

IFS Broker version 3.2 Doctrine v1

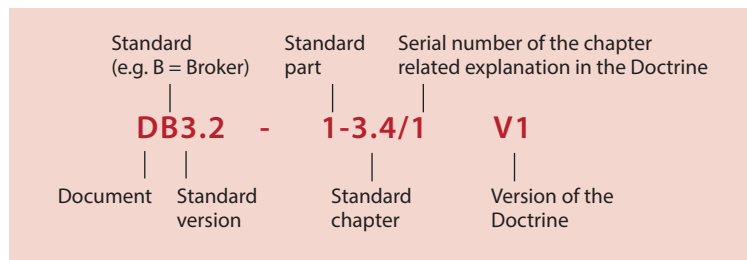


Foreword

This document provides additional clarification to the IFS Broker version 3.2 Standard. The doctrine is available to certification bodies, certified companies and all other IFS users.

The following doctrine is a collection of several descriptive documents. Each document has its own name and the first three signs indicate the type of document. In the example below, the first two letters stand for Doctrine Broker, and the number 3.2 for the Standard version 3.2. The second section of the name specifies the part of the standard to which the document refers (the IFS Broker Standard is divided into different parts which are again subdivided into different chapters). The third section indicates the chapter of the standard and the number after the backslash marks the number of the explanation in the doctrine itself.

E.g. DB3.2-1-3.4/1 V1 means the document is the first IFS Broker Doctrine explanation which refers to the chapter 3.4 in the first part of the IFS Broker version 3.2.



The document name is followed by the version of the doctrine document to enable the reader to follow the changes.

This new document system enables the user to exchange only the modified pages instead of the whole document. All changes are described in the content overview on the first pages and these pages will be updated with each change. Please note that the comment “reworked wording” indicates a grammatical correction or improvement of the language. Any changes to the content are additionally marked.

In the digital version of the doctrine, links allow users to search for specific clarifications. Clicking on the explanation of interest will lead to the relevant document.

The application of newly introduced or adapted rules is always two (2) months after publication of the relevant version, if not specified otherwise.

Certification bodies shall ensure that relevant certification body personnel is trained on the introduced changes according to their function within the certification body before the rules come into force. A proof of this training shall be available on request.

The duration of the training depends on the extent of the changes, IFS does not request any minimum length of time nor a specific tool to be used for the training as long as it is done face-to-face, online or by webinar (see part 3 of the Standard). Sending an email or a presentation in an email is not considered as a training.

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CLARIFICATION – 0.0 INTRODUCTION

0.0 Introduction

0.0.1 Clarification for companies in case of initial audit and first audit according to a new version

In an IFS Broker version 3.2 audit, the site is audited to the requirements of IFS Broker version 3.2 and the auditor has to evaluate the site's implementation of those requirements.

Following this, all rules and requirements of the standard including those where an annual review is requested shall be implemented and validated (e.g. through internal audits, senior management review, etc.) before the annual certification audit. In case of an unannounced audit, all standard requirements need to be implemented before the audit time window starts.

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS BROKER 3.2, FEBRUARY 2024

PART 1 – Audit Protocol

1.1 The history of the International Featured Standards and IFS Broker Standard

The new IFS Broker version 3.2 will come into force on 1 July 2024. All audits performed on or after or include this date shall be according to IFS Broker version 3.2.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – AUDIT PROTOCOL

1.1.1 Which IFS Broker version shall be applied in some specific situations?

In case of multi-site companies: All sites shall be audited to the same version as that of the central managing site (headquarter) within the same certification cycle.

Exceptional situations where the IFS Broker version 3.1 can still apply are the following:

- Multi-sites with central management where the audit of the central managing site (headquarter) is performed before the 1 July 2024 requires all sites to be audited to IFS Broker version 3.1
- Follow-up audit and/or extension audit when the “main” audit took place before 1 July 2024

In case of unannounced audits, if the audit window starts on or after 1 July 2024 then the audit shall be performed according to IFS Broker version 3.2.

The general admission of the aforementioned exceptional situations which permit the use of IFS Broker version 3.1 after 1 July 2024, shall terminate on 30 June 2025.

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS BROKER 3.2, FEBRUARY 2024

1.2 Introduction

1.2.2 Extraordinary information to the certification body by the certified company

The company shall inform its certification body about any change that may affect its ability to conform to the certification requirements (e.g. recall, alert on products, organisation and management):

- Any product recall/withdrawal caused by the broker company for own broker brands or customer branded products;
- Any visit from authorities which results in mandatory action connected to product safety, and/or product fraud

The details shall be defined and agreed between both parties.

