



F-2132

BRCGS REMOTE AUDIT PROCEDURE DUE TO COVID 19

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PURPOSE

Management of extraordinary events of circumstances affecting certified organizations and CBs, resulting to inability of conducting a normal physical audit.

APPLICABLE

Companies already certified against BRCGS standards.

CONTENT

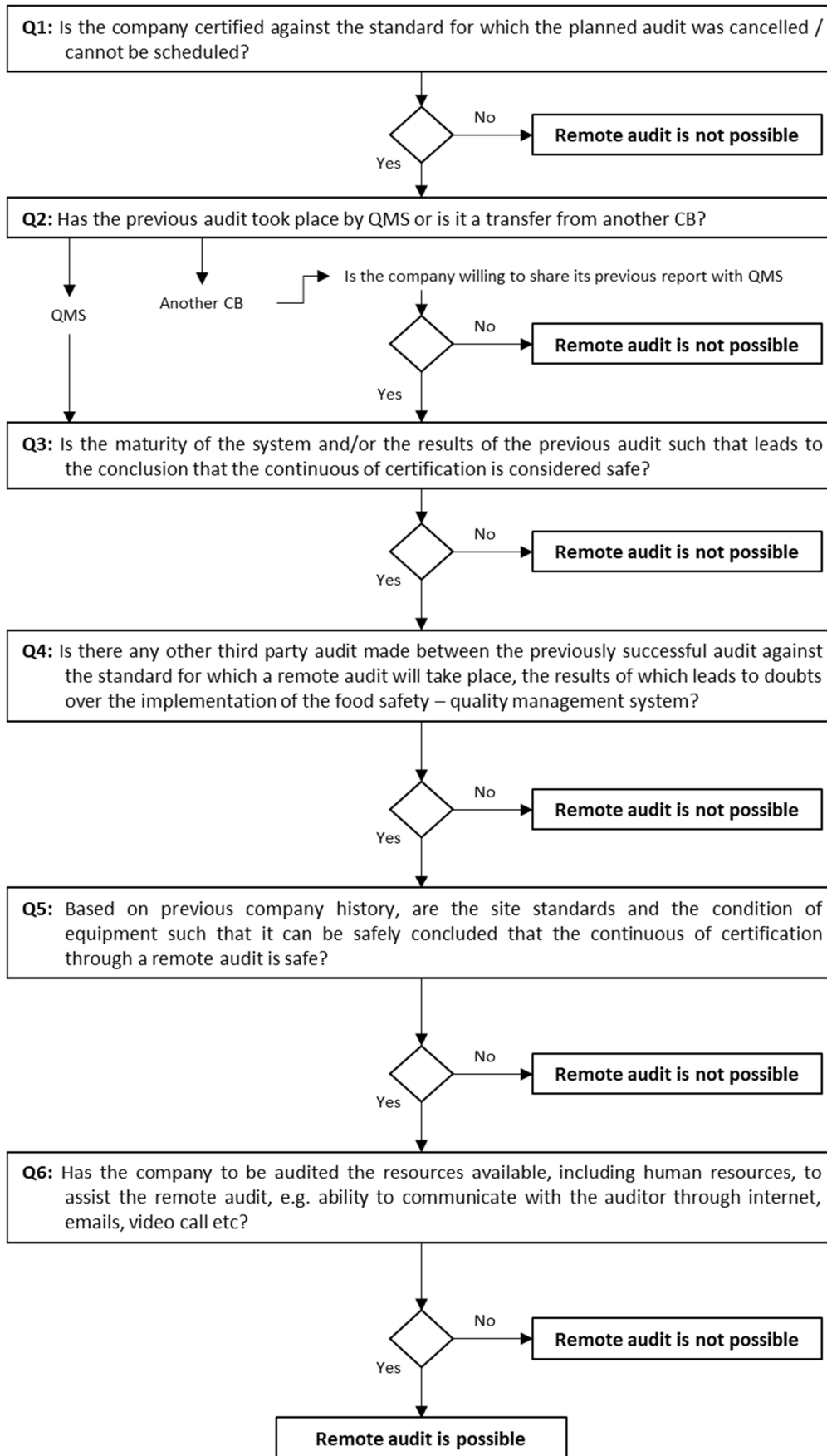
Where there are travel restrictions in specific regions or countries as specified by the local government authorities due to Covid-19, or where there are well supported company policies preventing visitors on site, and therefore auditors, in an attempt to reduce risk of personnel – auditor exposure to risk of exposure to Covid-19, consequently resulting to an audit cancellation, the Certification Body shall offer the certified company the option of a remote audit. The company has the option to accept or decline the offer.

The remote audit option will no longer be available should government restrictions be lifted and scientific developments suggest that the pandemic is no longer active.

A. Preliminary steps

- Confirm that the audit cannot be scheduled or it has been cancelled, due to Covid-19 restrictions – office.
- Evaluate risks of continuing certification without a physical visit. The risk assessment will be based on the matrix presented below and shall be performed for all companies, before a remote audit has been offered to them.

