

Comparatives

This Singapore Standard on Auditing was previously approved by the Council of the Institute of Singapore in October 1999.

Auditors are required to comply with this SSA in respect of audits of financial statements for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2000.

SSA 710 supersedes the SSA of the same title in June 2004. No substantive changes have been made to the original approved text and all cross references have been updated, as appropriate.

This revised SSA 710 supersedes the SSA of the same title in June 2005.

The Audit Risk Standards, comprising SSA 315 "Understanding the Entity and Its Environment and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement", SSA 330 "The Auditor's Procedures in Response to Assessed Risks" and SSA 500 (Revised) "Audit Evidence" gave rise to conforming amendments in this SSA. These amendments are effective for audits of financial statements for periods beginning on or after 15 December 2004.

Singapore Standards on Auditing (SSAs) are to be applied in the audit of financial statements. SSAs are also to be applied, adapted as necessary, to the audit of other information and to related services.

SSAs contain the basic principles and essential procedures (identified in bold type black lettering) together with related guidance in the form of explanatory and other material. The basic principles and essential procedures are to be interpreted in the context of the explanatory and other material that provide guidance for their application.

To understand and apply the basic principles and essential procedures together with the related guidance, it is necessary to consider the whole text of the SSA including explanatory and other material contained in the SSA not just that text which is black lettered.

In exceptional circumstances, an auditor may judge it necessary to depart from an SSA in order to more effectively achieve the objective of an audit. When such a situation arises, the auditor should be prepared to justify the departure.

SSAs need only be applied to material matters.

The Public Sector Perspective (PSP) issued is set out at the end of an SSA. Where no PSP is added, the SSA is applicable in all material respects to the public sector.

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SINGAPORE STANDARD ON AUDITING

SSA 710

Comparatives

Foreword

This Standard is based on International Standard on Auditing 710.

Introduction

1. The purpose of this Singapore Standard on Auditing (SSA) is to establish standards and provide guidance on the auditor's responsibilities regarding comparatives. It does not deal with situations when summarised financial statements are presented with the audited financial statements (for guidance see SSA 720, "Other Information in Documents Containing Audited Financial Statements," and SSA 800, "The Auditor's Report on Special Purpose Audit Engagements").
2. **The auditor should determine whether the comparatives comply in all material respects with the financial reporting framework applicable to the financial statements being audited.**
3. The existence of differences in financial reporting frameworks between countries results in comparative financial information being presented differently in each framework. Comparatives in financial statements, for example, may present amounts (such as financial position, results of operations, cash flows) and appropriate disclosures of an entity for more than one period, depending on the framework. The frameworks and methods of presentation are referred to in this SSA as follows:
 - (a) **Corresponding Figures** where amounts and other disclosures for the preceding period are included as part of the current period financial statements, and are intended to be read in relation to the amounts and other disclosures relating to the current period (referred to as "current period figures" for the purpose of this SSA). These corresponding figures are not presented as complete financial statements capable of standing alone, but are an integral part of the current period financial statements intended to be read only in relationship to the current period figures; and
 - (b) **Comparative Financial Statements** where amounts and other disclosures of the preceding period are included for comparison with the financial statements of the current period, but do not form part of the current period financial statements.

(Refer to Appendix 2 for discussion of these different reporting frameworks.)
4. Comparatives are presented in compliance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The essential audit reporting differences are that:
 - (a) for corresponding figures, the auditor's report only refers to the financial statements of the current period; whereas
 - (b) for comparative financial statements, the auditor's report refers to each period that financial statements are presented.
5. This SSA provides guidance on the auditor's responsibilities for comparatives and for reporting on them under the two frameworks in separate sections. **When reporting on financial statements**

prepared in accordance with Singapore Financial Reporting Standards, the auditor should comply with those paragraphs relating to Corresponding Figures, paragraphs 6 to 19.

Corresponding Figures

The Auditor's Responsibilities

6. **The auditor should obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that the corresponding figures meet the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework.** The extent of audit procedures performed on the corresponding figures is significantly less than for the audit of the current period figures and is ordinarily limited to ensuring that the corresponding figures have been correctly reported and are appropriately classified. This involves the auditor evaluating whether:
 - (a) accounting policies used for the corresponding figures are consistent with those of the current period or whether appropriate adjustments and/or disclosures have been made; and
 - (b) corresponding figures agree with the amounts and other disclosures presented in the prior period or whether appropriate adjustments and/or disclosures have been made.
7. When the financial statements of the prior period have been audited by another auditor, the incoming auditor evaluates whether the corresponding figures meet the conditions specified in paragraph 6 above and also follows the guidance in SSA 510, "Initial Engagements – Opening Balances."
8. When the financial statements of the prior period were not audited, the incoming auditor nonetheless assesses whether the corresponding figures meet the conditions specified in paragraph 6 above and also follows the guidance in SSA 510.
9. If the auditor becomes aware of a possible material misstatement in the corresponding figures when performing the current period audit, the auditor performs such additional audit procedures as are appropriate in the circumstances.