This information shall be made within three (3) working days.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.2.2.1 Form for extraordinary information to be filled out by the certification bodies

The following information needs to be added in the description:

- Company (COID)
- Product (including private labels and/or brands);
- Date of recall/withdrawal;
- Involved batches;
- Reason of the recall;

After ten (10) working days from the initial information in the IFS Database:

- Cause of the incident (if relevant with corrections and corrective actions taken by the company)
- The actions taken by the certification body. Especially with reference to the certification status of the company

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1.3 Types of audit

3.1 Initial audit

An initial audit is either a company's first audit to IFS Broker Standard or the audit after an interruption of the certification cycle (see 6.2, Part 1). It is performed at a time and date agreed upon between the company and the selected certification body. During this audit, a full and thorough audit of the entire company will be conducted both, in relation to its documentation and the processes/services. Furthermore, all criteria of the IFS Requirements shall be assessed by the auditor.

In the case of a pre-audit, the auditor who performs this assessment shall be a different one from the auditor who performs the initial audit.

3.2 Follow-up audit

A follow-up audit is required in a specific situation when the result of the audit (an initial audit or a renewal audit) have been such as to not allow the awarding of the certificate (see chart n° 6).

During the follow-up audit, the auditor focuses on the implementation of the actions taken to correct the major non-conformity determined within the previous audit. The follow-up audit shall be performed within a six (6) months period, from the date of the previous audit. Generally, the auditor who performed the audit where a major non-conformity has been identified shall also perform the follow-up audit.

If there is no follow-up audit performed after six (6) months from the date of the previous audit, then a complete new audit is necessary.

In the event that the follow-up audit establishes that requirements remain inadequate, a complete new audit is necessary, which shall be scheduled no earlier than six (6) weeks after the follow-up audit. The elimination of a major non-conformity shall always be established through an on-site visit by the auditor.

Note: After a successful IFS Follow-Up Audit, the site shall be granted certification at foundation level, only (see chart n° 6).

// 1.3 Types of audit

3.3 Renewal audit (for re-certification)

Renewal audits are those which are performed after the initial audit. The period in which a renewal audit shall be performed is shown on the certificate. A renewal audit involves a full and thorough audit of a company resulting in the issue of a new certificate. During the audit, all IFS Broker Requirements shall be assessed by the auditor. Particular attention is paid to the deviations and non-conformities identified during the previous audit, as well as to the effectiveness and implementation of **corrective** actions and preventive measures laid down in the company's **corrections**, corrective action plan.

Note: action plans from the previous audit shall always be assessed by the auditor, even if the previous audit has been performed more than one (1) year ago. Hence, audited companies shall always inform their certification body, if they have already been IFS certified in the past.

The date of the renewal audit shall be calculated from the date of the last day of the initial audit and not from the date of issue of the certificate. Furthermore, the renewal audit can be scheduled at earliest eight (8) weeks before and at latest two (2) weeks after the renewal audit due date (see also section 6.2, Part 1).

Companies are responsible for maintaining their certification. All IFS Broker certified companies will receive a reminder from the IFS Database three (3) months before end of validity of certificate.

The certification bodies shall contact companies in advance in order to set a date for a new audit in due time.

In general, the expected date of each audit shall be uploaded in the IFS Database, in the diary function and two (2) weeks (14 calendar days) at the latest before the audit due date (it is possible to change the date at short notice).

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// 1.3 Types of audit

3.4 Extension audit

In specific situations, such as where new products/services — different from those included in the certification scope of the current IFS Broker Audit — are added to the broker services, the certified company shall immediately inform its certification body. They then shall perform a risk assessment to decide whether an extension audit is necessary or not. The result of this risk assessment, which is based on particular product safety risks, shall be documented.

If the certification body decides positive for an extension audit, then, for an IFS Broker certified company, it is not necessary to perform a complete new audit, but to organise an on-site extension audit during the validity period of the existing certificate.

The certification body is responsible for determining relevant requirements to be audited and the relevant audit duration. The report of this extension audit shall be presented as an annex adjoined with the current audit report. Conditions for passing the extension audit (relative score $\geq 75\%$) remain the same as any other audit, but shall only focus on specific requirements which were audited:

- If the extension audit demonstrates compliance, the certificate shall be updated including the new scope and uploaded into the IFS Database (the original audit score does not change). The updated certificate shall keep the same due date of end of validity as the current certificate.
- If the relative score is $< 75\%$, the extension audit is failed and it is not possible to update the certificate with the extended products/processes.
- If a major non-conformity or a KO (knock out non-conformity) was identified during an extension audit, the full audit is failed resulting in the current certificate being suspended as described in sections 5.8.1 and 5.8.2.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3 TYPES OF AUDIT

1.3.1 **How is the renewal audit managed during the following year when an extension audit has been performed?**

The renewal audit shall include the activity which has been audited during the extension audit (all in one certificate).