B. Risk assessment matrix



C. Methodology to be followed after matrix indicated that a remote audit is possible

Steps	Description	Tool	Responsibility
1	<p>Contact company and offer them remote audit option. Include in the offer a statement that remote audit includes the need of data sharing with the auditor electronically, via email, video call, skype meeting, CCTV system, video recording etc. and ask whether company wants these data to be permanently deleted once the audit is completed.</p> <p>Confirm that company understands that following a remote audit, an actual factory inspection will take place as soon as possible this is feasible and in case, within 6 months from remote audit.</p> <p>Note: For companies participating in the unannounced scheme, this will take place unannounced.</p>	Attach appendix to application for remote audit option	Office
2	<p>Establish minimum audit duration. This will be usually 8h and include the challenge of the information sent by the company before the "face to face" remote audit – see step no 10 below.</p> <p>Duration might be increased in cases where the data need a significant amount of time for review, large – complex companies (e.g. big number of HACCP studies covering different product categories, large sites with a significant number of equipment), etc.</p> <p>Duration might also be increased in cases where remote audits are covering more than one standard, e.g. 2-4h.</p> <p>Review of data submitted before the audit: 2-4h, is not included in the 8h audit mentioned above.</p>	Application review	Office
3	Following acceptance, nominate auditor for the audit and send application along with appendix for remote audit.	Email - phone	Office
4	Contact company and ensure that communication channels are established, i.e. members of staff from the company that will participate in the remote audit representing the company.	Email - phone	Auditor
5	Ask from company to prepare and communicate the data necessary to complete necessary review of documentation.	Email - phone	Auditor
	As a minimum, these will include:		
	- Full internal audit report, against the standard to be audited, using a shelf assessment tool which will be a checklist including all standard requirements, e.g. for BRCV8 this is F804a. Clarify that a simple Ok or "V", will not be accepted. The report itself must contain significant amount of information so as for the auditor to be able to establish a conclusion that the sample selected was adequate and that the system was properly evaluated.	Email	Auditor
	- Updated HACCP plan which contains critical control points, their limits and methodology of monitoring.	Email	Auditor
	- Letter from the company that includes information of a) any possible recalls since last audit and b) complaints (number total and analysis), c) significant changes since last audit		

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Steps	Description	Tool	Responsibility
	- Last management review meetings, including objectives review of last year and new objectives.	Email	Auditor
	- An updated master list of documents and records used by the company.	Email	Auditor
	- A list of approved suppliers, including raw materials suppliers, packaging material suppliers and service suppliers.	Email	Auditor
	- A list of products produced by the site.	Email	Auditor
	- A site map of the site	Email	Auditor
	- An updated organization chart	Email	Auditor
	- The quality manual of the company	Email	Auditor
	- A set of minimum 15 -25 photos, based on company size, covering all areas of the site, including external areas (raw material intake – warehousing, production areas, packaging areas, staff facilities and canteen, external areas of the factory). Note1: Photos must be named in such way so that auditor understands what the specific photos are showing. Note2: Photos must contain information – details, i.e. date and time of the photo taken.		
	- A video recording of minimum 30 minutes, presenting operational procedures in production areas. This can be from a fixed camera recording different areas of the factory, or a video recorded from company, during production, covering all key processes involved.		
	- Other documents that auditor judges to be necessary to be submitted before the face to face meeting.	Email	Auditor
6	Define - agree timeframe for data communication to the auditor.	Email - phone	Auditor
7	Define – agree “face to face” meeting; date, time, method of communication, personnel necessary to be present at meeting.	Email - phone	Auditor
8	Define to company what the “face to face” meeting will include, so that company is able to prepare and have the resources and data available at request. Make sure to explain that a live recording video will be part of the “face to face” meeting.	Email - phone	Auditor
9	Study the data provided by the company and make necessary notes.	Data provided by the company	Auditor
10	Conduct “face to face” meeting. Opening meeting – confirm all information necessary, e.g. scope, company profile details etc. Attendance register – sent to company to sign and submit after closing meeting. a. Challenge data provided. b. Make a traceability test and use product to conduct a vertical audit by checking, e.g. raw material specs, approved supplier status, production records – CCPs, weight control checks, label approval process, label control, calibration of key equipment involved, PRP implementation (cleaning – sanitation, BFH rules	Data review through, email, skype, video, photos	Auditor

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	<p>compliance, intake control, temperature controls etc), training of personnel involved in the specific product.</p> <p>c. Challenge – audit other aspects of the FSMS system to confirm compliance with the standard.</p> <p>d. Live video check. A company member of staff will be asked to go through the factory focus on specific locations as per auditor request, including zooming in specific areas- equipment, warehouses visits, zoom a specific bait stations and EFKs, staff facilities, maintenance workshop, external areas (go around the site) etc. During factory tour, interview with key staff shall be performed.</p> <p>e. Draw conclusions and submit NCs – closing meeting.</p>		
11	Review evidence submitted by the company to close NCs	Evidence review	Auditor
12	Prepare and submit report	Final audit report	Auditor
13	Upload report and certificate in the system, considering specific standard requirements	Report - certificate	Office

D. Communication of the remote audit to the standard owner where applicable

Under the responsibility of the office, admin or Technical staff.

All remote audits must be communicated to the standard owner prior of the audit, as per specific standard owner procedures.

E. Certificate issue

Individual standard owner requirements are to be considered as per guidance issued by the standard owners, e.g. validity of the certificate, expiry dates, indication of “remote audit” in the certificate, handling of unannounced audits, level – grading of certificate etc.

F-2132 REVIEW HISTORY

Revision No:	Revision Date	Nature of Change	Approval
0	13/03/2020	Original Issue	PD / LDK