Reporting

10. **When the comparatives are presented as corresponding figures, the auditor should issue an audit report in which the comparatives are not specifically identified because the auditor's opinion is on the current period financial statements as a whole, including the corresponding figures.**
11. The auditor's report would make specific reference to the corresponding figures only in the circumstances described in paragraphs 12, 13, 15b, and 16 through 19.
12. **When the auditor's report on the prior period, as previously issued, included a qualified opinion, disclaimer of opinion, or adverse opinion and the matter which gave rise to the modification is:**
 - (a) **unresolved, and results in a modification of the auditor's report regarding the current period figures, the auditor's report should also be modified regarding the corresponding figures; or**
 - (b) **unresolved, but does not result in a modification of the auditor's report regarding the current period figures, the auditor's report should be modified regarding the corresponding figures.**
13. When the auditor's report on the prior period, as previously issued, included a qualified opinion, disclaimer of opinion, or adverse opinion and the matter which gave rise to the modification is resolved and properly dealt with in the financial statements, the current report does not ordinarily refer to the previous modification. However, if the matter is material to the current period, the auditor may include an emphasis of matter paragraph dealing with the situation.

14. In performing the audit of the current period financial statements, the auditor, in certain unusual circumstances, may become aware of a material misstatement that affects the prior period financial statements on which an unmodified report has been previously issued.
15. **In such circumstances, the auditor should consider the guidance in SSA 560, “Subsequent Events”, and:**
 - (a) if the prior period financial statements have been revised and reissued with a new auditor’s report, the auditor should obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that the corresponding figures agree with the revised financial statements; or
 - (b) **if the prior period financial statements have not been revised and reissued, and the corresponding figures have not been properly restated and/or appropriate disclosures have not been made, the auditor should issue a modified report on the current period financial statements modified with respect to the corresponding figures included therein.**
16. If, in the circumstances described in paragraph 14, the prior period financial statements have not been revised and an auditor’s report has not been reissued, but the corresponding figures have been properly restated and/or appropriate disclosures have been made in the current period financial statements, the auditor may include an emphasis of matter paragraph describing the circumstances and referencing to the appropriate disclosures. In this regard, the auditor also considers the guidance in SSA 560.

Incoming Auditor – Additional Requirements

Prior Period Financial Statements Audited by Another Auditor

17. In some jurisdictions, the incoming auditor is permitted to refer to the predecessor auditor’s report on the corresponding figures in the incoming auditor’s report for the current period. **When the auditor decides to refer to another auditor, the incoming auditor’s report should indicate:**
 - (a) **that the financial statements of the prior period were audited by another auditor;**
 - (b) **the type of report issued by the predecessor auditor and, if the report was modified, the reasons therefor; and**
 - (c) **the date of that report.**

Prior Period Financial Statements Not Audited

18. **When the prior period financial statements are not audited, the incoming auditor should state in the auditor’s report that the corresponding figures are unaudited.** Such a statement does not, however, relieve the auditor of the requirement to perform appropriate audit procedures regarding opening balances of the current period. Clear disclosure in the financial statements that the corresponding figures are unaudited is encouraged.
19. **In situations where the incoming auditor identifies that the corresponding figures are materially misstated, the auditor should request the directors to revise the corresponding figures or if the directors refuse to do so, appropriately modify the report.**

Comparative Financial Statements

The Auditor’s Responsibilities

20. **The auditor should obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that the comparative financial statements meet the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework.** This involves the auditor evaluating whether:
 - (a) accounting policies of the prior period are consistent with those of the current period or whether appropriate adjustments and/or disclosures have been made; and
 - (b) prior period figures presented agree with the amounts and other disclosures presented in the prior period or whether appropriate adjustments and disclosures have been made.

