

Report on

**2015 Inspection of SMS San Martin Suarez y
Asociados**
(Headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic)

Issued by the

Public Company Accounting Oversight Board

December 21, 2015

THIS IS A PUBLIC VERSION OF A PCAOB INSPECTION REPORT

**PORTIONS OF THE COMPLETE REPORT ARE OMITTED
FROM THIS DOCUMENT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH
SECTIONS 104(g)(2) AND 105(b)(5)(A)
OF THE SARBANES-OXLEY ACT OF 2002**

2015 INSPECTION OF SMS SAN MARTIN SUAREZ Y ASOCIADOS

Preface

In 2015, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB" or "the Board") conducted an inspection of the registered public accounting firm SMS San Martin Suarez y Asociados ("the Firm") pursuant to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 ("the Act").

Inspections are designed and performed to provide a basis for assessing the degree of compliance by a firm with applicable requirements related to issuer audit work. For a description of the procedures the Board's inspectors may perform to fulfill this responsibility, see Part I.C of this report (which also contains additional information concerning PCAOB inspections generally). The inspection included a review of portions of the Firm's audit work on one issuer audit engagement in which it played a role but was not the principal auditor. This review was intended to identify whether deficiencies existed in the reviewed audit work, and whether such deficiencies indicated defects or potential defects in the Firm's system of quality control over audit work. In addition, the inspection included a review of policies and procedures related to certain quality control processes of the Firm that could be expected to affect audit quality.

The Board is issuing this report in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The Board is releasing to the public Part I of the report and portions of Part IV of the report. Part IV of the report consists of the Firm's comments, if any, on a draft of the report. If the nonpublic portions of the report discuss criticisms of or potential defects in the firm's system of quality control, those discussions also could eventually be made public, but only to the extent the firm fails to address the criticisms to the Board's satisfaction within 12 months of the issuance of the report. Appendix A presents the text of the paragraphs of the auditing standards that are referenced in Part I.A. in relation to the description of auditing deficiencies there.

PROFILE OF THE FIRM¹

Offices	1 (Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic)
Ownership structure	Partnership
Partners/professional staff ²	11/52
Issuer audit clients	None
Other issuer audits in which the Firm plays a role ³	None at the outset of the inspection; however, the Firm had played a role in at least one issuer audit since registration with the PCAOB
Lead partners on issuer audit work ⁴	1

¹ The information presented here is as understood by the inspection team, generally as of the outset of the inspection, based on the Firm's self-reporting and the inspection team's review of certain information. Additional information, including additional detail on audit reports issued by the Firm, is available in the Firm's filings with the Board, available at http://pcaobus.org/Registration/rasr/Pages/RASR_Search.aspx.

² The number of partners and professional staff is provided here as an indication of the size of the Firm, and does not necessarily represent the number of the Firm's professionals who participate in audits of issuers.

³ The number of other issuer audits encompasses audit work performed by the Firm in engagements for which the Firm was not the principal auditor, including audits, if any, in which the Firm plays a substantial role as defined in PCAOB Rule 1001(p)(ii).

⁴ The number of lead partners on issuer audit work represents the total number of Firm personnel who had primary responsibility for an issuer audit (as defined in AS No. 10, *Supervision of the Audit Engagement*) or for the Firm's role in an audit since the Firm's registration with the PCAOB.

PART I

INSPECTION PROCEDURES AND CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS

Members of the Board's staff ("the inspection team") conducted primary procedures for the inspection from May 25, 2015 to May 29, 2015.⁵

A. Review of Audit Engagement

The inspection procedures included a review of portions of the Firm's audit work on one issuer audit engagement in which it played a role but was not the principal auditor. The inspection team identified matters that it considered to be deficiencies in the performance of the work it reviewed.

The description of the deficiency in Part I.A of this report includes, at the end of the description of the deficiency, a reference to a specific paragraph of the auditing standard that relates to that deficiency. The text of that paragraph is set forth in Appendix A to this report. The reference in this sub-Part includes only the standard that primarily relates to the deficiency; it does not present a comprehensive list of every auditing standard that applies to the deficiency. Further, certain broadly applicable aspects of the auditing standards that may be relevant to a deficiency, such as provisions requiring due professional care, including the exercise of professional skepticism; the accumulation of sufficient appropriate audit evidence; and the performance of procedures that address risks, are not included in any references to the auditing standards in this sub-Part, unless the lack of compliance with these standards is the primary reason for the deficiency. These broadly applicable provisions are described in Part I.B of this report.

