BACKGROUND NOTE ON ACTION PLANS

SMO Action Plans are developed by IFAC Members and Associates and address policy matters as identified through self-assessments against the The SMO Action Plan is intended to provide a summary of:

- 1. The legal and regulatory environment for the profession;
- 2. The status of adoption of international standards and best practices in the jurisdiction; and
- 3. The level of a Member's or Associate's fulfillment of IFAC membership requirements.

IFAC Statements of Membership Obligations (SMOs) require IFAC Members and Associates to support the adoption and implementation of international standards and other pronouncements issued by independent standard-setting boards under the auspices of IFAC as well as by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB); and to establish a quality assurance (QA) review and investigation and disciplinary (I&D) systems. The SMOs are recognized as the international benchmarks for credible and high-quality PAOs that are focused on and have the necessary expertise to serve the public interest and meet the market demands of their respective jurisdictions.

IFAC Members and Associates conduct a self-assessment against the requirements of SMOs and identify areas where, if any, improvements are needed. Members and Associates should develop an Action Plan to (a) demonstrate how they fulfill the requirements of the SMOs (revised in 2012), and (b) where some requirements are not yet addressed, to present plans towards their fulfillment. Action Plans are designed to be **ever-green** documents that take into consideration IFAC recommendations. Depending on the PAO's level of fulfillment (see *IFAC's Summary Assessment* – page 2), an Action Plan may not be necessary for each SMO section and instead the 'Attestation of Ongoing SMO Compliance' is used to confirm their ongoing commitments. However, PAOs may wish and are welcome to utilize the Action Plan as a tool to demonstrate how they are using 'best endeavors' and going beyond their mandate with innovative approaches to fulfilling the SMOs and strengthening the national profession.

The specific details of each organization's actions will vary even where two PAOs are involved in the same SMO area. Each PAO operates in its own unique regulatory and standard-setting framework and has different operating, technical, and resource capacities. Moreover, in deciding when and how a particular SMO requirement is to be addressed, PAOs might have differing timeframes and objectives to achieve. Notwithstanding these inevitable differences, seeking the advice and assistance of other PAOs who have already faced and dealt with similar challenges can save significant time and resources. IFAC staff will offer assistance as needed.

Regular updates of the SMO Action Plans are required as part of the IFAC Member Compliance Program.

Use of Information

Please refer to the *Disclaimer* published on the IFAC website.

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¹ Adoption is concerned with the decision that international standards are appropriate for use in specific national financial reporting environments and with the actions necessary to affect those decisions, including incorporation into national requirements or requiring the use of international standards through law. Adoption may include a process to review draft international standards, translation, public exposure of proposed standards, approval, incorporation into national requirements as necessary, and promulgation of final standards, and, where applicable, a convergence process to eliminate or minimize differences between international and national standards.

² Implementation may include a process to build awareness of the adopted standards, provide relevant education and training, develop, or disseminate implementation guidance and any other activities that promote proper understanding and use of the standards in practice.

ACTION PLAN

IFAC Member/Associate: EXPERTsuisse - Swiss Expert Association for Audit, Tax and Fiduciary

Approved by Governing Body: Council/Board of Directors

Original Publish Date: April 2010
Last Updated: November 2023

IFAC's Summary Assessment: PAOs are encouraged to take staff's recommendations into consideration as part of future strategic planning conversations at the PAO.

For more information on IFAC Member Compliance Program and the legends used to describe the status of adoption of international standards, best practices, and fulfillment of SMO requirements, please refer to the Status of Adoption methodology and SMO Fulfillment methodology.