21. When the financial statements of the prior period have been audited by another auditor, the incoming auditor evaluates whether the comparative financial statements meet the conditions in paragraph 20 above and also follows the guidance in SSA 510.
22. When the financial statements of the prior period were not audited, the incoming auditor nonetheless evaluates whether the comparative financial statements meet the conditions specified in paragraph 20 above and also follows the guidance in SSA 510.
23. If the auditor becomes aware of a possible material misstatement in the prior year figures when performing the current period audit, the auditor performs such additional audit procedures as are appropriate in the circumstances.

Reporting

24. **When the comparatives are presented as comparative financial statements, the auditor should issue a report in which the comparatives are specifically identified because the auditor's opinion is expressed individually on the financial statements of each period presented.** Since the auditor's report on comparative financial statements applies to the individual financial statements presented, the auditor may express a qualified or adverse opinion, disclaim an opinion, or include an emphasis of matter paragraph with respect to one or more financial statements for one or more periods, while issuing a different report on the other financial statements.
25. **When reporting on the prior period financial statements in connection with the current year's audit, if the opinion on such prior period financial statements is different from the opinion previously expressed, the auditor should disclose the substantive reasons for the different opinion in an emphasis of matter paragraph.** This may arise when the auditor becomes aware of circumstances or events that materially affect the financial statements of a prior period during the course of the audit of the current period.

Incoming Auditor – Additional Requirements

Prior Period Financial Statements Audited by Another Auditor

26. **When the financial statements of the prior period were audited by another auditor,**
 - (a) **the predecessor auditor may reissue the audit report on the prior period with the incoming auditor only reporting on the current period; or**
 - (b) **the incoming auditor's report should state that the prior period was audited by another auditor and the incoming auditor's report should indicate:**
 - i. **that the financial statements of the prior period were audited by another auditor;**
 - ii. **the type of report issued by the predecessor auditor and if the report was modified, the reasons therefor; and**
 - iii. **the date of that report.**
27. In performing the audit on the current period financial statements, the incoming auditor, in certain unusual circumstances, may become aware of a material misstatement that affects the prior period financial statements on which the predecessor auditor had previously reported without modification.
28. **In these circumstances, the incoming auditor should discuss the matter with the directors and, after having obtained the director's authorisation, contact the predecessor auditor and propose that the prior period financial statements be restated. If the predecessor agrees to reissue the audit report on the restated financial statements of the prior period, the auditor should follow the guidance in paragraph 26.**

29. If, in the circumstances discussed in paragraph 27, the predecessor does not agree with the proposed restatement or refuses to reissue the audit report on the prior period financial statements, the introductory paragraph of the auditor's report may indicate that the predecessor auditor reported on the financial statements of the prior period before restatement. In addition, if the incoming auditor is engaged to audit and applies sufficient audit procedures to be satisfied as to the appropriateness of the restatement adjustment, the auditor may also include the following paragraph in the report:

We also audited the adjustments described in Note X that were applied to restate the 20X1 financial statements. In our opinion, such adjustments are appropriate and have been properly applied.

Prior Period Financial Statements Not Audited

30. **When the prior period financial statements are not audited, the incoming auditor should state in the auditor's report that the comparative financial statements are unaudited.** Such a statement does not, however, relieve the auditor of the requirement to carry out appropriate audit procedures regarding opening balances of the current period. Clear disclosure in the financial statements that the comparative financial statements are unaudited is encouraged.
31. **In situations where the incoming auditor identifies that the prior year unaudited figures are materially misstated, the auditor should request the directors to revise the prior year's figures or if the directors refuse to do so, appropriately modify the report.**

Effective Date

32. This SSA is effective for reports issued or reissued on or after 1 January 2000. Earlier application is permitted.

The conforming amendments are effective for audits of financial statements for periods beginning on or after December 15, 2004.

Appendix 1

Comparison of SSA 710 with International Standards on Auditing

This comparison appendix which deals only with significant differences in the auditing standards, is produced for information purposes only and does not form part of the standards in SSA 710. The International Standard on Auditing referred to in this Appendix was promulgated by the International Federation of Accountants.

The International Standard on Auditing comparable with SSA 710 is:

- ISA 710 (1996), *Comparatives*.

The following summarises the significant differences between SSA 710 and ISA 710:

Reporting Framework

ISA 710 recognises that, internationally, there are two financial reporting frameworks as regards comparatives: the “Corresponding Figures” framework and “Comparative Financial Statements” framework.

Under both ISA 710 and SSA 710, the auditor is required to determine whether the comparatives comply in all material respects with the financial reporting framework relevant to the financial statements being audited.

