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**Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of
Forest Management Systems**

Authority to Issue

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Galloway". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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with Authority of the Governing Board

CONTENTS

0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
0.1	BACKGROUND	1
0.2	OBJECT AND FIELD OF APPLICATION	1
0.3	TRANSITION POLICY.....	2
1	SCOPE	4
2	REFERENCES.....	4
3	TERMS AND DEFINITIONS	4
4	PRINCIPLES.....	5
5	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	5
6	STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS	5
7	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS	5
7.2	PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE CERTIFICATION ACTIVITIES	5
8	INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS	6
8.6	INFORMATION EXCHANGE BETWEEN A CERTIFICATION BODY AND ITS CLIENTS	6
9	PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.....	7
9.1	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	7
9.2	INITIAL AUDIT AND CERTIFICATION	9
9.3	SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES	14
9.6	SUSPENDING, WITHDRAWING OR REDUCING THE SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION	15
9.9	RECORDS OF APPLICANTS AND CLIENTS	15
10	MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES.....	15
	ANNEX A – AUDIT DURATION.....	16
	ANNEX B - MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION.....	18

0 Introduction

0.1 Background

- 0.1.1 Certification of forest management systems is a third-party conformity assessment activity as defined in ISO/IEC 17000:2004, 5.5, 'Certification Bodies' (CBs) are the third-party conformity assessment bodies performing this activity.
- 0.1.2 This Procedure was developed by JAS-ANZ, on behalf of the AFSL, and sets down the requirements for certification bodies conducting audits against the Australian Forestry Standard – AS 4708—2007.
- 0.1.3 JAS-ANZ Procedure 26, Issue 2, references AS 4708(Int)—2003. This standard has now been superseded by AS 4708—2007, as referenced in this Procedure.
- 0.1.4 The significant changes made to the normative sections of AS 4708 are detailed on the AFSL website at http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/files/AS4708_changes.doc.
- 0.1.5 AS4708-2007 is designed to be used in isolation or in combination with other audit requirements such as ISO14001 and ISO 9001.
- 0.1.6 The criteria against which the forest management system of an applicant is assessed shall be those outlined in AS 4708 relevant to the function performed. If an explanation is required as to the application of AS 4708, it shall be formulated by relevant and impartial committees or persons possessing the necessary technical competence and published by the CB.
- Note:** The provision “if an explanation is required” shall be applied by limiting such documents to those recognized by JAS-ANZ.
- 0.1.7 Accredited certification bodies must appreciate that where their scope of accreditation refers, either directly or indirectly, to requirements laid down by a regulatory authority, the requirements of that regulatory authority, as amended from time to time, may be applied by JAS-ANZ in addition to the requirements laid down in this Procedure.
- 0.1.8 The AFSL may request a review of this procedure at any time, for example in response to industry needs or future amendments to AS 4708. This Procedure shall also be subject to ongoing review by the JAS-ANZ Forestry Sector Technical Committee as part of the normal ongoing programme development cycle.

0.2 Object and field of application

- 0.2.1 ISO/IEC 17021 is an International Standard that sets out the requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems.
- 0.2.2 To facilitate the uniform interpretation and application of ISO/IEC 17021 for audit and certification of forest management systems, this procedure has taken the work of the JAS-ANZ Forestry Sector Technical Committee in Procedure 26, Issue 2, and aligned

the normative criteria with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021 in this Procedure as Issue 3. The Annexes to this Procedure are also to be considered as normative criteria.

0.2.3 Bodies seeking JAS-ANZ accreditation for forest management systems certification shall satisfy the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021 and this Procedure.

0.2.4 The term “should” is used in this document to indicate recognised means of meeting the requirements of the standard. A CB can meet these in an equivalent way provided this can be demonstrated to JAS-ANZ. The term “shall” is used in this document to indicate those provisions which, reflecting the requirements of the relevant standard, are mandatory.

0.2.5 Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021 and this Procedure attests to the necessary competence and reliability of a CB to provide audits and certification of forestry management systems.

0.2.6 All the major headings (numbers 1-10) of this Procedure have been reproduced from ISO/IEC 17021.

0.2.7 This procedure does not diminish any of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021. The clause numbers in this procedure are prefixed with the letter ‘J’ to indicate mandatory criteria developed by the JAS-ANZ Forestry Sector Technical Committee for the audits and certification of forestry management systems.

0.2.8 The text of ISO/IEC 17021:2006 is not included in this document and shall be referred to separately.

0.2.9 References in this procedure to specific clauses of ISO/IEC 17021 shall be read to mean reference to ISO/IEC 17021 in conjunction with the corresponding criteria in this procedure.

0.3 Transition Policy

0.3.1 Accreditation

0.3.1.1 All new applicant CBs will be required to demonstrate compliance with JAS-ANZ Procedure 26, Issue 3 before accreditation is granted.

0.3.1.2 For existing applicants and accredited CBs due to be assessed before 15 September, 2008, they shall be assessed against JAS-ANZ Procedure 26 Issue 2 and JAS-ANZ Procedure 26, Issue 3, but any findings against the additional requirements of JAS-ANZ Procedure 26, Issue 3 shall be raised as observations.

