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Approval: C. Lamoureux	SAI SA8000: 2026 Notification 2: Training Requirement for Existing SA8000 auditors	Effective: October 1, 2025



Notification 2

Issue: 1
Date: October 1, 2025
To: All SAAS-Accredited and Applicant Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) (formerly Certification Bodies)
From: Social Accountability International
RE: Training Requirements for Qualified SA8000 Auditors

Preamble: This document (Notification 2) is the second in a series of policy and process documents detailing the transition to the SA8000:2026 Standard. This Notification focuses specifically on training requirements for existing auditors qualified under SA8000:2014. It should be read in conjunction with Notification 1 (Transition Requirements for Certification of Organisations to SA8000: 2026) and other supporting documents.

Status: This Notification explains the process for SA8000 auditor upgrade training as part of the transition to SA8000:2026. The requirements contained herein are normative. Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) SHALL comply with these requirements as a condition of maintaining accreditation.

1. Upgrade Training Requirement

- i. All auditors qualified to conduct SA8000:2014 audits SHALL complete and pass the SA8000:2026 Auditor Upgrade Course before conducting audits to the revised standard.
- ii. The course will be available online, on-demand through SAI's Training Center, beginning January 1, 2026, in English, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Italian and Portuguese.
- iii. Duration: 4–6 hours, including interactive checks and a final test. Multiple attempts to successfully complete the final test will be permitted.
- iv. Course Fee: USD \$100 (please see FAQ Q10 for more information about exceptions).

2. Special Exception

- i. Auditors completing the SA8000 Basic Course directly with SAI on or after September 22, 2025 will already be trained on SA8000:2026 and SHALL NOT be required to complete the upgrade course.
- ii. This exception does not apply to courses delivered by other providers.

3. Requirements Summary

SA8000 Basic Auditor Training Date	Training provider	Upgrade Course Required?
Before September 22, 2025	SAI or any SAI-approved provider	Yes
September 22, 2025 or later	SAI only	No
September 22, 2025 or later	Any SAI-approved provider	Yes

4. Next Steps for CABs

- i. CABs SHALL ensure that only qualified SA8000 auditors that have successfully completed the SA8000:2026 Auditor Upgrade Course are assigned to conduct SA8000:2026 audits.
- ii. CABs SHALL monitor auditor training records and certificates for compliance and make such records available for SAAS review.

----- End of Document -----

Annex A - Frequently Asked Questions for Notification 2 RE: Training Requirements for Existing SA8000 Auditors

Q1. I completed the SA8000 Basic Course before September 22, 2025. Do I need to complete the upgrade course?

Yes. All auditors trained on SA8000:2014, including those who completed the Basic Course before September 22, 2025, must complete the SA8000:2026 Auditor Upgrade Training before conducting SA8000:2026 audits.

Only auditors who attend the SA8000 Basic Course directly with SAI on or after September 22, 2025 will already be trained on SA8000:2026 and do not need the upgrade. This exemption does not apply to courses delivered by other providers.

Q2. Will my SA8000:2014 qualification remain valid after January 1, 2026?

Yes. You may still conduct audits to SA8000:2014 if assigned by your CAB during the transition period. However, you must complete the upgrade course before conducting any SA8000:2026 audits, and no later than December 31, 2026.

Q3. How do I prove that I have completed the upgrade course?

Once you pass the final test given as part of the SA8000:2026 Auditor Upgrade Course, you will receive an electronic certificate of successful course completion. CABs can verify this through SAI's learning platform and must maintain updated auditor qualification records.

Q4. When can I conduct audits to the SA8000:2026 Standard?

You may begin auditing to SA8000:2026 once:

1. The standard is published, and
2. You have successfully completed the upgrade training and received your certificate.
3. Your CAB has authorized your qualifications to conduct SA8000:2026 audits.

Q5. What does the upgrade course cover?

The course focuses on the changes from SA8000:2014 to SA8000:2026, including procedural updates (such as SAAS Procedure 201B), to quickly update auditors already trained on the previous version.

Q6. Can I complete the upgrade course in parts or must I finish in one sitting?

The course is on-demand. You can complete it in multiple sessions and your progress will be saved automatically.

Q7. What happens if I fail the final test?

You may retake the test as many times as needed. The course is designed to help all auditors fully understand the information provided in the training course.

Q8. When can I register for the upgrade course?

Registration will open on **January 1, 2026** through SAI's Training Center, which can be found here:

<https://socialfingerprint.absorbtraining.com/#/public-dashboard>

Q9. How long do I have to complete the upgrade course?

All existing SA8000 auditors must complete the upgrade course by December 31, 2026.

Q10. What is the cost of the upgrade course?

The course fee will be USD \$100. This includes all training modules, assessments, and your electronic certificate.

As an exception, participants who completed the SA8000 Basic Course training with SAI in 2023 or later may take the revision training for free, provided they complete it by June 30, 2026. A coupon code will be issued to these participants, expiring July 1, 2026. After that date, the USD \$100 fee applies.

Q11. Does completing the upgrade course give me additional auditor status?

No. Completing the upgrade course updates your qualification to SA8000:2026. All other requirements for auditor status remain governed by SAAS Procedure 201B.

Q12. Will there be any other training requirements for existing SA8000 auditors?

Yes. In 2026, SAI will offer additional mandatory and non-mandatory training for existing SA8000 auditors. More information will be issued in early 2026.

Q13. What are CABs required to do during the transition?

CABs must ensure that only auditors who have successfully completed SAI's official SA8000:2026 upgrade training are assigned to audits under the new standard. CABs must also update their internal training and calibration processes in line with revised SAAS procedures as they are published over the coming months.

Q14. Do CAB managers, technical reviewers, and support staff also need training?

Yes. CAB managers, technical reviewers, and personnel involved in SA8000 certification processes are also subject to SA8000:2026 training requirements. Further details will be communicated at the time of republication of SAI's SA8000 scheme competency requirements 201B (anticipated January 1, 2026).

Q15. What is expected of CABs during the transition period in 2026?

Between January 1, 2026 and December 31, 2026, audits may still be conducted against SA8000:2014. CABs must carefully manage assignments during this time, ensuring that audits conducted against SA8000:2026 are carried out only by upgraded auditors. Please refer to Notification 1 (Transition Requirements for Certification of Organisations to SA8000: 2026) and other supporting documents, which can be found here: <https://sa-intl.org/sa8000-standard-revision/>

Q16. I have more questions. Who can I contact?

For questions about registering for this training, please contact **training@sa-intl.org**.

For questions regarding SA8000:2026 and the transition process, please contact **sa8000@sa-intl.org**