



## Maintaining SAFE Certification For Large Companies and BASE Audit Users

### Annual Audit Submission

SAFE Certification is valid for 3 years from the date of certification, providing all annual maintenance audit requirements are met. A large company needs to perform a BASE audit each calendar year after the original certification submission, and a recertification audit before the SAFE certification expiry date<sup>1</sup>. The maintenance audit requirements are the same as the initial certification audit, but using records covering the time period since the previous audit.

For example, submission requirements for a large company with a SAFE certification date of 15 June 2009

- 1<sup>st</sup> maintenance audit – due before 15 June 2010, submit at least 6 months after certification date.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> maintenance audit – due before 15 June 2011, submit at least 6 months after 2010 submission.
- Recertification audit – due on or before 15 June 2012

Late audits submitted after December 31 containing information from the previous calendar year will be counted as an audit submission for previous calendar year. The company will be required to submit an audit for the current calendar year to maintain SAFE Certification.

For example, 1<sup>st</sup> maintenance audit is due before 15 June 2010 but submitted after 31 December 2010 and containing company safety information of 2010:

- The audit will be treated as 2010 submission. Since the audit was submitted after December 31, 2010 the company will not be eligible for 2010 WSBC COR rebate.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> maintenance audit is still required to be submitted for 2011 to maintain certification.

To avoid a lapse in certification, recertification audits must be submitted before the SAFE certification expiry date.

SAFE certification will become inactive for companies that fail to submit a maintenance audit by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that calendar year. These companies with late audits will not be eligible for a WorkSafeBC COR rebate for that year and their name will be removed from the SAFE certified list. SAFE certification will be reactivated when a maintenance audit submission is received. However, the company will not retroactively receive a COR rebate for a late audit.

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<sup>1</sup> SAFE Certification expiry date is the month and day of certification, 3 years after initial certification date.

Inactive SAFE certification will be terminated when a company fails to submit a maintenance audit for 2 consecutive calendar years. A company with a terminated certification will have to get recertified.

## **General Information**

### Continuous Improvement

A key part of performing the maintenance audit is to generate a corrective action plan to address deficiencies. The corrective action plan should address:

- Identified problems or weaknesses
- Required corrective action
- Person responsible
- Due date
- Completion status

For large companies, a corrective action plan can be developed from the recommendations in the BASE audit report. A sample corrective action plan is attached.

### Submission Requirements and Timing

Since maintenance audits provide an opportunity for companies to verify that all aspects of their health and safety management system are being maintained, there is no requirement that a pass mark be obtained in order to stay certified. Significant infractions may result in a requirement for further audits of an employer's health and safety management system to maintain the validity of the employer's SAFE certification.

Maintenance audit activities and audit submissions are to be completed to the same standard as BASE certification audits and are subject to the same quality assurance review process.

- For large companies the scope and scale for interview sample size and site observations is the same.
- Report content and formats are the same as certification audits.
- The auditor is required to assess the corrective action plan from previous audit recommendations and document the findings as part of the current audit submission.

It is recommended that you conduct your maintenance audits before the anniversary date of the initial certification and to avoid conducting the 2<sup>nd</sup> maintenance audit very close to your recertification audit.

### Change in Company Size

A company's size may change during the 3-year certification period and it may be required to change the company's registration category.

- e.g. – A company SAFE certified as a large employer using the BASE audit has downsized to 10 workers and anticipates remaining at that worker count for the long-term.

If a company assesses their current worker count and/or anticipated peak season worker count for the upcoming year and identifies a significant, long-term variation and the employer wants to change their company category, the company must complete a SAFE Companies Status Change Form. Requests for status change pertaining to company

size and audit requirements must be submitted prior to the date of upcoming audit submission and will require approval from the Council. Company registration information will be updated when the status is approved. If there is a change in the certification level such as from BASE to SEBASE, a new certification will only be issued after a new SEBASE audit is submitted meeting Council requirements. SEBASE training requirements must be met before a SEBASE audit is submitted.

It is recommended that large companies certified using the BASE standard whose worker count falls below 20 workers during maintenance years continue to maintain their certification as a large company.

A company can always choose to be certified to a higher audit standard.

- e.g. – employer with 18 workers can be certified at the BASE audit standard.

**If you have any questions, please contact the Council for guidance.**

**To download a pdf of this information that includes a template Corrective Action Plan please [click here](#).**



### Corrective Action Plan

These corrective actions are to be completed by the person indicated within the time frame allotted. If more time is required or there are difficulties encountered, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ for assistance.

Reviewed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Identified Problem	Required Corrective Action	Person Responsible	Due Date	✓ Done