0.3.1.3 If the next assessment is due on or after 15 September, 2008, then the CB shall be assessed against JAS-ANZ Procedure 26, Issue 3 and any deficiencies shall be reported as nonconformities.

0.3.2 Certification

- 0.3.2.1 CBs shall establish and implement a process for notifying all applicants and holders of AS 4708(Int)—2003 certifications of the requirement for transition to AS 4708—2007, by no later than 31 January 2009.
- 0.3.2.2 From the date of publication of this procedure, all new applicants shall be required to demonstrate compliance with AS 4708—2007 before certification is granted.
- 0.3.2.3 For existing certifications, during this transition period, organizations can choose to maintain certification to AS 4708(Int)—2003, or gain certification to AS 4708—2007, recognising the obligation of the certified organization to demonstrate compliance with AS 4708—2007 by no later than 31 January 2009.
- 0.3.2.4 CBs shall maintain records to demonstrate, that by no later than 31 January 2009, all AFS certifications comply with AS 4708—2007.
- 0.3.2.5 This policy should not lead to additional audits if all parties promptly respond to this policy advice from the date of publication.

Conformity assessment— Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

1 Scope

2 References

- 2.1 AS 4708—2007 – The Australian Forestry Standard, Forest Management – Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Criteria and Requirements for Wood Production, available at: <http://www.forestrystandard.org.au>
- 2.2 AS 4708(Int)—2003 to AS 4708—2007 - Significant changes, available at http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/files/AS4708_changes.doc
- 2.3 AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000 – Quality management systems – Requirements
- 2.4 ISO 19011:2002 – Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing
- 2.5 ISO 14001:2004 – Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use
- 2.6 ISO/IEC 17021:2006 – Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- 2.7 IAF MD 2:2007 (Issue 1) – IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems, available at www.iaf.nu

3 Terms and definitions

J.3.4 The following definitions also apply to this document:

- AFSL Australian Forestry Standard Limited is the industry organization that initiated the development of this Procedure and AS 4708:2007, which is also referred to as 'The Australian Forestry Standard'.
- Coupe Refer to Annex B - clauses B2.1.1 and B2.1.3.
- DFA The defined forest area, as described in AS 4708, Sections 3 and 5, includes productive and non-productive forest areas, streamside reserves, conservation areas, roads, etc. The defined forest area is described by survey plans, legal title(s), gazettal notices or GIS shape files (coupes or

similar), whether as freehold, joint venture agreement or lease.

<u>Group certification</u>	A "group" is defined as a legal entity representing a cohort of managers of small forest areas that are jointly developing, implementing or maintaining a forest management system designed to meet the requirements of AS 4708, and are located within a forest region defined by similar forest types or a similar range of forest types, conditions or administrative arrangements.
<u>Nonconformity</u>	Refer ISO/IEC 17021, clause 9.1.15.b)
<u>PEFC</u>	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme
<u>Stakeholder</u>	An individual or organization, usually locally or regionally based, who has an interest in the forest management on the DFA.

Like-forest management units include:

<u>Native forests</u>	Should be grouped by forest type. For example: eucalyptus forests; callitris and eucalypt woodland. Where the forest type is extensive, the general topographical or geomorphological divisions should also be grouped.
<u>Plantations</u>	Should be grouped into active management phases

4 Principles

5 General requirements

6 Structural requirements

7 Resource requirements

7.2 Personnel involved in the certification activities

- J.7.2.4.1 If a CB uses technical experts, its systems shall include details of how technical experts are selected and how their technical knowledge is assured on a continuing basis. The CB may rely on outside help, for example, from industry or professional institutions.

- J.7.2.4.2 The competencies specified at clause J.9.1.3.4 shall be demonstrated through education, training and/or experience or a suitable combination of these such as:
- a) a degree or postgraduate diploma in forestry;
 - b) professional membership of a forestry-related professional body;
 - c) experience gained working as a forester in a forest environment equivalent to that under audit (e.g. south-east eucalypt forest, radiata pine plantation);
 - d) registration as an auditor/lead auditor with an accredited professional body operating a forest auditor recognition scheme.
- J.7.2.10.1 The CB shall have procedures to ensure that each auditor and lead auditor is fully evaluated on-site by a competent forestry lead auditor, or a competent EMS lead auditor assisted by a forestry auditor or technical expert, and found to be competent prior to authorising the auditor or lead auditor to audit unsupervised.
- J.7.2.10.2 Full evaluation means evaluating the auditor's or lead auditor's planning, leading and auditing skills and technical knowledge as applicable. This should include evaluation against all of the technical elements of AS 4708.
- Note:** Conversion from auditor to lead auditor status may only require a partial evaluation where a previous evaluation verified the auditor's auditing skills and technical competence.

