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Assured Steel Certification

CARES SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTIONAL STEEL (SCS) SCHEME SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENTS & SUSTAINABILITY SCHEME AUDITS IN 2023

Summary of Accreditation Assessments

CARES is accredited by The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) for the BS 8902:2009 Responsible sourcing sector certification schemes for construction products - Specification. The details of the CARES accreditation status can be found on the following UKAS webpage <https://www.ukas.com/download-schedule/0002/Product>

Following successful accreditation assessments in 2021 there were no assessment activities conducted by UKAS in 2023 and CARES' grant of accreditation was successfully renewed for a further four years to 2026. UKAS surveillance assessments in 2023 also resulted in a recommendation to maintain accreditations.

Summary of SCS Scheme Audits in 2023

CARES completed all SCS scheme audits in 2023 as scheduled. There were 40 companies holding 44 CARES SCS certificates (4 companies have two certificates each for different products) at the end of 2023. The type of audits conducted at these companies are provided in Table 1 and the type and number of non-conformities raised during these audits are provided in Table 2.

Table 1. Type and number of CARES SCS scheme certification audits in 2023

Type of Audit	Number of Audits
MS Manual Review	3
Stage 1	5
Stage 2	28
Surveillance	24
Re-certification	-
Follow-up	2
Total number of Audits	62

Table 2. Summary of the NCRs raised by CARES Auditors in 2023

Type and number of NCR		Note
Major	-	No major NCRs raised in 2023
Minor	121	The root cause analysis and actions to the NCRs were reviewed by CARES and found satisfactory, effectiveness of corrective actions to be verified during following CARES audits in 2024.

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NCRs were mainly raised for area of improvements relating to the sustainability management including assessment of supply chain, ethical supply chain practices, transparency and numerous NCRs were raised in relation to the social aspects.

SCS Scheme Revision

The SCS scheme is the only responsible sourcing scheme that is independently accredited by UKAS to the rigorous requirements of BS 8902:2009 - Responsible sourcing sector certification schemes for construction products. It is highly valued by construction projects specifiers and clients. It has also been assessed by BREEAM against the requirements for responsible sourcing credits and has been recognised as a 'responsible sourcing certification scheme' within BREEAM New Construction, BREEAM International New Construction and CEEQUAL and is recognised by other green building and infrastructure assessment tools globally.

CARES has been monitoring various performance indicators since 2009 and has periodically amended the scheme requirements to keep up to date with changing stakeholder expectations and the changing operating environment.

The new scheme version 9 was launched, taking effect from Jan 2021 after an extensive consultation through 2019 and 2020 on the need to raise sustainability performance standards, in particular, driven by demand from the UK construction market. Development of the scheme has been aligned to the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 59:2019 ISO and IEC recommended practices for standardization by national bodies and ISEAL code of conduct and code of good practice for social and environmental standard setting v6.

SCS v9 transition of 35 companies have been completed, assessment of 5 remaining companies is in progress at the time of the issue of this report. In addition to ongoing audits, there are currently 7 new applications in progress.

CARES SCS Scheme Future Update Plans

CARES is committed to promote Sustainable Development aligned to the UN's SDG (Sustainable Development Goals)

- Reduction of its own direct impacts
- Actions to support performance improvements of SCS certified clients
- Outreach & work with construction, steel industry and other stakeholders
- Independent & validated EPD's and Carbon Footprint Reports

Driving forces and increased expectations:

- The race to decarbonise the steel industry,
- The rise in due diligence legislation requiring better knowledge of and actions regarding labour rights, human rights and environmental risks in the supply chain
- Customer demand
- Increased regionalisation,
- Advances in standardisation
- Building rating systems,

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- Traceability and other requirements impacting on the construction supply chain.

The next review of SCS and updates v9 to v10, aligning with some of the minor improvement opportunities identified in the benchmarking, e.g., expand of some human rights and labour conditions criteria to demonstrate alignment more clearly and close some of the minor gaps identified.

- Q1 2024: Initial stakeholder consultation through an online survey
- Q2 2024: SCS scheme update proposals development process
- Q3 2024: Communications and second consultation on proposed changes
- Q3 2024: Agreement on changes and development activities to finalise a new Version 10
- Q4 2024: Communications relating to the changes and timelines for implementation sent to approved and prospective firms
- 2025: SCS Version 10 published with a timeline for transition from v9 to v10 defined
- 2025-2030 periodic review to ensure scheme alignment to current science and performance expectations.

CARES 19/01/2024

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