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3 TYPES OF AUDIT

1.3.2 Remote auditing protocol

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have made remote auditing enforceable.

For the purpose of auditing the IFS Broker version 3.2, remote means that the audit is performed entirely by using remote ICT and is being conducted in compliance with IFS Broker version 3.2 requirements.

The use of remote ICT for auditing will only be successful if the right conditions are in place. Therefore, by introducing this clarification, the document “IFS Broker version 3.2 Audit Protocol for remote auditing” is considered as additional document to the IFS Broker version 3.2 Standard and fully belongs to IFS Broker version 3.2 requirements.

This document was created to ensure a robust audit process by applying remote ICT for the evaluation of IFS Broker version 3.2 requirements by a certification body/auditor. Certification bodies/auditors are obliged to fully comply to the requirements set out in this document (including additional auditor qualification as laid down in chapter 2.1.3 of that document).

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS BROKER 3.2, FEBRUARY 2024

1.4 Coverage of this standard and scope of the audit

1.4.1 Coverage of this standard

(...)

The IFS Broker Standard applies to persons and/or companies who may or may not own the products but typically who do not take physical possession of the products (e.g. which do not have warehouses, packing stations or truck fleet, but are legal entities with mailboxes, offices, etc.).

The main aim of the standard is to assess the services compliance, especially how the company selects and/or manages its suppliers and service providers for the products demanded by the customers, how it is able to fulfil traceability and other specific customer requirements of delivered products and how to manage a product recall.

Note: in the following sections, all activities covered by the standard are named broker services.

The following scopes are defined for IFS Broker Audits:

Trading

- Food
- Household and personal care products
- Packaging materials
- A combination of above products.

Note: Food, household and personal care products and packaging materials which are covered by this scope are defined in ANNEX 5, Part 1.

IFS Broker shall not apply to the following activities:

- processing of food or non-food products (see ANNEX 1, Part 1),
- any other physical handling of products, such as own logistics activities (by taking over the physical possession of the products)

(...)

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.1 COVERAGE OF THIS STANDARD

1.4.1.1 Is there an IFS table with examples of products and the classification of relevant product scope(s)?

A table with examples of food products is available on the IFS Website and will be updated each time it is necessary.

For HPC products, examples can be found in the IFS HPC Standard version 3, Part 1, 2.2.

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1.4.2 Scope of the audit

The audit scope shall be defined according to the following requirements:

The audit scope shall be agreed upon between the company and the certification body before the audit takes place. The scope shall be clearly and unambiguously stated in the contract between the company and the certification body, as well as in the audit report and on the certificate.

The audit scope shall include the complete broker services of the company. The scope shall be reviewed by the auditor and agreed during the opening meeting of the audit, after an initial risk assessment. Furthermore, the scope can be modified after the risk assessment (for instance, if a further activity interferes with the one concerned with the audit scope).

Note: in the audit report and on the certificate, the audit scope shall describe the traded products for which the broker services have been audited. For all products of the audit scope, the product scopes (names and numbers) according to the table laid down in ANNEX 5, Part 1 shall be specified in the audit scope of the audit report (ANNEX 1, Part 4) and on the certificate (ANNEX 5, Part 4).

The audit shall be performed at a time to ensure that the full broker services can be thoroughly and effectively assessed. Only these conditions can allow the proper assessment of the broker's services compliance.

Under exceptional circumstances, the certification body may allow a company to exclude the broker services only related to whole **specific product scopes** (according ANNEX 5, Part 1) from the scope of the audit, as long as they are not considered as the core business of the company subject to an IFS Broker Audit. However, these exclusions shall be clearly noted and included in the company profile of the audit report and on the IFS Broker Certificate.

Note: it is not allowed to exclude customer branded products (e.g. private label) from the scope of the IFS Broker Certification.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.2 SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.2.1 Origin certification and other certification under specific regulations

Reference to product certifications or labels that are under specific regulations (e.g. Protected designation of origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), Organic ...) shall not appear in the scope on the IFS Broker Certificate, to avoid any confusion with the scope of the IFS Broker Audit and Certification.