8 Information requirements

8.6 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients

8.6.1 Information on the certification activity and requirements

- J.8.6.1. The CB's requirements for prospective clients shall include:
- a) making available to the CB, when requested, the records of all communications including complaints and corrective action taken in accordance with the requirements of AS 4708.
 - b) making the summary report referred to at J.9.1.10.3 publicly available.
 - c) maintaining a DFA register of all separately described titles or coupes. This register forms the basis of the certification; and shall be regularly updated by the forest manager; and verified by the CB. New areas shall be added to the register and sampled as a specific subgroup at the time of each audit.
 - d) The client organization shall have a system that can track the additions and/or deletions to the DFA between audits and be able to provide areas and diagrammatic representation of any changes. Maps of the defined forest area at a scale no smaller than 1:250,000 shall be publicly available.

8.6.3 Notice of changes by a client

- J.8.6.3 The organisation shall be subject to special audit or additional surveillance activity if it makes major modifications to its forest management system or if other changes or significant events take place which could affect the basis of its certification.

9 Process requirements

9.1 General requirements

- J.9.1.1.1 A CB shall perform its initial audit (but not necessarily its surveillance audits and recertification audit) of medium and large grower's (refer to Annex A, Table 1) in at least two stages at the organization's office(s).
- J.9.1.1.2 For small growers, the Stage 1 does not need to be performed on-site if the CB can adequately demonstrate that it requires applicants to provide a self-audit that addresses all of the stage 1 requirements.
- J.9.1.1.3 For large growers, the Stage 1 should also include a sample of the operational forest(s).
- J.9.1.3.1 For combined audits (i.e. EMS, OHS or other management system audits that are conducted simultaneously or consecutively with forestry management audits), there may be elements common to all systems. In determining auditor competence for common elements, the main principle is that the integrity of each audit is maintained. This requires appropriate competence to be deployed for all audit activities. It remains a matter of judgement which aspects of an EMS, OHS, forestry management or other audit can be performed by an auditor whose training and background are from another discipline, and whether any supplementary knowledge and/or training is required.
- J.9.1.3.2 The process for determining the competences needed in the CB's audit teams should include consideration of:
- a) the defined forest area's size, characteristics and forest types; and
 - b) a suitable mix of skills, including auditing, statistical sampling and analysis, forest auditing, forest management, forest ecology and soil and water conservation.
- J.9.1.3.3 A forestry auditor may be appointed as the team leader if that auditor is a QMS or EMS lead auditor as defined in ISO 19011.
- J.9.1.3.4 Audit teams may use technical experts with specific knowledge regarding the process, forestry and environmental issues or legislation affecting the organization, but who do not satisfy all of the criteria set out in ISO 19011. However they shall satisfy the personal attributes as defined in ISO 19011, clause 7.2. Technical experts shall not function independently.
- J.9.1.3.5 The audit team member(s) conducting the technical elements of the audit must also satisfy clauses J.9.1.3.6 and J.9.1.3.7 below, or be accompanied/directly supervised by a technical expert or auditor who has a minimum of four years practical work experience in the forestry sector, at a professional or semi-professional level, which contributes to the competence requirements specified at clause J.9.1.3.6.
- J.9.1.3.6 The audit team shall collectively possess competence in the following subjects as they apply to the forestry sector. A team may consist of one person if that person can demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the following:
- a) soil and water conservation

- b) silviculture practices;
 - c) cultural, heritage, indigenous and social values;
 - d) forest ecology;
 - e) forest planning and management practices;
 - f) accounting practices.
- J.9.1.3.7 If the certification involves both native forest and plantation, then the specified knowledge and understanding must be demonstrated for each of the forest management types.
- J.9.1.3.8 The CB shall be able to demonstrate that the audit team also includes a level of environmental competence appropriate to the forest management system being assessed.
- J.9.1.4 Certification bodies shall allow auditors sufficient time to undertake all activities relating to an audit. Annex A provides mandatory criteria on audit duration.
- J.9.1.5.1 Multi-site organizations shall be audited in accordance with Annex B.
- J.9.1.5.2 Sampling of organizations comprising a Group is only permitted where all the requirements of Annex B can be applied to the Group. For example, the applicant organization representing the Group must have the same authority and powers (eg. to require all members to take corrective action) as the central office referred to in Annex B. In this case, a Group can be considered to be a Multi-site organization, and members can be sampled according to Annex B.
- J.9.1.5.3 If a Group does not meet the eligibility criteria as specified in Annex B then all components of the Group shall be audited.
- J.9.1.10.1 A report on the stage 1 audit shall be presented to the organization prior to the stage 2 audit and include as a minimum:
- a) a summary of the findings from documents reviewed;
 - b) a summary of the findings from the site visit(s) against the applicable issues listed under clause 9.2.3.1.
- J.9.1.10.2 The content of all reports on stage 2 audits, surveillance audits and reassessment audits shall:
- a) include a recommendation on certification by the audit team to the CB;
 - b) be sufficient for the CB to make an informed decision on certification;
 - c) allow for traceability of the objective evidence upon which the evaluation was based to establish conformance or nonconformance with the requirements of the clauses of the AFS;
 - d) include a summary of the most important observations, positive as well as negative, regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the forest management system;
 - e) where possible, include suggestions for continuous improvement;
 - f) document the degree of reliance that can be placed on the organization's audit and review program;

