accordance with the agreements set out therein.

### **4.12 Recertification**

The recertification process must be completed before the certificate expires.

During recertification, the effectiveness of the entire management system is randomly checked. The same principles apply as for the certification audit.

The client sends the valid documentation of the processes to the auditor at least one month before the audit date.

As a rule, recertification is the most favourable time to change the auditor so that new ideas can be introduced and objectivity and independence are not restricted. This can take place after the first certification cycle, i.e. after three years, but should be considered after two cycles.

Following successful recertification, the certified organisation receives a new certificate. This remains valid for another three years, provided that the annual surveillance audits are successfully completed.

### **4.13 Cancellation of the certification procedure**

The customer may cancel the certification procedure at any time. The company will be charged for the costs incurred up to the cancellation (including the report).

The audit reports and the certificate remain the property of the certification body. With the report and the certificate, the certification body confirms its examination of conformity with the applied norms/standards. If conformity is no longer given and no measures are taken to correct the deviations, the certification body must withdraw the certificate (4.9.3).

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## Annex

### Certification mark

You may/should use the SSC logo (as shown on this page) for communication purposes (e.g. marketing). The logo must be used in such a way that it is not misinterpreted. If, for example, the management system is certified according to ISO 9001, the impression must not be created that the product is certified.

The logo of the accreditation body shown on the certificate (Swiss Certification round logo with Swiss cross) may only be reproduced in the form shown here in combination with the SSC logo and a frame by the customer on its printed bags, website, etc.

It is not permitted to use the certification or accreditation mark on laboratory, calibration or inspection reports.

Display rules:

- No changes may be made to the signs.
- The width of the characters must be identical.
- The accreditation symbol (logo with Swiss cross) may only be displayed in black or red.
- The SSC logo may be shown in black/red or in a single other colour in accordance with the template.
- The characters may be reproduced in any size as long as they remain legible.
- If the accreditation mark is no longer legible in the size shown (e.g. SCESm 0013 for management systems and SCESp 0063 for products), the information under the logo must be repeated legibly.
- The proportions of the characters must not be changed.
- The characters must always be reproduced in full.

The files with the certification marks can be downloaded from the SSC website (<http://www.safetycenter.ch/shop>).

#### Swiss Safety Center (Example):



#### also possible, if deemed necessary

(both logos must be the same size and framed together):



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## More signs

Special rules apply to the use of the following marks. Compliance with the associated requirements is a requirement that must be met by the certified organisation and is verified by the certification body.

Information on this can be found on the websites of the standards organisations. A corresponding information sheet is provided as part of the contract.

### Food

- FSSC 22000 (FSSC)
- Berg & Alp (BAIV)
- Suisse Garantie (AMS Agro-Marketing Suisse))
- aha! (Service Allergie Suisse)

### Training and further education

- eduQua (SVEB)

### Automobile

- Swissgarant
- Five Star
- Repanet
- Business Excellence by André Koch AG
- Green Car Repair

### Quality

- IN-Qualis
- Dentic (Dental laboratories)

### Environment

- EcoEntreprise
- Valais Excellence

### Work safety

- (Safety Culture Ladder (SCL)
- SCC