If the company asks for the visibility of such a status, a reference can only be made in the company profile.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.2 SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.2.2 Clarification about the description of the IFS Broker Audit Scope

Brand information is not allowed in the audit scope as it does not provide a detailed description of the product category. It can only be mentioned in the company profile of the report.

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1.4.3 Broker with logistics activities

In the IFS Broker, a number of requirements are laid down in case the company subject to the IFS Broker Certification is also organizing storage and/or transport activities for the traded products.

The broker services in terms of organisation of storage and/or transport activities can neither be excluded from the scope of the IFS Broker Certification, nor allowed to be mentioned in the certification scope.

4.3.1 Combined certification IFS Broker/IFS Logistics:

If a trading company additionally is taking over the physical possession of the traded products and thus conducting own logistics activities (storage, distribution and/or transport) at the Broker's physical location, an IFS Broker Certification is not applicable alone and a combined certification according to IFS Broker and IFS Logistics shall be performed, in case the company would like to certify those. In that case, the IFS Broker Certificate shall specify: "The company also has own logistics activities, which are IFS Logistics certified".

If no combined certification is performed but own logistics activities are present but the trading company doesn't want to include those logistics activities into the scope of IFS Certification, those activities shall be explicitly excluded from the certification scope by specifying on the IFS Broker.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.3 BROKER WITH LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES

1.4.3.1 Clarification about logistics activities in case of fully outsourced products and/or traded product

Fully outsourced products and/or traded products are not covered by IFS Food Certification. To certify the fully outsourced products and/or traded products, a combined IFS Food/Broker Audit shall be performed.

Audit and reporting

The logistics activities of the fully outsourced and/or traded products shall be assessed in the combined audit. The situation shall be described in the company profile of the reports.

Deviations and/or non-conformities related only to logistics activities of fully outsourced and/or traded products shall be raised in the IFS Broker Report.

Certificate

Only in case a combined IFS Food/Broker Audit is performed, the following sentences shall be written only:

- on the IFS Food Certificate: "The company has own broker activities, which are IFS Broker certified".
- on the IFS Broker Certificate: "The company also has own processing activities, which are IFS Food certified".

Audit duration

The CB shall decide based on a risk assessment, if a maximal reduction of 0,5 days can still be applied for a combined IFS Food/IFS Broker Audit. It shall be indicated in the audit duration details of the IFS Food and IFS Broker Reports.

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1.5 The certification process

1.5.2 Certification body selection — contractual arrangements

In order to undertake the IFS Broker Audit, the company shall appoint a certification body which is approved to perform such audits. Certification bodies shall be accredited to ISO/IEC 17065 norm for the scope of IFS Broker and shall have auditors who are approved to perform IFS Broker Audits (see Part 3). Only those IFS approved certification bodies, which have signed a contract with IFS (see Part 3) — can carry out IFS Broker Audits and issue certificates. The list of all international IFS approved certification bodies by country, is available on the website www.ifs-certification.com.

IFS Broker Audits can be carried out by an audit team, only if all members of the audit team are approved IFS Broker Auditors. Additional requirements for audit teams are described in detail in Part 3 of the Standard, chapter 3.4.

An auditor is not allowed to perform more than three (3) consecutive audits of the same company's site (whatever the time between the audits); rules in case of audit team are also detailed in Part 3, chapter 3.4.

A contract shall exist between the company and the certification body detailing the scope of the audit, the duration and reporting requirements. The contract shall have a reference to Integrity Program (see chapter 12), in relation to the possibility of on-site checks organized by Quality Assurance Management of the IFS Offices.

The audit shall take place when broker services of the company's audit scope can be fully assessed.

The audit shall preferably be carried out in the working language of the company and the certification body shall make every attempt to appoint an auditor whose native language or main working language is the working language of the company. Furthermore, languages used by the auditor for leading an audit — among native language — shall be approved by IFS Offices prior to undertaking audits (see also Part 3).

It is the responsibility of the company to verify that the certification body is accredited for IFS Broker Certification.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2 CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION — CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.1 Are there any IFS rules for the use of interpreters during an IFS Broker Audit?

An IFS Broker Audit shall be carried out in the working language of the trading site. Therefore the use of an interpreter is not allowed if the language is:

- German
- French
- English
- Chinese
- Italian
- Spanish (exempted Central and South America)

In general, the audit shall preferably be carried out in the language of the company. If this is not possible, it is mandatory to use an interpreter under the following conditions:

- The interpreter shall have a technical background or shall be an approved auditor for another food safety/quality scheme,
- The interpreter shall be independent from the audited company, to avoid any conflict of interest
- 20% of the total audit duration shall be added, to ensure a properly performed audit.