- g) support the conclusions reached by the audit team.
- J.9.1.10.3 Additionally, the report shall contain a summary of the DFA and the audit results (i.e. a Summary Report) that the forest manager will make publicly available to relevant stakeholders.
- J.9.1.10.4 Where AS 4708—2007 Section 5 Certification Framework refers to ("Scale of requirements"), reports shall mention this and how requirements are scaled, paying particular attention to the last paragraph - "Such cases will be assessed by the CB on a case-by-case basis".
- J.9.1.10.5 Where applicable, reports (eg. of surveillance and recertification audits) shall document the clearing of each nonconformity revealed previously.
- J.9.1.10.6 The content of reports of surveillance and recertification audits shall ensure that coverage of the respective requirements at clauses 9.3.2 and 9.4.2 are traceable.
- J.9.1.10.7 Completed questionnaires / checklists / observation logs / auditor notes might form an integral part of the reports referred to above. If these methods are used, these documents:
- a) shall be submitted to the CB
 - b) and retained by the CB as evidence to support the certification decisions.
- J.9.1.14 If the decision to issue, extend, reduce, suspend or withdraw certification is taken by a committee comprising, among others, representatives from one or more certified organizations, the operational procedures of the CB shall ensure that these representatives do not have a significant influence on decision making. This can, for example, be assured by the distribution of voting rights or some other equivalent means.
- J.9.1.15 For the purposes of this procedure:
- a) a major nonconformity is a nonconformity as described in ISO/IEC 17021 clause 9.1.15 b).
 - b) a minor nonconformity occurs when a forest management system partially fails to meet a requirement, but there is significant doubt that this partial failure has adversely impacted on the intended outputs of the management system.

9.2 Initial audit and certification

9.2.1 Application

- J.9.2.1.1 The scope of the certification shall reference AS 4708 and the DFA.
- J.9.2.1.2 Applications for transfer of certification shall be treated in accordance with IAF MD 2.

9.2.2 Application review

- J.9.2.2.1.1 Rules for Group certification:

- a) one organization must be the applicant and act as the contact point and coordinator for all communications and audit planning with the CB; and have a legally enforceable agreement with all sites covered by the scope of certification.
- b) each organization in the Group must go through the certification process concurrently and must operate on essentially similar documentation and procedures. Each organization must present for audit (and subsequent audits) at the same time;
- c) the auditor days are applied according to the number of organizations currently in the Group and if the Group numbers change, then the auditor days (and hence the CB fees) will change accordingly;
- d) a combined audit report may be provided covering all organizations in the Group;
- e) acceptance of a cohort of managers of small forest areas as a Group is at the discretion of the CB.

J.9.2.2.1.2 The CB shall have documented procedures for application review. In particular, and as part of the application review process applied to each application for certification, the CB shall:

- a) review the outcomes of observations and discussions during any pre-audit site visits;
- b) review any statutory licensing or registration requirements that may impact on the forest management system;
- c) confirm that the forest management system is designed to achieve the organization's forestry management policy, including the ability of the company to meet its established forest management performance requirements;

9.2.3 Initial certification audit

9.2.3.1 Stage 1 audit

J.9.2.3.1.1.1 In evaluating the effectiveness of the organization's audit and review programs, the CB shall seek, during the stage 1 audit, objective evidence of:

- a) the competence of personnel responsible for conducting audit and review programs (eg. including any reference to ISO 19011 and/or to programs for registration of internal auditors);
- b) procedures and methods for conducting audit and review programs (eg. including any reference to ISO 19011);
- c) references and standards used (eg. ISO 19011);
- d) organization of audit and review programs (eg. including any reference to ISO 19011);
- e) checks and verifications performed;
- f) findings, including reports and records;
- g) timeliness and effectiveness of corrective action;
- h) audit and review programs taking into account the forestry management importance of the various components of the organization's activities;
- i) the overall reliability of audit and review programs is confirmed on a sample basis.