	PAO Level of Responsibility for Adoption	Adoption Status as of 2023	Level of SMO Fulfillment as of 2023
QA / SMO 1	No Direct	A Partially Adopted	Review & Improve
IES / SMO 2	Shared	Adopted	Sustain
ISA / SMO 3	Shared	A Partially Adopted	Review & Improve
IESBA / SMO 4	Shared	A Partially Adopted	Review & Improve
IPSAS / SMO 5	No Direct	Adopted	Sustain
I&D / SMO 6	Shared	Adopted	Sustain
IFRS / SMO 7	No Direct	A Partially Adopted	Sustain

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Attestation of SMO Compliance

The **EXPERTsuisse - Swiss Expert Association for Audit, Tax and Fiduciary** has developed an Action Plan to demonstrate how it fulfills the requirements of the SMOs (revised in 2012). The abovementioned *Governing Body* has reviewed the information contained within the SMO Action Plan and affirms that the **EXPERTsuisse** continues to undertake these and other relevant actions to maintain ongoing compliance and fulfillment of the membership obligations where IFAC's assessments are at *Review & Improve* and/or *Sustain*.

On behalf of the **EXPERTsuisse**, the *Governing Body* endorses the information contained within the SMO Action Plan as of the publication date and its publication on the IFAC website in the interests of transparency and to demonstrate our commitment to enhancing the quality and credibility of the accountancy profession worldwide.

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GLOSSARY

CPD Continuing Professional Development **FAOA** Federal Audit Oversight Authority

IAESB International Accounting Education Standards Board IESBAs International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants

IFRS International Financial Reporting Standards
IPSASs International Public Sector Accounting Standards

ISAInternational Standard on AuditingISQCInternational Standard on Quality ControlPCAOBPublic Company Accounting Oversight Board

QA Quality Assurance

SMPs Small- and Medium-Practices

Swiss GAAP FER Fachempfehlungen der Rechnungslegung, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in Switzerland

US GAAP
US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
US GAASs
US Generally Accepted Auditing Standards
IPSASs
International Public Sector Accounting Standards

SMEs Small and Medium Enterprises
SMO Statement of Membership Obligation

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 1–Quality Assurance

Action Plan Objective: Continue to ensure an effective quality review program is in place for all members offering accounting services to

the public and in particular offering assurance services.

Background:

Quality assurance (QA) is one of the top priorities of EXPERTsuisse. EXPERTsuisse has set quality assurance guidelines for all member categories; these are incorporated in the EXPERTsuisse Professional and Ethics rules ("Standes- und Berufsregeln"). These rules have been modified lately as per decision by the annual general meeting of EXPERTsuisse.

For audit, assurance and assurance-related services EXPERTsuisse has specified its quality control guidelines by adopting ISQC1 (in the EXPERTsuisse professional announcements called "ISQC-CH 1").

In general, audit firms performing audits and related services under Swiss Law are obliged to have a quality control system in place. The FAOA has ruled in this respect that ISQC-CH 1 has to be applied.

For sole practitioners (i.e. audit firms, in which only one individual holds a license by the FAOA) national law prescribed a transitional period for implementing quality control procedures. This transitional period ended Sept 1, 2017. As of this date sole practitioners have to engage outside professionals for quality control / peer review procedures.

Audit firms are required to have a license granted by the FAOA. License renewal is at least every 5th year, while audit firms with a license to perform audits of financial statements of public interest entities are subject to FAOA inspections at least once during a three-year term. Apart, investigations on an ad-hoc basis are initiated by FAOA (or the ethics commission of EXPERTsuisse) in case of notifications/whistleblower information. EXPERTsuisse member firms are reviewed for compliance once in a five-year term or in case of notifications/whistleblower information. As such a mixed approach (cycle-based and risk-based) for selecting firms for QA review is used. System of FAOA is in compliance with requirements of SMO 1 (for instance, the EU Commission had decided to recognize the equivalence of the Swiss system of oversight for auditors and audit firms in 2011).

EXPERTsuisse is engaged in continuously offering guidance and helpful resources for quality control for Small- and Medium-Practices (SMP) as well as sole practitioners. In this respect, EXPERTsuisse has issued an electronic Guide to Quality Control in SMPs in 2013, which in 2016 has been updated and since then includes further guidance for sole practitioners in implementing ISQC-CH 1 and dealing with issues such as consultation, engagement quality control review or monitoring.