Note: In case of use of a professional interpreting service provider, IFS accepts that the respective interpreter doesn't have the required technical background. All further rules remain valid.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2 CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION — CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.2 Auditor sharing

To cover all the necessary product scopes of an audit, there are two possibilities to share auditors between certification bodies:

1) Borrowing of auditors

For the occasional sharing of auditors, both certification bodies shall compose a short agreement concerning the lending/borrowing of the auditor. The agreement shall contain the following at a minimum:

- day of audit
- name of company
- name of shared auditor
- signature of both certification body managers of the IFS contracted certification bodies
- signature of a responsible person notified to IFS from both IFS contracted organisations.

2) IFS Certification Body Working Group

If certification bodies wish to share auditors more frequently, a short contract can be requested from the IFS Office in Berlin. This agreement allows two or more certification bodies to work together by sharing one pool of auditors. The responsibilities for the audits, training of auditors, reviewing etc. are clearly separated. Only audit date and scope can be seen by the partner; company names are invisible.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 AUDIT DURATION

1.5.3 Audit duration

1.5.3.1 Minimum audit duration

A normal audit day duration is eight (8) hours and shall never exceed ten (10) hours. The minimum audit duration does not include time for audit preparation and report generation. Additionally, time for generation of the audit report is typically 0,5 days.

Note 1: for an audit team, at least two (2) hours shall be allocated to the team and not to an individual auditor for common tasks (e.g. opening and closing meeting, discussion about audit findings, etc.). See also Part 3, chapter 3.4 about audit team.

Note 2: for a combined audit IFS Broker/IFS Product Standard, it is accepted to reduce the total duration (calculated separately for the audit of each standard) about maximum 0,5 days (4 hours).

Note 3: for a combined audit IFS Broker/IFS Logistics, the minimum audit duration shall be 1.25 days (10 hours).

Note 4: In case of auditing of multi-location companies with central management, the audit duration for each single trading site can be reduced to four (4) hours, if requirements have already been audited at the central managing site.

The only acceptable reduction reasons are those defined in the IFS Broker Standard. A combination of different reasons for reduction, including in the case of a combined IFS Audit, is not possible. The minimum audit duration after reduction is four (4) hours.

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS BROKER 3.2, FEBRUARY 2024

1.5.4 Drawing up an audit time schedule

During the closing meeting, the auditor (or lead auditor in the case of an audit team) shall present all findings and discuss deviations and non-conformities, which have been identified during the audit. As specified by ISO/IEC 17065 norm, the auditor may only issue a provisional assessment of company's status during the closing meeting. The certification body shall issue a provisional audit report and outline an action plan to the company, which shall be used as a basis for drawing up **corrections and** corrective actions for the determined deviations and non-conformities.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.4 DRAWING UP AN AUDIT TIME SCHEDULE

1.5.4.1 **Mandatory document to be signed by a representative of the audited site and auditors at the end of the audit**

IFS requires certification bodies/auditors to provide a mandatory document which reflects and confirms the actual presence of the auditor(s) and audited production site representative(s) during the audit. This document shall:

- state the start and end time of each audit date.
- be signed by a representative of the company, auditor(s) and if applicable from trainee(s), auditor under observation, witness auditor or any other observer present, latest on the last day of the audit.

This document shall be part of the audit documentation and shall be available upon request at the office of the certification body.

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1.5.8.4 Specific management of the audit process in case of multi-location companies

- All KO requirements shall be audited at all trading sites, even if some of them are partly managed at the central managing site.
- In the audit report of each trading site, only the audit date of the respective trading site shall be mentioned; the audit date of central managing site is not additionally necessary.
- In case that a major non-conformity or a KO scored with D has been issued during the audit of the central managing site, all audited trading sites are also affected and the certificates of these trading sites shall be suspended (according the procedure described above).
- After a successful audit of the central managing site (or after positive follow-up after a major non-conformity was issued in the central managing site), the certificates of the trading sites can be reinstated. Depending upon which non-conformity has been issued in the central managing site, a new audit of the trading sites may also be necessary.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.8.4 SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT OF THE AUDIT PROCESS IN CASE OF MULTI-LOCATION COMPANIES

1.5.8.4.1 How is a situation managed where a deviation, which had been identified during the central managing site audit, has been solved and checked by the auditor during the site audit?