- J.9.2.3.1.1.2 The Stage 1 audit should also confirm that:
- a) the management system has identified relevant stakeholder groups and all key forest values to be managed;
 - b) the organization can demonstrate/indicate through its statistical monitoring protocols the probability that it will detect important changes, if they occur, for identified significant aspects of forest management, so that the monitoring system is reasonably certain of detecting unacceptable impacts (for a defined set of indicators, at an agreed level of reliability).
- J.9.2.3.1.1.3 The CB shall obtain at least the following information during the stage 1 audit:
- a) an overview of the organization's or Group's forest management system, its management and organizational structure, policies, forest types, extent of estate, and resources;
 - b) an understanding of the organization's or Group's documentation structure, planning processes, significant aspects and impacts, environmental goals and legislative environment;
 - c) an understanding of processes for protecting forest values, forest health, and systems for maintaining long term benefits to stakeholders;
 - d) the means by which the concept of continual improvement is realised;
 - e) an overview of the applicable regulations (including licences/permits), and any agreements with authorities;
 - f) procedures and records of audit and review programs, document control, and corrective/preventive action;
 - g) identify relevant stakeholders that may need to be consulted with during the stage 2 audit;
 - h) any necessary information to identify issues that will need special attention in the stage 2 audit.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.4 The DFA shall be reviewed during the stage 1 audit and proposed audit durations and audit team competencies shall be confirmed prior to the stage 2 audit.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.5 The stage 1 audit of a Multi-site organization or Group shall confirm whether the organization is eligible for Multi-site sampling according to the criteria in Annex C, and include an onsite audit component, without necessarily covering all of the sites that are to be sampled during the Stage 2 audit.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.6 Certification bodies shall be aware that forestry management regulatory requirements applicable to an organization may cover the area outside and inside the site boundaries, and that there may be more than one regulatory authority. Certification bodies shall be able to demonstrate that each of these has been considered.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.7 The maintenance and evaluation of regulatory compliance is the responsibility of the organization. The CB shall restrict itself to checks and samples in order to establish confidence that the forest management system functions in this regard; and shall also confirm that:
- a) the organization's forest management system can continue to conform with regulatory requirements applicable to the forest, and is fully implemented;
 - b) the organization has evaluated regulatory compliance and can show that action has been taken in cases of nonconformity with relevant regulations.

- J.9.2.3.1.1.8 The CB shall develop procedures that detail action it will take if the audit discovers a breach of a regulatory requirement. These procedures shall include a requirement that any breach or contravention is recognised as a nonconformity and communicated to the organization. It is important that the organization is advised of these procedures in advance.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.9 The forestry management documentation shall describe the forest management system and make clear the relationship to any other related management system in operation in the organization or having an influence on the forest management system subject to certification. It is acceptable to combine the documentation for forestry management and other management systems (such as for EMS or OHS) as long as the forest management system can be clearly identified together with the appropriate interfaces to the other systems.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.10 An audit of a forest management system integrated with audits of other management systems must satisfy all requirements for certification of the forest management system. The quality of the audit shall not be adversely affected by the combination of the audits.
- J.9.2.3.1.1.11 When the stage 1 audit, including document review, is not conducted by a single person the CB shall be able to demonstrate how the activities of the various team members are coordinated.
- J.9.2.3.1.5 The CB shall make the organization aware that additional information may be required for detailed evaluation during the stage 2 audit. This additional information may include:
- a) licence/permit requirements;
 - b) records (including records of incidents, breaches of regulation or legislation and relevant correspondence with authorities) on which the organization based its audit of compliance with regulatory requirements;
 - c) details of any internally identified nonconformities together with details of relevant corrective and preventive action taken in the previous 12 months (or since commencement of the forest management system implementation if this is less than 12 months);
 - d) records of audit and review programs;
 - e) records of any forest management system related communications received and any actions taken in response to them. This includes communications and interactions with stakeholders, and the disposition of all comments made.

9.2.3.2 Stage 2 audit

- J.9.2.3.2.1 The stage 2 audit always takes place at the office(s) and defined forest area of the organization. On the basis of findings of the stage 1 audit the CB drafts an audit plan for the stage 2 audit.
- J.9.2.3.2.2 The stage 2 audit shall focus on the organization's:
- a) identification of environmental, social and economic aspects and subsequent determination of their significance;
 - b) procedures to ensure compliance with legal and other requirements;

- c) objectives and targets derived from the identified significant impacts and which address the full range of forest management performance requirements;
- d) consultation with relevant stakeholders identified by the organization on the management of the DFA;
- e) operational control, including capacity planning, sustainable production, and maintenance of forest values;
- f) identification and evaluation of nonconformities and completion of corrective / preventive action;
- g) management responsibility for the forestry management policy;
- h) links between: policy; environmental, social and economic aspects (and their associated impacts); objectives and targets; responsibilities; procedures; performance data; internal audits; and management review programs.

J.9.2.3.2.3 In order to provide increased confidence that organizations consistently establish and maintain procedures to identify and evaluate environmental, social and economic aspects and their associated impacts, certification bodies shall consider the following factors during the stage 2 audit:

- a) it is for the organization to identify environmental, social and economic aspects and their associated impacts, and to develop procedures for doing this;
- b) it is for the CB to assess the adequacy of the procedures by which the organization determines which environmental, social and economic aspects and their associated impacts are significant;
- c) it is for the organization to identify relevant stakeholders, consult with and resolve issues raised by relevant stakeholders;
- d) any inconsistency between the organization's policy, objectives and targets and its procedure(s) or the implementation of those procedure(s).

Note: Significant environmental, social and economic aspects and their associated impacts are not necessarily confined to a single geographical location. They may also include other aspects of an organization's activities, products or services that it can control and over which it can be expected to have an influence. In particular, these may include any activities of suppliers, customers or related organizations that create additional environmental, social and economic aspects for the organization.