Establishing and maintaining (Separate and Stand-Alone) Quality Control Standards and Guidance for all member categories (auditors, accountants, tax experts, fiduciary experts). For auditors ISQC 1 / ISQC-CH 1 is applicable. For other member categories the Professional and Ethics rules ("Standes- und Berufsregeln") set the tone for quality control. All member firms (as well as individual members) have to adhere to certain membership obligations (e.g. repute, insurance coverage, capital requirements, continuous professional development), which are described as "EXPERTsuisse House of Quality".

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#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource
1.	2008	Provide training courses in quality control, general management techniques, human resource management and ethics.	Ongoing	Training Institute of EXPERT suisse / SMP Working Party	
2.	Yearly	Yearly, all members have to declare their continuing professional development (CPD) via the EXPERTsuisse online declaration tool. Apart from checking whether minimum CPD requirements have been fulfilled, EXPERTsuisse compliance team is considering the substance of the CPD declared.	Ongoing	EXPERTsuisse compliance team	
3.	Once in a five-year term	Once in a five-year term, all member firms are reviewed whether they continuously follow the membership obligations. Failure to meet EXPERTsuisse membership obligations leads to sanctions (up to withdrawal of membership).	Ongoing	EXPERTsuisse compliance team / Ethics Committee	
4.	2017	Draft a guideline to assist member companies to implement quality control systems (for services other than audit and assurance) in accordance with the EXPERTsuisse Professional and Ethics rules ("Standes- und Berufsregeln").	March 2018	Technical Department	Technical Staff

Maintaining a Quality Control / Peer Review System for Audit Firms and Single Practitioners in Cooperation with the Audit Oversight Authority

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5.	2008	Maintain and improve mandatory quality assurance review program for audit firms performing audits of listed companies; continuous involvement of EXPERTsuisse with the Swiss Audit Oversight Authority.	Ongoing	FAOA, EXPERTsuisse	
6.	2008	Continuous dialogue with the Swiss Audit Oversight Authority in order to discuss and monitor latest regulatory and legal developments and their potential impact on the audit profession.	Ongoing	Council, President and management of EXPERTsuisse	Regular Meetings with FAOA (on political and technical level)
7.	2017	Design (and maintain) "tailored" QA / Peer Review procedures for all sole practitioners being either EXPERTsuisse member and/or having a license with the FAOA.	September 2017	SMP Competence Centre / FAOA	Technical Staff
Mainta	aining Ongoing	g Processes			
8.	Ongoing	Continue to support ongoing implementation of QA System.	Ongoing	Training institute / various working groups / compliance team of EXPERTsuisse	Technical Staff
9.	2007	Maintain and improve mandatory quality assurance review program for audit firms performing audits of listed companies; continuous involvement of EXPERTsuisse with the Swiss Audit Oversight Authority.	Ongoing	FAOA, EXPERTsuisse	Technical Staff

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 2–International Education Standards for Professional Accountants and Other Pronouncements Issued by the IAESB **Action Plan Objective:** Convergence with international pronouncements

Background:

In general, candidates to EXPERTsuisse membership are required to complete a program of professional accountancy education delivered by the Institute, and pass several years of practical experience and a final assessment. In addition, all EXPERTsuisse members have to follow 120 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) over a two-year rolling period. Compliance with CPD requirements is monitored.

The Federal Act on Vocational and Professional Education and Training and the Ordinance on Vocational and Professional Education and Training are the legal basis for the initial professional development (IPD). EXPERTsuisse, as the sole provider of IPD, is in regular contact with the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation in order to make sure constant compliance of its IPD with Swiss regulation. Apart, EXPERTsuisse is monitoring the requirements of International Education Standards (IES) and thus also ensuring compliance with these standards.