If there is objective evidence that the deviation first noticed at the central managing site has been completely solved, it should be possible to rate the respective requirement as an A. This can be accepted under the following conditions:

- The respective central managed process can also be checked completely at the trading site and the previously rated deviation at the central managing site can be solved with objective evidence.
- The check of corrective actions which allow the deviation to be solved, shall be carried out during the audit of all sites.
- The auditor needs time to check the implementation of corrective actions for this previously noticed deviation at the central managing site. More than likely a full reduction of audit time (0, 5 days) would no longer be applicable (as would be possible in a normal situation). This decision is the responsibility of the certification body.

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1.6 Awarding the certificate

1.6.1 Deadlines for awarding certificate

The certification body is responsible for the decision to award or not to award the IFS Broker Certificate. The decision is made by person(s) other than those who have carried out the audit. The certification shall be valid effectively from the date of issue stated on the certificate itself and shall end after twelve (12) months. The date for the renewal audit shall be calculated from the date of the initial audit, not from the date of issue the certificate. If the audit is not performed in due time, the retailers or other users will be informed via the IFS Database.

The time between the date of the audit and the awarding of certificate is determined as follows:

- two (2) weeks to draw up the pre-report of the audit
- **four (4) weeks** for the company to respond to the deviations and non-conformities (i.e. draw up the corrective action plan)
- two (2) weeks for the auditor/**certification body to review the action plan (all corrections shall be implemented)** and upload of the audit report, the corrective action plan and the certificate to the IFS Database.

The timeline is six (6) weeks (as a target time) or eight (8) weeks (as a maximum time) between the date of audit and the upload of the audit report in the IFS Database/issue of the certificate.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1 DEADLINE FOR AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1.6.1.1 Is the first or the last day of audit, the date to be considered as the starting point for calculating the certification cycle –8 weeks/+2 weeks?

The last day of audit shall be used to calculate the time window –8 weeks/+2 weeks.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1 DEADLINE FOR AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1.6.1.2 Which is the final day of certificate validity?

The start date of certificate validity is: initial audit date (last day) +8 weeks.

The last day of certificate validity is: initial audit date (last day) +8 weeks –1 day
+1 year.

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PART 2 – List of audit requirements

2.4 Planning and services process

2.4.4 Purchasing

- 4.4.1 The company shall control purchasing processes to ensure that all sourced products and services, which have an impact on product safety and quality, conform to requirements.
- 4.4.2 There shall be a procedure for approval and monitoring of suppliers and service providers.
- 4.4.3 The approval and monitoring procedure shall be based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks and shall contain clear assessment criteria such as:
- audits,
 - certificates of analysis,
 - supplier reliability and complaints (including fraud), as well as
 - required performance standards
- 4.4.4 The supplier of the product shall be certified against IFS Standard or any other GFSI recognized standard covering the respective scope of activity. Exceptions can only be made if the customer is expressly accepting other conditions.
- 4.4.5 The company shall have a (internal or external) risk based system in place, to monitor the sourcing areas of purchased products.
- 4.4.6 An assessment of suppliers and service providers shall be made regularly to identify and control risks. There shall be a record of all reviews and actions taken as a consequence of the assessment.
- 4.4.7 The purchased products shall be checked in accordance with the existing specifications and, risk based, with their authenticity. The schedule of these checks shall, as a minimum, take into account the following criteria: product requirements and supplier status (according to its assessment).
- 4.4.8 In case of customer branded products, a supplier approval system shall exist for product suppliers, which is in accordance with customer requirements.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

2.4.4.1 Supplier status and exceptional situations

In exceptional situations, where the supplier status is not available, the acceptance procedure of incoming purchased products or purchased services described in 4.4.7 shall adequately address the missing status by increased frequency and scope of product testing.

The exceptional situation shall be justified and documented.

If the supplier status is a requirement of a retailer specification, the exceptional situation shall be notified before commissioning.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

2.4.4.2 Product Defence threat assessment

The hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks for the approval and monitoring of suppliers and service providers shall also incorporate the assessment of risks in regard to product defence. Based on that, measures on product defence shall be implemented and monitored.

More detailed information can be found in the IFS Product and Food Defence Guide-line.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

2.4.4.3 What is expected to be provided by the auditee to fulfill the requirement on “expressively accepting other conditions”?

The intention of this requirement is to show evidence, that the customer is informed about products/suppliers not being certified against any IFS or GFSI recognized standard and that the client evidently accepted this certification status of the products.

Evidence of this can be shown in different ways, e.g. through signed specifications, signed contracts, email confirmation, letters of acceptance or similar documents, comprising the active acceptance by the customer.

A generic statement about the certification status of the products/suppliers in the general terms and conditions of the broker are not considered as “good trading practice” therefore, a deviation shall be scored accordingly.

