

Part III, Annex 1

Guidance for certification bodies seeking accreditation to ISO/IEC Guide 65 for the scope of a Global Food Safety Initiative conforming food safety management scheme

Introduction

The general requirements for accreditation to the scope of a **GFSI** conforming food safety management scheme are laid down in the International Standard ISO/IEC Guide 65 – IAF (International Accreditation Forum) Guidance on the Application of General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems. These requirements apply to all types of certification and therefore need to be interpreted in respect of food safety requirements and the fields of food technology concerned.

This annex provides general guidance on the application of ISO/IEC Guide 65 to food certification. It does not cover all the requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 65 but where necessary it provides amplification of ISO/IEC Guide 65. A reference to the related clause in ISO/IEC Guide 65 is given between brackets where appropriate.

1. Scope

- 1.1 The guidance below is intended to apply to the certification of the ‘process’, which supplies food products to assure their safety. The term ‘process’ is used in the widest sense and should include all the processes and services, which together make up the end user food product. This requires the adoption of the elements of a documented food safety management system, control of GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) / GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) / GDP (Good Distribution Practices) standards and the HACCP principles or equivalent.
- 1.2 The **GFSI** conforming scheme used by a Certification Body shall have undertaken the **GFSI** Benchmark Procedure, which includes the key elements defined by **GFSI**, the auditor qualifications, training and experience, the assessment reporting format, duration of initial and surveillance visits and guidance for the management of certification bodies.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Certification and Certification Body are defined in Part I, chapter 3 of the Guidance Document. Clarification is given below on some other terms, some of which have gained common usage in the food industry in a way that conflicts with the Accreditation definition.

2.2.1 Accreditation

The International Accreditation Forum, Inc. (IAF) brings together a number of bodies from around the world with the aim of providing global accreditation coverage, in this case for process certification. Further information on member bodies with an MLA-status of the IAF can be obtained by contacting the IAF Secretariat at the address detailed in the back of ISO/IEC Guide 65.

2.2.2 Scope of Accreditation

The scope of accreditation shall be precisely defined in terms of the field of application and reference to the relevant standard(s) of the conforming food safety management scheme including revision numbers and/or dates.

2.2.3 Categories

Specific area of the food chain. Sub-divisions are indicated in chapter 7.5

3. Certification Body

3.1 General Provisions

(Reference 4.1.3) The criteria against which the process of a supplier is evaluated shall be those outlined in the standards in compliance with the Guidance Document. A full list of conforming standards is available at www.ciesnet.com.

3.2 Operations

(Reference 4.3) The certification body shall evaluate the process on the basis of a site visit in compliance with the guidelines of chapter 7.6. The evaluation shall encompass all the elements of the conforming food safety management scheme. Personnel conducting the evaluation shall be recognised as competent by the certification body within the requirements defined in chapter 7.2.

4. Certification Body personnel/Qualification criteria

(Reference 5) The minimum relevant criteria for the competence of personnel as defined by the certification body shall be in accordance with the qualifications, training and experience defined in chapter 7.2 of this document.

5. Preparation for evaluation

- 5.1 (Reference 9.2) The certification body shall prepare and monitor the plan for any certification activity to include:
- a) A proposal for a site visit date, mutually acceptable to client and certification body
 - b) A proposal for an auditor to undertake a site visit, mutually acceptable to client and certification body
 - c) The duration and frequency of the site visits according to the guidelines mentioned in chapter 7.6.

6. Audit Report

(Reference 11) The audit report shall be prepared by the auditor and include all the requirements listed in chapter 7.3. The report shall be submitted to the certification body for review. Corrective action proposals are considered and the Certification Body shall inform the client of the non-conformities that need to be discharged in order to comply with the certification scheme requirements. Verification of corrective action undertaken by the client must be demonstrated in writing to the certification body.