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource				
Continu	Continuing to Using Best Endeavors to Ensure Compliance with International Requirements								
10.	Ongoing	Ensure that national education and training requirements are in accordance with international developments.	Ongoing	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse				
11.	Ongoing	Review current requirements for auditor's education against new developments and monitor the education and examination process.	Ongoing	Training Institute / Examination Board	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse; Examination Board				
12.	Beginning of 2012	Establish an online CPD monitoring. From 2013 onwards EXPERTsuisse members are obliged to feed data on their training activity into their personal electronic account. EXPERTsuisse monitors members' training activity and sample-checks evidence for trainings reported.	Completed in 2013 / Ongoing	General Management of EXPERTsuisse	Online declaration account				

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13.	Ongoing	Comparison of CPD with IES and implement adaption where and when necessary.	Ongoing	General Management of EXPERTsuisse	CPD Directive 2017 / Guideline for education of auditors
14.	2017/2018	EXPERTsuisse has updated its Continuing Professional Education Directive ("Richtlinien zur Weiterbildung") to give more room for intellectual, interpersonal, communication and organizational skills to be trained. Furthermore, online courses / web-based trainings are now counting for the minimum CPD, in case these courses are output-based. During the update of the CPD Directive of EXPERTsuisse it has also been thoroughly reviewed that internal guidelines (curriculum and instructions to lecturers) for IPD are fully in line with IES, as it is noteworthy that legal requirements do not itself incorporate IES.	2017	General Management of EXPERTsuisse	CPD Directive / IPD course materials and guidelines for
15.	2017	The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) is implementing the National Qualifications Framework for Vocational and Professional Qualifications (NQF VPQ). This framework allows comparing different diploma received in the country with those available abroad. EXPERTsuisse is proud that the Swiss Certified Auditor has been awarded the highest ranking within the NQF VPQ (level 8).	End of 2017	General Management of EXPERTsuisse	www.sbfi.admin.ch

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 3-International Standards and other Pronouncements Issued by the IAASB

Action Plan Objective: Convergence with IAASB pronouncements

Background:

EXPERTsuisse sets the auditing standards for listed entities and non-listed entities. The pronouncements of the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board) are adopted in an ongoing manner as national standards, with modifications (add-ons) for Swiss-specific issues. EXPERTsuisse participates in the translation of ISAs in German along with the Institut der Wirtschaftsprüfer (IDW) of Germany and with the Austrian Institut Österreichischer Wirtschaftsprüfer (IWP). French translations are coordinated with the Belgian and French profession. The Swiss Code of Obligations in conjunction with regulation by the Swiss Stock Exchange are obliged to prepare consolidated financial statements applying Swiss GAAP FER, IFRS or US GAAP (depending on the segment of listing). In this segment, the original ISAs in their latest version are applied (as per regulation by the Audit Regulator), while for full scope audits outside the listed/PIE segment the Swiss Audit Standards do apply, which are an adoption of the ISAs in an ongoing manner. Currently, the latest ISAs are in the process of being translated.

Especially for national particularities EXPERTsuisse issues – apart from audit standards – so-called audit recommendations, which are not binding standards and do not represent add-ons or modifications to ISAs.

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource
Settin	g National Aud	lit Standards and Guidance in Areas Without Adequate IA	AASB Pronouncem	ents	
16.	Ongoing	Incorporate all revised and redrafted ISAs into national audit standards. In 2022, a revised version of the Swiss Standards on Auditing was published including ISA 250 (Revised) and ISA 540 (Revised). Also, the Swiss Standard on Limited Statutory Examination was revised in 2022.	Ongoing	Audit Working Party / Steering Committee ISA / Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse	Swiss Standards on Auditing ("SA-CH"/"SER")
17.	2014	Implementation of new auditor's reporting in line with ISA 701 ("RAB-Rundschreiben 1/2015"; Q&A on Key Audit Matters)	Completed end of 2016	Audit Working Party / Council of EXPERTsuisse	Q&As, issued in an access- restricted area on the website of EXPERTsuisse