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2.4.6 Traceability (including GMOs and allergens)

4.6.1 **KO n° 4:** A traceability system shall be in place which enables the full identification of products. The labelling of the products shall be carried out in a way to allow full traceability. The traceability system and related records, shall ensure full traceability from the supplier (defined to batch quantity) until the delivery to the customer

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.6 TRACEABILITY (INCLUDING GMOS AND ALLERGENS)

2.4.6.1 Clarification about bulk products

The traceability and identification of products shall ensure that all relevant information regarding product safety and quality is clearly assignable to the product also in case of bulk products and consumer unit packages without a final consumer label.

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2.4.8 Logistics activities

4.8.1 Where the company contracts a third-party transport and/or storage service provider, all the relevant requirements to ensure product safety and quality (including product defense) shall be clearly defined in the respective contract or the service provider shall be certified against IFS Logistics or any other GFSI recognized standard covering the respective scope of activity.

4.8.2 If the company has its own storage area and/or own transportation services and would like to include them into the scope of the IFS Certification, then these processes shall be certified according to IFS Logistics (combined audit with IFS Logistics Checklist), unless the customer has accepted other conditions.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.8 LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES

2.4.8.1 How to control parcel service providers if used for transportation of products?

If the company is assigning parcel service providers for the transportation of products, it shall be ensured that the integrity and safety of the product is not compromised during the whole distance and that general terms and conditions of the parcel service provider are respected (e.g. no temperature controlled products).

The company shall conduct a risk assessment and implement controls based on a “worst case scenario”.

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ANNEX 1: Glossary/List of Definitions

Product safety culture

Shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behaviour toward product safety in, across and throughout an organization.

Elements of product safety culture are those elements of the product safety management which the senior management of a company may use to drive the product safety culture within the company. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Communication about product safety policies and responsibilities
- Training
- Employee feedback on product safety related issues
- Performance measurement

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY/LIST OF DEFINITIONS

2.ANNEX1.1 Minimum elements to be covered within product safety culture

The definition for product safety culture has been adapted as follows:

Shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behavior toward product safety in, across and throughout an organization.

Elements of product safety culture are those elements of the product safety management, which the senior management of a company may use to drive the product safety culture within the company.

These shall include as a minimum:

- Communication about product safety policies and responsibilities,
- Training,
- Employee feedback on product safety related issues,
- Performance measurement.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY/LIST OF DEFINITIONS

2.ANNEX1.2 New definition about claim

Claim: Any message or representation, including pictorial, graphic or symbolic representation, in any form (product label, packaging, advertisement, specifications, product inserts), which states, suggests or implies that the product has particular characteristic(s) or effect(s) that is/are not inherent to the product and/or is not generally present in similar products.

The following list of examples of the particular characteristic(s) and/or effects doesn't claim to be exhaustive :

- nature or composition (e.g. organic, "natural", "free from", "source of", "reduced", etc.),
- standards of identity for products (e.g. meat products, specific labels, etc.),
- origin or provenance (e.g. "made in ...", "product of ...", PDO/PGI etc.),
- methods of production/processing (e.g. fairtrade, religious claims, etc.),
- specific properties, structure and/or function related to a risk reduction for customers and/or consumers (e.g., related to prevent or reduce the risk of health diseases, prevent the contamination by spoilage or pathogen microorganisms, etc.)
- specific properties, benefits and/or effects for customers and/or consumers due to the usage of the product (e.g., anti-aging effect in cosmetics, extend shelf life of food in packaging, improving or modifying a physiological function or biological activity associated with health in food, etc.)

Claims linked to the product can be declared (by the legally responsible for the product) only if:

- Evidential support is available to demonstrate their truthfulness, honesty, fairness and the legal compliance.
- Are approved to be used by the relevant authority, when applicable.
- Clear and understandable information is provided to the users (customer, consumer and/or end-user, as applicable) about the particular characteristic(s) and/or effect(s) declared in regard to the intended use of the product.

Note: In case of IFS Audits, claims shall not be used in the description of the audit scope on the IFS Certificate, in order to avoid confusion on the scope of the IFS Audit and Certification.

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PART 3 – Requirements for Accreditation Bodies, Certification Bodies and Auditors – IFS Accreditation and Certification Process

3.2 Requirements for the certification bodies

3.2.3 Certification decision

The person in charge of assessing the audit reports (reviewer) shall be either an approved IFS Food or HPC or IFS PACsecure Auditor, Trainer or Reviewer. It is mandatory for this person to have participated successfully in the IFS Broker Auditor Training.