One of the deficiencies identified was of such significance that it appeared to the inspection team that the Firm, in an audit in which it played a role but was not the principal auditor, had not obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to fulfill the

⁵ For this purpose, "primary procedures" include field work, other review of audit work papers, and the evaluation of the Firm's quality control policies and procedures through review of documentation and interviews of Firm personnel. Primary procedures do not include (1) inspection planning, which is performed prior to primary procedures, and (2) inspection follow-up procedures, wrap-up, analysis of results, and the preparation of the inspection report, which extend beyond the primary procedures.

objectives of its role in the audit. The deficiency that reached this level of significance is described below—

Issuer A

the failure to perform sufficient procedures to test revenue recognition (AS No. 14, paragraph 30).

B. Auditing Standards

The deficiency described above could relate to several applicable provisions of the standards that govern the conduct of audit work. The paragraph of the standard that is cited for the deficiency is the paragraph that most directly relates to the deficiency. The deficiency also relates, however, to other paragraphs of that standard and to other auditing standards, including those concerning due professional care, responses to risk assessments, and audit evidence.

Many audit deficiencies involve a lack of due professional care. AU 230, *Due Professional Care in the Performance of Work*, paragraphs .02, .05, and .06, requires the independent auditor to plan and perform his or her work with due professional care and sets forth aspects of that requirement. AU 230, paragraphs .07 through .09, and AS No. 13, *The Auditor's Responses to the Risks of Material Misstatement*, paragraph 7, specify that due professional care requires the exercise of professional skepticism. These standards state that professional skepticism is an attitude that includes a questioning mind and a critical assessment of the appropriateness and sufficiency of audit evidence.

AS No. 13, paragraphs 3, 5, and 8, requires the auditor to design and implement audit responses that address the risks of material misstatement, and AS No. 15, *Audit Evidence*, paragraph 4, requires the auditor to plan and perform audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a reasonable basis for the audit opinion. Sufficiency is the measure of the quantity of audit evidence, and the quantity needed is affected by the risk of material misstatement (in the audit of financial statements) and the quality of the audit evidence obtained. The appropriateness of evidence is measured by its quality; to be appropriate, evidence must be both relevant and reliable in providing support for the related conclusions.

The paragraphs of the standards that are described immediately above are not cited in Part I.A, unless those paragraphs are the most directly related to the relevant deficiency.

B.1. List of Specific Auditing Standards Referenced in Part I.A.

The table below lists the specific auditing standard that is referenced in Part I.A of this report, cross-referenced to the issuer audit for which each standard is cited.

PCAOB Auditing Standard	Issuer
AS No. 14, <i>Evaluating Audit Results</i>	A

C. Information Concerning PCAOB Inspections that is Generally Applicable to Triennially Inspected Firms

A Board inspection includes a review of certain portions of selected audit work performed by the inspected firm and a review of certain aspects of the firm's quality control system. The inspections are designed to identify deficiencies in audit work and defects or potential defects in the firm's system of quality control related to the firm's audit work. The focus on deficiencies, defects, and potential defects necessarily carries through to reports on inspections and, accordingly, Board inspection reports are not intended to serve as balanced report cards or overall rating tools. Further, the inclusion in an inspection report of certain deficiencies, defects, and potential defects should not be construed as an indication that the Board has made any determination about other aspects of the inspected firm's systems, policies, procedures, practices, or conduct not included within the report.

C.1. Reviews of Audit Work

Inspections include reviews of portions of selected audits of financial statements and, where applicable, audits of internal control over financial reporting ("ICFR") and the firm's audit work on other issuer audit engagements in which it played a role but was not the principal auditor. For these audits, the inspection team selects certain portions of the audits for inspection, and it reviews the engagement team's work papers and interviews engagement personnel regarding those portions. If the inspection team identifies a potential issue that it is unable to resolve through discussion with the firm and any review of additional work papers or other documentation, the inspection team ordinarily

provides the firm with a written comment form on the matter and the firm is allowed the opportunity to provide a written response to the comment form. If the response does not resolve the inspection team's concerns, the matter is considered a deficiency and is evaluated for inclusion in the inspection report.

