



Pembroke House
21 Pembroke Road
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 1XR
United Kingdom

Assured Steel Certification

CARES SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTIONAL STEEL (SCS) SCHEME SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENTS & SUSTAINABILITY SCHEME AUDITS IN 2024

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 demonstrating the Schedule of Accreditation for ISO/IEC 17065:2012 - Product Certification with UKAS accreditation company number 0002. <https://www.ukas.com/download-schedule/0002/Product>

Following successful renewal of the accreditation assessments in 2022, CARES' grant of accreditation was successfully renewed for a further four years to 2026. UKAS surveillance assessments in 2024 also resulted in a recommendation to maintain accreditations.

Summary of SCS Scheme Audits in 2024

CARES completed all SCS scheme audits in 2024 as scheduled. There were 45 companies/sites holding 49 CARES SCS certificates (4 companies holding certificates for two types of products) at the end of 2024. 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 2024

Type of Audit	Number of Audits
MS Manual Review	7
Stage 1	9
Stage 2	6
Re-certification	9
Surveillance	29
Follow-up	3
Total number of Audits	63

Table 2. Summary of the NCRs raised by CARES Auditors in 2024

Type and number of NCR		Note
Major	6	The root cause analysis and actions to the NCRs were reviewed by CARES and found satisfactory, effectiveness of corrective actions were generally verified during follow up audits, and also verified based on the documented information published on relevant companies' websites.

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Minor	60	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 2025.
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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 sustainability reporting.

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 (UK), 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. Following the revision of the scheme to version 9, transition of all certified companies to the new version have been satisfactorily completed within the specified 3-year transition period.

The next review of SCS and updates v9 to v10 has been planned for 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. Accordingly, the plan stages cover:

- Q4 2023: Initial 60+ days stakeholder consultation through an online survey
- Q1/2 2024: SCS scheme update proposals development process
- Q3/4 2024: Communications and ongoing consultation on proposed changes
- Q4 2024: Agreement on changes and development activities to finalise a new Version 10 + Proposals for Regional/National Schemes
- Q1/2/3 2025: Draft SCS Version 10 (+ proposals on regional and national schemes) published with a timeline for transition defined. Further feedback sought/consultation
- Q4 2025: Communication with approved and prospective firms relating to the changes and timelines for introduction
- 2025-2030 periodic review to ensure scheme alignment to current science and performance expectations

Online consultation survey over 60+ days, as well as feedback from stakeholder events during 2023/2024. 100's engaged. Reasonable level of feedback and engagement with most respondents from approved

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firms. Often a balanced response to many consultation questions, so limited clear steers. Key feedback and plans cover:

- Improve ease of certification process, especially for SME's/fabricators/processors
- Local conditions and requirements
- Supply chain/responsible sourcing requirements deemed too hard by some however, acknowledged as essential by most
- Enhance social clauses
- KPIs
- Recognising Performance

CARES SCS Scheme Future Plans

- Ongoing engagement with identified stakeholders, Sustainability Committee members and open consultation
- Participation in collaborations, initiatives and standards development
- Encourage SCS for the constructional steels and ResponsibleSteel for other type of steels
- Encourage Stand-Alone EPD (Aiming to reach +100 EPDs in 2025)
- Ongoing updates to EPD process and tool
- Execute SCS v10 development plan to ensure aligned to 1.5°C pathway, changing legal drivers and extended sustainability requirements as discussed at Committee
- Support market-based initiatives to drive demand

CARES 17/09/2025

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