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18.	Ongoing	Observe developments in international standards on auditing and related pronouncements and initiate action, if and when necessary.	Ongoing	Audit Working Party / Banking and Insurance Working Party	Technical Staff
19.	Ongoing	Prepare "Q&A" (Questions and answers) papers in areas, where there are interpretation issues and open questions.	Ongoing	Audit Working Party	Q&As, issued on the website of EXPERTsuisse
20.	2017	Prepare an audit standard for compliance management systems. Update planned for 2023/2024.	Completed in 2018. Update planned for 2023/2024.	Audit Working Party	Swiss Auditing Standard 980
21.	Ongoing	Swiss Handbook on Auditing ("Schweizer Handbuch der Wirtschaftsprüfung") - Monitor further developments in audit and accounting and prepare and publish updated handbook / separate volumes. Volume "Betriebswirtschaftliche Prüfungen und verwandte Dienstleistungen" (Assurance engagements and related services) has been published in 2020. In 2023, the update of the volume "Buchführung und Rechnungslegung" (Accounting and Reporting) has been published. Currently, the volumes "Ordentliche Revision" (Ordinary Audit), "Eingeschränkte Revision" (Limited Statutory Examination) and «Betriebswirtschaftliche Prüfungen und verwandte Dienstleistungen" (Assurance engagements and related services) are under revision and are foreseen to be published in 2024.	Ongoing	All Working Parties / Drafting Committee of EXPERTsuisse	Technical Staff

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Action Plan Developed by EXPERTsuisse

22.	2018	Adapt Swiss Auditing Standard 950 to the revised ISAE 3000 (dependent on the availability of German/French translations). Translations still pending.	2024	Audit Working Party	Swiss Audit Standard 950
23.	Ongoing	Incorporate revised ISAs and other pronouncements of the IAASB into national auditing standards.	Ongoing	Audit Working Party	Technical Staff

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 4–IESBA Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants

Action Plan Objective: Ensure compliance with the IESBA Code of Ethics

Background:

EXPERTsuisse adopts ethical requirements for its members. The EXPERTsuisse requirements are based on the 2016 IESBA Code of Ethics. The requirements are laid out in the EXPERTsuisse Standes- und Berufsregeln (General Regulation on Ethics) and the Richtlinien zur Unabhängigkeit (Independence Directive).

Swiss law (Swiss Code of Obligations and the Federal Act on the Licensing and Oversight of Auditors) includes general and specific independence requirements for professional accountants in Switzerland. These requirements are aligned with the IESBA requirements and in certain aspects even go further than IEASB requirements.

In this context, EXPERTsuisse has a joint responsibility in this area.

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource			
Updat	Updating EXPERTsuisse's Independence Directive							
24.	2018	In 2022 update of EXPERTsuisse's independence directive ("Richtlinien zur Unabhängigkeit") in order to include latest amendments to the IESBA Code of Ethics (version April 2018).	2022	Legal working party and project team / approval by Council of EXPERTsuisse				
25.	Ongoing	Maintain a hotline for EXPERTsuisse members for questions regarding independence and related matters.	Ongoing	EXPERTsuisse	Technical Staff			
Assist	Assisting with the Implementation of the Standards							
26.	Ongoing	Continuous discussion of ethical standards with the FAOA; provide CPD in ethics and independence topics.	Ongoing	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse; FAOA	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse; Technical Staff; Independence directive			

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 5-International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Other Pronouncements Issued by the IPSASB

Action Plan Objective: Liaison with the Swiss public sector accounting standards board

Background:

Public sector accounting in Switzerland is very advanced and mature. It is based on International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). There is a public sector accounting standards board, which has the task to improve public sector accounting in Switzerland. Public sector accounting, as discussed in Switzerland, stretches far beyond preparing financial statements, but also includes public management issues (New Public Management).

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource
27.	Ongoing	Liaison with the Swiss public sector accounting standards board.	Ongoing	EXPERTsuisse has a seat in the Swiss Public-Sector Accounting Standards Board	
28.	Ongoing	Prepared and established guidance ("Prüfungshinweis PH 60") for practitioners being engaged in auditing public sector financial statements. Update of PH 60 in 2023 due to revision of the Swiss Code of Obligations and the Swiss Auditing Standards. After issuance of PH 60 in 2016, EXPERTsuisse - via its Public-Sector Sub-Committee - is actively engaged in achieving harmonization of public sector auditing rules, which are very diverse in the various Swiss cantons. In the meantime the Canton of Ticino has accepted PH 60 and declared that this audit recommendation has to be universally applied in Ticino by all auditors	2018 (Updated in 2023)	Public Sector Sub- Committee	Technical Staff