The inspection team selects the audits, and the specific portions of those audits, that it will review, and the inspected firm is not allowed an opportunity to limit or influence the selections. Audit deficiencies that the inspection team may identify include a firm's failure to identify, or to address appropriately, financial statement misstatements, including failures to comply with disclosure requirements,⁶ as well as a firm's failure to perform, or to perform sufficiently, certain necessary audit procedures. An inspection may not involve the review of all of the firm's audit work, nor is it designed to identify every deficiency in the reviewed audits. Accordingly, a Board inspection report should not be understood to provide any assurance that a firm's audit work, or the relevant issuers' financial statements or reporting on ICFR, are free of any deficiencies not specifically described in an inspection report.

In some cases, the conclusion that a firm did not perform a procedure may be based on the absence of documentation and the absence of persuasive other evidence, even if the firm claimed to have performed the procedure. AS No. 3, *Audit Documentation*, provides that, in various circumstances including PCAOB inspections, a firm that has not adequately documented that it performed a procedure, obtained evidence, or reached an appropriate conclusion must demonstrate with persuasive other evidence that it did so, and that oral assertions and explanations alone do not constitute persuasive other evidence. In reaching its conclusions, an inspection team considers whether audit documentation or any other evidence that a firm might provide to the inspection team supports the firm's contention that it performed a procedure, obtained evidence, or reached an appropriate conclusion. In the case of every matter

⁶ When it comes to the Board's attention that an issuer's financial statements appear not to present fairly, in a material respect, the financial position, results of operations, or cash flows of the issuer in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework, the Board's practice is to report that information to the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "the Commission"), which has jurisdiction to determine proper accounting in issuers' financial statements. Any description in this report of financial statement misstatements or failures to comply with SEC disclosure requirements should not be understood as an indication that the SEC has considered or made any determination regarding these issues unless otherwise expressly stated.

cited in the public portion of a final inspection report, the inspection team has carefully considered any contention by the firm that it did so but just did not document its work, and the inspection team has concluded that the available evidence does not support the contention that the firm sufficiently performed the necessary work.

Identified deficiencies in the audit work that exceed a significance threshold (which is described in Part I.A of the inspection report) are summarized in the public portion of the inspection report.⁷

The Board cautions against extrapolating from the results presented in the public portion of a report to broader conclusions about the frequency of deficiencies throughout the firm's practice. Individual audit engagements and areas of inspection focus are most often selected on a risk-weighted basis and not randomly. Areas of focus vary among selected audit engagements, but often involve audit work on the most difficult or inherently uncertain areas of financial statements. Thus, the audit work is generally selected for inspection based on factors that, in the inspection team's view, heighten the possibility that auditing deficiencies are present, rather than through a process intended to identify a representative sample.

C.2. Review of a Firm's Quality Control System

QC 20, *System of Quality Control for a CPA Firm's Accounting and Auditing Practice*, provides that an auditing firm has a responsibility to ensure that its personnel comply with the applicable professional standards. This standard specifies that a firm's system of quality control should encompass the following elements: (1) independence, integrity, and objectivity; (2) personnel management; (3) acceptance and continuance of issuer audit engagements; (4) engagement performance; and (5) monitoring.

The inspection team's assessment of a firm's quality control system is derived both from the results of its procedures specifically focused on the firm's quality control policies and procedures, and also from inferences that can be drawn from deficiencies

⁷ The discussion in this report of any deficiency observed in a particular audit engagement reflects information reported to the Board by the inspection team and does not reflect any determination by the Board as to whether the Firm has engaged in any conduct for which it could be sanctioned through the Board's disciplinary process. In addition, any references in this report to violations or potential violations of law, rules, or professional standards are not a result of an adversarial adjudicative process and do not constitute conclusive findings for purposes of imposing legal liability.

in the performance of individual audit engagements. Audit deficiencies, whether alone or when aggregated, may indicate areas where a firm's system has failed to provide reasonable assurance of quality in the performance of audit work. Even deficiencies that do not result in a failure to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to fulfill the objectives of its role in an audit may indicate a defect or potential defect in a firm's quality control system.⁸ If identified deficiencies, when accumulated and evaluated, indicate defects or potential defects in the firm's system of quality control, the nonpublic portion of this report would include a discussion of those issues. When evaluating whether identified deficiencies in individual audit engagements indicate a defect or potential defect in a firm's system of quality control, the inspection team considers the nature, significance, and frequency of deficiencies;⁹ related firm methodology, guidance, and practices; and possible root causes.