J.9.2.3.2.4 The CB shall establish whether the procedures employed in the analysis of significance are sound and properly implemented. It shall verify that the environmental, social and economic aspects and associated impacts that are identified as being significant are managed within the system. Depending on the situation, this may entail combinations of the following:

- a) investigation and development of opportunities for further improvement;
- b) programs for planned improvement;
- c) controls to maintain performance;
- d) special values, identified significant impacts and monitoring of forest performance.

but shall include:

- e) consultation with a sample of relevant stakeholders on the management of the DFA.

9.2.5 Information for granting initial certification

J.9.2.5.2 The CB shall advise the AFSL of the results of each initial and recertification audit, preferably by a faxed copy of the certificate, within 5 working days of making the decision on certification or recertification. The following information shall be supplied in the covering fax:

Area certified in hectares and the forest type(s) of the certification.

9.3 Surveillance activities

9.3.1 General

J.9.3.1.2 At each surveillance, the CB shall interview the responsible management and also check the following:

- a) the functioning of procedures for the periodic evaluation and review of compliance with relevant legislation and regulations;
- b) progress of planned activities aimed at the process of enhancing the forest management system to achieve improvements in overall performance in line with the organization's forest management policy;
- c) changes to the DFA register as described in J.8.6.1 c) and applicable statistical monitoring protocols as described in J.9.2.3.1.1.2 b).
- d) other selected areas as appropriate such as a sample of field activities;
- e) consultation with a sample of relevant stakeholders on the management of the DFA.
- f) publication by the organization of the Summary Report referred to in J.9.1.10.3.

9.3.2 Surveillance audit

J.9.3.2.1 In reviewing actions taken on complaints and nonconformities, the CB shall satisfy itself that the organization is using such investigations to develop remedial/corrective action, which shall include measures for:

- a) notification to appropriate authorities if required by regulation;
- b) restoring conformity as quickly as practicable;
- c) preventing recurrence;
- d) evaluating and mitigating any adverse aspects;
- e) ensuring satisfactory interaction with other components of the forest management system;
- f) assessing the effectiveness of the remedial/corrective measures adopted.
- g) The implementation of the remedial/corrective action shall not be deemed to have been completed until its effectiveness has been demonstrated and the necessary changes made in the procedures, documentation and records.

J.9.3.2.3 In addition to clause J.9.3.1.2, surveillance should be planned to cover all of the requirements of AS 4708—2007 over a two-yearly cycle.

9.6 Suspending, withdrawing or reducing the scope of certification

J.9.6.1 The CB shall advise AFSL in writing, preferably by fax, within 5 working days if certification is suspended or withdrawn, or where there are any changes in decisions relating to the status of certification of an organization, and the reasons for those decisions.

9.9 Records of applicants and clients

J.9.9.2 The following information shall be available in reports or other documents on the CB's files:

- a) sufficient information to trace all on-site audit durations, and the basis for the calculations (Annex A refers);
- b) the supporting information and rationale for any Group or Multi-site sampling decisions shall be clearly documented and maintained up to date by the CB so that their basis is readily traceable (Annex B refers);

10 Management system requirements for certification bodies

Annex A – Audit duration

- A.1 This Annex provides guidance on the amount of time required by the CB for assessing organizations of various sizes. It does this by indicating the on-site audit durations for stage 1 and 2 audits, surveillance and recertification.
- A.2 The audit durations identified in this annex are appropriate to relatively small numbers of audit locations and like-forest management units. The number and complexity of like-forest management units will also influence the appropriate audit duration..
- A.3 It is understood that some organizations of a particular size will need more time. If the organization holds accredited certification to another recognised environmental or forestry standard (e.g. ISO 14001, FSC), then the auditor days may be reduced by a maximum of 25%, based on the confidence derived from the other certification process and outcome.
- A.4 The tables below depict expected minimum audit durations excluding planning, preparation, travel time and report writing. Where two or more team members work together (eg. two auditors or an auditor plus a technical expert), that time shall be counted as if a single auditor was involved.
- A.5 The times do not allow for sampling a network of offices. Where an organization has branch offices to be sampled according to Annex B, the audit duration should be increased accordingly.
- A.6 If a nursery or propagation centre is to be included in the scope of certification, additional audit duration may also be required.
- A.7 The following table has been developed to provide sufficient time under normal circumstances to adequately assess native forest estates. Additional audit durations should normally be expected when harvesting.
- A.8 The audit time required for single species hardwood/softwood plantations, with coupes in a variety of rotational maturity, could be reduced by up to 30 to 50% if the audit team is not presented with significant issues relating to plantation borders or streamside reserves.

Table 1 - Minimum audit durations

Descriptor	Stage 1	Stage 2	Surveillance (annual)	Recertification
Individual growers		1	0.5	1
Small scale groups (not more than 9) and <1,000 ha		2	1	2
Groups (more than 9) and <1,000 ha		3	2	3
Medium forest 1,000 to <10,000 ha	2	3-4	2-3	3-4
Medium/large forest 10,000 to 100,000 ha	2	4-6	3-4	4-6
Large forest >100,000 ha	2+	6+	4+	6+

+ For large forests, the CB is to document a detailed justification for the actual times used.