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 6-Investigation and Discipline

Action Plan Objective: Enforcement of membership obligations and professional requirements

Background:

FAOA has the responsibility for the investigation and discipline process for the entire profession. EXPERTsuisse is having its own responsibility in this area for its members, while membership with EXPERTsuisse is voluntary. A Professional Ethics Committee ("Standeskommission") is operating independently outside of EXPERTsuisse's structure and carries out investigations (i.e. whether members of EXPERTsuisse have followed their duties imposed on them by EXPERTsuisse's membership obligations ("Standes- und Berufsregeln"). Both systems in place are "complaints-based" as well as "information-based". The Investigation and Discipline functions in Switzerland fully comply with SMO 6 requirements.

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource
Enford	cing Membersh	nip Obligations			
29.	Ongoing	Regular checks of individual and firm members, whether they are in compliance with the membership obligations of the Institute.	Ongoing	Compliance team / Membership Committee ("Mitglied- schaftskommission")	Staff of the Institute
30.	Ongoing	Comprehensive assessment of the compliance of individual members with the continuing education requirements based on the online declaration (online CPD monitoring).	Ongoing	Staff of the Institute	Staff of the Institute
31.	Ongoing	Investigate whenever there are indications for individual failure by EXPERTsuisse members.	Ongoing	Fact-finding commission ("Untersuchungskommis sion") of EXPERTsuisse; EXPERTsuisse's tribunal with members totally independent of the profession	Staff of the Institute
32.	Ongoing	Sanctions against EXPERTsuisse members in case of failure to follow membership obligations (up to expulsion).	Ongoing	Tribunal with members totally independent of the profession	Tribunal

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Action Plan Subject: SMO 7-International Financial Reporting Standards and Other Pronouncements issued by the IASB

Action Plan Objective: Liaison with national standard setting bodies and governmental agencies

Background:

IFRS have a long history in Switzerland. Already in the 1980s, Swiss Companies voluntarily adopted International Accounting Standards (IAS) for their group reportings. In the meantime (full) International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) or US GAAP became mandatory for listed entities in the main segment. Companies with a listing in the local segment are alternatively allowed to apply Swiss GAAP FER ("Fachempfehlungen zur Rechnungslegung", Swiss Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) for their reporting. Swiss GAAP FER standards are true and fair view accounting standards prepared by an independent private standard-setter in Switzerland ("Kommission für Fachempfehlungen der Rechnungslegung" or FER Commission). In the 1980s, EXPERTsuisse was involved in the establishment of a foundation as a legal basis for this nowadays highly reputed standard-setter.

#	Start Date	Actions	Completion Date	Responsibility	Resource
Promo	oting IFRS in S	Switzerland			
33.	Ongoing	Meetings with SIX Swiss Exchange, which requires IFRS / US-GAAP for a listing in the main segment.	Ongoing	Accounting Working Party	Regular Meetings
34.	Ongoing	Support the FER commission in their effort to improve Swiss GAAP FER (true and fair view accounting standards) and to increase their acceptance in the Swiss accounting community.	Ongoing	General Management of EXPERTsuisse	EXPERTsuisse
35.	Ongoing	Organize regular seminars in IFRS and related areas (audit of IFRS accounts, consolidation, etc.) via the EXPERTsuisse training institute.	Ongoing	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse	Training Institute of EXPERTsuisse

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36.	Ongoing	Observe developments in IFRS and other accounting frameworks and participate in interpretation discussions; issue articles in the monthly periodical Expert Focus, if and when necessary to establish a common understanding of IFRS and / or other accounting standards.	Ongoing	Accounting Working Party, other EXPERTsuisse Working Parties	Monthly Periodical "EXPERT FOCUS"
37.	Ongoing	Incorporate new developments and changes in the Swiss Handbook on Auditing, volume "Buchführung und Rechnungslegung" (Accounting and Reporting) ("Schweizer Handbuch der Wirtschaftsprüfung").	Ongoing	All Working Parties of EXPERTsuisse	Staff of the Institute

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