Sustainable Leather Foundation
Standard for Process Control and Quality Management, Efficiency and Productivity

Reference: FSG7.1
Authored by: K Kutskill
Peer Reviewed by: XXX
Accredited by: XXX

Original Creation Date: 1 Nov 2022
Peer Reviewed Date: XXX 2022
Last Review Date: XXX
Next Review Date: Nov 2023

FSG7 PROCESS CONTROL AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT, EFFICIENCY, AND PRODUCTIVITY (QA)
STANDARD AND BENCHMARK

Summary: The SLF Process Control and QA standard provides the context, definitions, and methodology around process control and QA in the leather industry. This document gives the facility under audit the principles and general expectations, but it is not exhaustive and recognises that there will be differences within regions for national and local laws.

Where there are matters of interpretation in relation to the standard, applicable laws or organisational norms, the auditor will assess in favour of the employees in that facility.

1. Scope

1.1   The *SLF Process Control and QA Standard and Benchmark* specifies the definitions and structure of an operational process control and quality assurance system establishing an associated policy, plan, and environmental performance goals for a particular facility. The key areas include aspects and impacts register, operational objectives and targets, aspects screening, communication to employees, record keeping, continuous improvement, training, and internal management/audit review processes.

1.2   A process control and QA system is an integral part of promoting an efficient and resourceful operation for the employees, management team and associated supply chain while minimising negative impact on the surrounding resources.

1.3   The *SLF Process Control and QA Standard and Benchmark* is intended to ensure that SLF certified facilities are aware of the necessary systems required to build, implement, and manage operational process control and quality assurance aspects and are actively working to improve their efficiency and productivity.

2. Normative references

The following referenced documents are useful in the understanding of this document and are provided for further guidance. In the case of dispute these references form the core of the evidence in support of the Standard used here:

ISO9001:2015 Quality Management Systems - Requirements[1]

3. Terms and definitions

3.1 **Process Control and Quality Assurance (QA):** A system that documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality, consistent products, and services, while maintaining a feedback look for continuous improvement leading to increased productivity and efficiency.

3.2 **Operational Aspects and Impacts Register:** A documented list of an organisation's activities, products or services that interacts or can interact with operations and their actual or potential effect on efficiency and productivity.

3.3 **Master Operational Programme Document:** A document outlining the intentions and direction of an organisation related to its operational performance, as formally expressed by its top management. (May also be referred to in ISO9001:2015 as Quality Management System (QMS)).

3.4 **Aspect Screening:** A process in which an organisation's activities, products, or services are reviewed and monitored to determine the status and outline actual or potential impacts (with reference to operational for this Standard and Benchmark).

---

[1] https://www.iso.org/standard/62085.html

3.5 **Third-Party Auditor:** An independent contractor or service entity conducting a certified audit outside of SLF and the organisation involved.

3.6 **Continuous Improvement:** Recurring action to enhance performance (in this case, operational), typically involving a feedback mechanism that outlines progress and provides solutions.

3.7 **Reworking:** The process of corrective defective, failed, or nonconforming items after inspection.

4. Principle

4.1 The principle of the *SLF Process Control and QA Standard and Benchmark* is based upon the need for responsible organisations to develop systems to standardize operations in a way that optimises their performance while delivering on customer demands and regulatory requirements. The establishment of a Process Control and QA system is intended to provide a systematic approach to operational management by:

4.1.1 Consistently providing products and services that meet customer and applicable regulatory requirements
4.1.2 Facilitating opportunities to enhance customer satisfaction
4.1.3 Addressing risks and opportunities through systematic approaches
4.1.4 Demonstrating conformity to specified quality management requirements
4.1.5 Applying a risk-based approach that creates preventative controls minimising negative effects
4.1.6 Formalizing a communication and escalation plan for quality concerns to management

4.2 The Process Control and QA system is based off the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model. The PDCA model is an iterative process aimed at achieving continual improvement. Each of the elements of an quality management system can utilise the PDCA model to establish a consistent, systematic approach.

The PDCA model can be described as the following:

4.2.1 Plan: Establish operational objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organisation's operational policy
4.2.2 Do: Implement the process as planned
4.2.3 Check: Monitor and measure processes against the operational policy, including its commitments, operational objectives, and criteria, and report the results
4.2.4 Act: Take actions to continually improve

4.3 The Process Control and QA system will be most effective with alignment directly related to the conformities, obligations, and requirements of the organisation's legal, regional and customer requirements for its facility, service, product, and operations. The *SLF Process Control and QA Standard and Benchmark* provides an outline for the method of creating a system, however it is up to the organisation to apply a risk-based approach, seeking confirmation of its environmental obligations and requirements prior to audit and certification.

5. Procedure

5.1   The facility will provide data and documentation that demonstrates an effective management system to meet the requirements of the *SLF Process Control and QA Standard and Benchmark* as follows:

5.1.1   Operational aspects and impacts register and screening procedure

5.1.2   Master environmental programme document or similar manual containing operational scope, policy, and plan (Reference SLF Explanatory Notes & Templates for further details)

5.1.3   Process Control and QA communication and training plan

5.1.4   Operational report consisting of goals (objectives and targets) and actions

5.1.5   Accessible resource clearly displaying the structure of responsible personnel for operational plans

5.1.6   Evidence of the execution of the operational plan

5.1.7   Entry log documenting risk and internal audit frequency

5.1.8   Continuous improvement mechanism, feedback system, and evidence of implementation

5.1.9   Breakdown of measured total operational performance, including re-work as a metric

5.1.10   Management review process and engagement in Process Control and QA systems

5.2   The measurement of total operational performance may differ throughout the leather industry based upon which part of the leather-making process the facility takes part in. Please reference the following SLF Explanatory Notes & Templates for specifics on operational performance metrics and measurement methods. These documents are located in the "Technical Library" within the Partner Only Resources area of the website and are designed to support either in preparation for audit or for improvement measures: https://sustainableleatherfoundation.com/partner-only-resources/technical-library

5.2.1   Explanatory Notes and Templates
a. GM7 Process Control and Quality Management, Efficiency and Productivity
b. Template 1 – Legal Compliance Register
c. Template 2 – Environmental Aspects and Impacts Register (concept can be translated to operational aspects and impacts)
c. Template 5 – Best Available Techniques Register