When reporting on financial statements that are prepared in accordance with Singapore Financial Reporting Standards, SSA 710 proposes that the auditor determine whether the comparatives comply in all material respects with the “Corresponding Figures” framework.

Compliance with SSA 710 will ensure compliance with ISA 710.

Appendix 2

Discussion of Financial Reporting Frameworks for Comparatives

1. Comparatives covering one or more preceding periods provide the users of financial statements with information necessary to identify trends and changes affecting an entity over a period of time.
2. Under financial reporting frameworks (both implicit and explicit) prevailing in a number of countries, comparability and consistency are desirable qualities for financial information. Defined in broadest terms, comparability is the quality of having certain characteristics in common and comparison is normally a quantitative assessment of the common characteristics. Consistency is a quality of the relationship between two accounting numbers. Consistency (for example, consistency in the use of accounting principles from one period to another, the consistency of the length of the reporting period, etc.) is a prerequisite for true comparability.
3. There are two broad financial reporting frameworks for comparatives: the corresponding figures and the comparative financial statements.
4. Under the corresponding figures framework, the corresponding figures for the prior period(s) are an integral part of the current period financial statements and have to be read in conjunction with the amounts and other disclosures relating to the current period. The level of detail presented in the corresponding amounts and disclosures is dictated primarily by its relevance to the current period figures.
5. Under the comparative financial statements framework, the comparative financial statements for the prior period(s) are considered separate financial statements. Accordingly, the level of information included in those comparative financial statements (including all statement amounts, disclosures, footnotes and other explanatory statements to the extent that they continue to be of significance) approximates that of the financial statements of the current period.

Appendix 3

Example Auditor's Reports

Example A *Corresponding Figures: Example Report for the circumstances described in paragraph 12a*

Auditor's report to _____ (1) of _____ (entity)

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet as at 31 December 20X1, and the profit and loss account and cash flow statement for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of _____ (2). Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Singapore Standards on Auditing. Those Standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As discussed in Note X to the financial statements, no depreciation has been provided in the financial statements which practice, in our opinion, is not in accordance with the Singapore Financial Reporting Standards. This is the result of a decision taken by the directors at the start of the preceding financial year and caused us to qualify our audit opinion on the financial statements relating to that year. Based on the straight-line method of depreciation and annual rates of 5% for the building and 20% for the equipment, the loss for the year should be increased by XXX in 20X1 and XXX in 20X0, the fixed assets should be reduced by accumulated depreciation of XXX in 20X1 and XXX in 20X0, and the accumulated loss should be increased by XXX in 20X1 and XXX 20X0.

In our opinion, except for the effect on the financial statements of the matter referred to in the preceding paragraph, the financial statements are properly drawn up in accordance with _____ (3) and Singapore Financial Reporting Standards, and so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of _____ (entity) as at 31 December 20X1 and of the results and cash flows of the _____ (4) for the year then ended on that date.

Certified Public Accountants

Singapore
_____ (Date)

- (1) Insert class of persons, e.g. 'the members', 'the unit holders', etc.
- (2) Insert description of those responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, e.g. "the directors", etc.
- (3) Insert reference to appropriate rules, regulations, etc.
- (4) Insert type of entity, e.g. 'Company', 'Association', 'Society', etc.

Example B *Corresponding Figures: Example Report for the circumstances described in paragraph 12b*

Example C *Corresponding Figures: Example Report for the circumstances described in paragraph 17*

Auditor's report to _____ (1) of _____ (entity)

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet as at 31 December 20X1, and the profit and loss account and cash flow statement for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of _____ (2). Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. The financial statements for the year ended 31 December 20X0 were audited by another auditor whose report dated 31 March 20X1 expressed an unqualified opinion on those statements.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Singapore Standards on Auditing. Those Standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements are properly drawn up in accordance with _____ (3) and Singapore Financial Reporting Standards, and so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of _____ (entity) as at 31 December 20X1 and of the results and cash flows of the _____ (4) for the year then ended on that date.

Certified Public Accountants

Singapore

(Date)

- (1) Insert class of persons, e.g. 'the members', 'the unit holders', etc.
- (2) Insert description of those responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, e.g. 'the directors', etc.
- (3) Insert reference to appropriate rules, regulations, etc.
- (4) Insert type of entity, e.g. 'Company', 'Association', 'Society', etc.

Appendix 4

Forming an Opinion on Whether Corresponding Figures are Fairly Stated (or, "Provide a True and Fair View")