Annex B - Multi-site certification

B1 INTRODUCTION

B1.1 The aim of this Annex is to establish criteria for the assessment and, if appropriate, the certification of organizations operating as a Group, or with a network of sites, thus ensuring that the assessment provides adequate confidence in the conformity of the organization, while being practical and feasible in economic and operative terms. This Annex addresses the conditions under which this is acceptable for accredited certification.

B1.2 Site sampling:

- a) some large forest managers may operate over a large number of forest management units. In some circumstances, the entire organization can be certified on the basis of a sample of sites. The basis for selection of sites for sampling is that:
 - (i) at least part of the sample shall be random;
 - (ii) the full range of forest types shall be formed into subgroups of *like-forest management units* on the following basis:
- b) Plantations should be grouped into active management phases. The CB must be able to demonstrate how it ensures coverage of all operational phases in a plantation rotation.
- c) Native forests should be grouped by forest type. For example: eucalyptus forests, callitris and eucalypt woodland. Where the forest type is extensive, the CB's records should demonstrate how general topographical or geomorphological divisions have been evaluated and segregated into further like forest management units where applicable.
 - (i) a sample of sites shall be taken from each of the subgroups of like-forest management units.
 - (ii) the minimum number of sites audited shall be sufficient to provide an appropriate statistical level of significance/confidence.

B2 DEFINITIONS

B2.1 Multi-site organization

B2.1.1 A Multi-site organization has a headquarters or central office at which certain activities are planned, controlled or managed; and also meets any one (or more) of a), b) and c) below:

- a) has one or more branch offices (in addition to the central office) at which certain activities are planned, controlled or managed; and/or
- b) has more than one like-forest management unit referred to at clause B1.2 a)(ii); and/or
- c) has more than one identified active coupe. An active coupe is one where ground operations are being conducted under the supervision of the organization, such as harvesting, site preparation, planting and post-plant tending, hazard reduction, road construction or maintenance are currently underway or have been completed within the three months before the date of the audit. 'Ground operations' means physical activity on the coupe, and does not include acquisition or planning activity.

- B2.1.2 In the context of this document, branch offices, like-forest management units and active coupes are all deemed to be "sites". Therefore, an organization with only one office and one like-forest management unit, but with more than one active coupe, is still a Multi-site organization.
- B2.1.3 Inactive coupes include: areas where ground operations have not commenced or where operations have ceased (greater than three months) and the site is in a regeneration, growth or rehabilitation phase; non-productive areas such as streamside reserves, conservation areas, infrastructure, roads and trails, recreation sites or scientific areas. These areas are not deemed to be sites in the context of clauses B2.1.1 and B2.1.2.
- B2.1.4 A Multi-site organization need not be a unique legal entity, but all sites shall have a legal or contractual link with the central office of the organization and be subject to a common forest management system, which is laid down, established and subject to continuous surveillance by the central office. This means that the central office has rights to implement corrective actions when needed at any site. Where applicable, this should be formalised by means of contracts, policies and/or procedures between the central office and the sites.

B3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE ORGANIZATION

B3.1 Administration

- B3.1.1 The organization's forest management system shall be centrally administered under a centrally controlled plan and subject to central audit and review. All the relevant sites (including the central administration function) shall be subject to the organization's audit and review program and shall have been audited in accordance with that program before the CB starts its assessment.
- B3.1.2 It shall be demonstrated that the central office of the organization has established a management system which complies with AS 4708 and that the whole organization meets the requirements of AS 4708.
- B3.1.3 The organization shall demonstrate its ability to collect and analyse data (including but not limited to the items listed below) from all sites and the central office, and its authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required:
- a) system documentation and system changes;
 - b) complaints;
 - c) evaluation of corrective actions;
 - d) audit and review planning and evaluation of the results.

B4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE CERTIFICATION BODY

B4.1 Information

- B4.1.1 The CB shall provide information to the organization about the criteria in this Annex before starting the assessment process, and should not proceed with it if any of the criteria are not met. Before starting the assessment process, it shall inform the organization that the certificate will not be issued if during the assessment, nonconformities in relation to these criteria are found.

B4.2 Application review

B4.2.1 The CB's procedures shall ensure that the initial application review identifies the complexity and scale of the activities covered by the forest management system to be certified and any differences between sites as the basis for determining the level of sampling.

B4.2.2 If all the sites of an organization where the activity subject to certification is performed are not ready to be submitted for certification at the same time, the organization shall be required to inform the CB in advance of the sites that it wants to include on the certificate.

B4.3 Audit

B4.3.1 The CB shall have documented procedures to deal with audits under its Multi-site procedure. Such procedures shall establish the way the CB satisfies itself that all the criteria in clause B3 are met.

B4.3.2 If more than one audit team is involved in the assessment or surveillance of the network, the CB should designate a single lead auditor whose responsibility is to consolidate the findings from all the audit teams and to produce a synthesis report.