Inspections also include a review of certain of the firm's practices, policies, and processes related to audit quality, which constitute a part of the firm's quality control system. This review addresses practices, policies, and procedures concerning audit performance, training, compliance with independence standards, client acceptance and retention, and the establishment of policies and procedures.

END OF PART I

⁸ Not every audit deficiency suggests a defect or potential defect in a firm's quality control system, and this report may not discuss every audit deficiency the inspection team identified.

⁹ An evaluation of the frequency of a type of deficiency may include consideration of how often the inspection team reviewed audit work that presented the opportunity for similar deficiencies to occur. In some cases, even a type of deficiency that is observed infrequently in a particular inspection may, because of some combination of its nature, its significance, and the frequency with which it has been observed in previous inspections of the firm, be cause for concern about a quality control defect or potential defect.

PARTS II AND III OF THIS REPORT ARE NONPUBLIC
AND ARE OMITTED FROM THIS PUBLIC DOCUMENT

PART IV

RESPONSE OF THE FIRM TO DRAFT INSPECTION REPORT

Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(a), the Firm provided a written response to a draft of this report. Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), the Firm's response, minus any portion granted confidential treatment, is attached hereto and made part of this final inspection report.¹⁰

¹⁰ The Board does not make public any of a firm's comments that address a nonpublic portion of the report unless a firm specifically requests otherwise. In some cases, the result may be that none of a firm's response is made publicly available. In addition, pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), if a firm requests, and the Board grants, confidential treatment for any of the firm's comments on a draft report, the Board does not include those comments in the final report at all. The Board routinely grants confidential treatment, if requested, for any portion of a firm's response that addresses any point in the draft that the Board omits from, or any inaccurate statement in the draft that the Board corrects in, the final report.



San Martin, Suarez y Asociados

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October 29th, 2015

Ms. Helen A. Munter
Director – Division of Registration and Inspections
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board
1666 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Re: Response to Part I of the Draft Report on the 2015 Inspection of SMS – San Martin, Suarez y Asociados S.C.

Dear Ms. Munter:

SMS – San Martin, Suarez y Asociados S.C. ("SMS" or the "Firm") respectfully submits its response to Part I of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board's Draft Report on the 2015 Inspection of SMS (the "Draft Report").

We have thoroughly evaluated the matter described in Part I – Inspection Procedures and Certain Observations of the Draft Report and have taken actions to address findings in accordance with PCAOB Standards.

The PCAOB's inspection process assists us in identifying areas where we can continue to improve our performance and strengthen our system of audit quality control.

We appreciate the efforts of the PCAOB's Inspection team; they maintained a high degree of professionalism during the inspection and we would like to thank them for their efforts.

Sincerely,

SMS – San Martin Suarez y Asociados S.C.



Pablo G. San Martin
Managing Partner

APPENDIX A

AUDITING STANDARD REFERENCED IN PART I

This appendix provides the text of the auditing standard paragraph that is referenced in Part I.A of this report. Footnotes that are included in this appendix, and any other Notes, are from the original auditing standard that is referenced. While this appendix contains the specific portions of the relevant standard cited with respect to the deficiency in Part I.A of this report, other portions of the standards (including those described in Part I.B of this report) may provide additional context, descriptions, related requirements, or explanations; the complete standards are available on the PCAOB's website at <http://pcaobus.org/STANDARDS/Pages/default.aspx>.

AS No. 14, <i>Evaluating Audit Results</i>		
EVALUATING THE PRESENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, INCLUDING THE DISCLOSURES		
AS No. 14.30	The auditor must evaluate whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework. Note: AU sec. 411, <i>The Meaning of Present Fairly in Conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles</i>, establishes requirements for evaluating the presentation of the financial statements. Auditing Standard No. 6, <i>Evaluating Consistency of Financial Statements</i>, establishes requirements regarding evaluating the consistency of the accounting principles used in financial statements. Note: The auditor should look to the requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the company under audit with respect to the accounting principles applicable to that company.	Issuer A