B4.4 Dealing with major nonconformities

B4.4.1 When a major nonconformity, as defined at ISO/IEC 17021 clause 9.1.15 b), is found at a site, either through the organization's audit and review program or from auditing by the CB, investigation should take place to determine whether other sites may be affected. Therefore, the CB shall require the organization to review the major nonconformities to determine whether they indicate an overall system deficiency applicable to all sites or not. If they are found to do so, corrective action shall be performed at the central office and at the individual sites. If they are found not to do so, the organization should be able to demonstrate to the CB the justification for limiting its follow-up action.

B4.4.2 The CB shall require evidence of these actions and increase its sampling frequency until it is satisfied that control is re-established.

B4.4.3 At the time of the decision-making process, if any site has a major nonconformity, certification shall be denied to the whole network pending satisfactory corrective action.

B4.4.4 It shall not be admissible that, in order to overcome the obstacle raised by the existence of a major nonconformity at a single site, the organization seeks to exclude from the scope the "problematic" site during the certification process.

B4.5 Certification

B4.5.1 One certificate shall be issued with the name and address of the central office of the organization. A list of all the sites to which the certification relates shall be issued, either on the certificate itself, or in an appendix, or as otherwise referred to on the certificate. The scope or other reference on the certificate shall make clear that the certified activities are performed by the network of sites listed. If the certification scope of the sites is only part of the general scope of the organization, its applicability to all the sites shall be clearly stated on the certificate and any annex.

- B4.5.2 A sub-certificate may be issued to the organization for each site covered by the certification on condition that it contains the same scope, or a sub-scope of that scope, and includes a clear reference to the main certificate.
- B4.5.3 The certification will be withdrawn in its entirety, if the central office or any of the sites does not fulfil the necessary criteria for maintaining certification.
- B4.5.4 The list of sites shall be kept updated by the CB. Hence the CB shall require the organization to inform it about the closure of any of the sites. Failure to provide such information will be considered by the CB as a misuse of the certification, and it will act according to its procedures.
- B4.5.5 Additional sites can be added to an existing certificate as the result of surveillance or reassessment activities.

B5 CRITERIA FOR SAMPLING

B5.1 Sampling methodology

- B5.1.1 The sample should be partly selective based on the factors set out below and partly non-selective (random), and should result in a range of different sites being selected, without excluding the random element of sampling.
- B5.1.2 At least 25% of the sample should be selected at random.
- B5.1.3 Taking into account the criteria mentioned hereafter, the remainder should be selected so that the differences among the sites selected over the period of certification are as large as possible. The selection of inactive coupes and non-productive areas (clause B5.2.5) should take advantage of travel between the randomly selected active coupes.
- B5.1.4 The site selection criteria may include:
- a) results of the organization's audit and review programs; previous assessments by the CB; or any existing knowledge of the organization;
 - b) communications and views from interested parties and other relevant aspects of corrective and preventive action;
 - c) significant variations in the size of the sites and number of employees;
 - d) variations in work procedures including shift work;
 - e) modifications since the last certification activity;
 - f) geographical dispersion;
 - g) maturity of the management system that defines the significance and extent of the aspects and associated impacts; and
 - h) potential interaction with sensitive environment.
- B5.1.5 This selection does not have to be done at the start of the assessment process. It can be done once the assessment at the central office has been completed. In any case, the central office shall be informed of the sites to be sampled. This can be on relatively short notice, but should allow adequate time to prepare for the audit.

B5.2 Size of sample

B5.2.1 The minimum number of sites to be visited per audit is:

Table 2 - Size of multi-site audit sample

Initial audit:	the size of the sample shall be the square root of the number of remote sites ($y = \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number where remote site means any coupes and or site(s) other than the central office (see clause B5.2.4).
Surveillance audit:	the size of the annual sample shall be the square root of the number of remote sites with 0.6 as a coefficient ($y = 0.6 \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number (see clause B5.2.4).
Reassessment:	the size of the sample shall be the same as for an initial audit. Nevertheless, where the organization has proved to be compliant over the previous three years, the size of the sample could be reduced to a factor of 0.8; ie. ($y = 0.8 \sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number (see clause B5.2.4).

B5.2.2 In all cases, the central office shall be visited in addition to the number of sites sampled.

B5.2.3 The size of sample should be increased where the CB's analysis of the activity covered by the forest management system subject to certification indicates special circumstances in respect of factors like those at clause B5.1.4 above.

B5.2.4 When the organization has a hierarchical structure (e.g. central or head office / branch offices / like forest management units / active coupes), the sampling model defined above applies to each level. An example for initial audit could be:

Table 3 - Example of multi-site audit sample

1 central office	visited at each audit	(initial / surveillance/ reassessment)
4 branch offices	sample = 2	minimum 1 chosen at random
27 like forest management units	sample = 6	minimum 2 chosen at random
1700 actives	sample = 42	minimum 11 chosen at random.

B5.2.5 Where applicable, a minimum of one inactive coupe and one non-productive area shall be sampled for each like-forest management unit sampled. (See clause B2.1.3)

B5.3 Additional sites

B5.3.1 On application for a new Group of sites to join an already certified Multi-site network, each new Group of sites should be considered as an independent set to determine the sample size. After including the new Group on the certificate, the new sites should be added to the previous ones to determine the sample size for future surveillance or reassessment audits.