The reviewer shall have the food or HPC or packaging material knowledge related to the core business of the broker whose report is assessed (respectively IFS Broker Audits for food products or HPC products or packaging materials).

The review shall be documented.

The certification decision can only be made following the recommendation of a competent person or a certification committee. Furthermore, decision can only be made by a person different from the person who performed the audit.

The competent person for the certification decision or at least one of the members of the certification committee shall be respectively an IFS Food or HPC or IFS PACsecure Auditor, Trainer or Reviewer. It is mandatory for this person to have participated successfully in the IFS Broker Auditor Training.

The final certification decision shall be made by the certification body and shall not be subcontracted.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 2.3 CERTIFICATION DECISION

3.2.3.1 Does the IFS Broker Reviewer also need to be trained on the IFS Broker version 3.2 or is any IFS Broker Training sufficient?

The reviewer shall have been successfully trained on the current version of the standard (i.e. IFS Broker version 3.2) conducted on behalf of IFS.

Reviewers approved for IFS Broker version 3.1 will automatically be approved for the new version 3.2 in the IFS Database as soon as they are approved for IFS Food version 8, IFS PACsecure version 3 or HPC version 3. No additional conversion is required as the only change in content is the scoring system covered by the main product standards as well as the introduction of the star status.

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3.3 Requirements for IFS Broker Auditors

3.3.1 Requirements for IFS Broker Auditors

IFS Broker Auditor Qualification always relies on IFS Food or IFS PACsecure or IFS HPC Auditor Approval.

To perform audits according to IFS Broker version 3.2, the auditor shall be an approved IFS Food, IFS HPC or IFS PACsecure Auditor (with additional participation in an IFS Broker Auditor Training (food or non-food)). The required qualification is different, depending on the audited productscope(s) of IFS Broker version 3.2 (see table 1).

Table N° 1: Minimum required auditor qualification for the IFS Broker Product Scopes

Scope of trading		Minimum required auditor qualification
Food	Food from animal origin	IFS Food Approval for at least one food related animal product scope (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (food)
	Food from non animal origin	IFS Food Approval for at least one food related non-animal product scopes (1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (food)
	food from no animal origin and food from animal origin	IFS Food Approval for at least one food related animal product scope (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (food)
Non-Food	Household and Personal Care products	IFS HPC Approval for at least one of the HPC related product scopes (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (non-food)
	Packaging products	IFS PACsecure Approval for at least one of the packaging related product scopes (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (non-food) OR IFS HPC Approval (for HPC related product scope 2.3) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (non-food)
Food and Non-Food	several food and non-food product scopes	IFS Food Approval for at least one food related animal product scope (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4) + IFS Broker Auditor Training (food)

Note: see also ANNEX 5, Part 1 for the correspondence between product scope numbers and names.

Note: The certification body shall ensure that the auditor has the right competences and product knowledge, through education, work experience or training, to be able to thoroughly assess all audited product scope.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS BROKER AUDITORS

3.3.1.1 Minimum auditor requirements for auditing the trading of non-food products and food products consisting of non-animal origin only

In case the Broker is trading non-animal containing food products and non-food products, following minimum auditor qualification is required:

- IFS Food Approval for at least one food related non-animal product scopes (1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10) + IFS Broker auditor training (food) on version 3.1/version 3.2.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS BROKER AUDITORS

3.3.1.2 IFS Auditor Conversion Training for Broker version 3.2

Auditors approved for IFS Broker version 3.1 will automatically be approved for the new version 3.2 in the IFS Database as soon as they are approved for IFS Food version 8, IFS PACsecure version 3 or HPC version 3. No additional conversion is required as the only change in content is the scoring system covered by the main product standards as well as the introduction of the star status.

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PART 4 – Reporting, IFS Software and IFS Database

4.1 Reporting

4.1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

After successful completion of the IFS Broker Process, the certification body shall issue a certificate. For the purposes of international recognition, and so as to be understandable, IFS Certificates awarded by the certification body shall include the following information at a minimum:

- the name and address of the certification body, including its logo
- the logo of the accreditation body or its name and registration number; the logo of accreditation body shall be used in conformity with accreditation body's rules
- the name and address of the audited company
- the COID, as defined in the IFS Database
- **GS1 GLN(s), if available**
- if the company is a subsidiary, the name of the company's headquarters
- audit scope (with mandatory minimum description of products which are traded and product scope numbers, as defined in Part 1, ANNEX 5). The audit scope shall always be translated as well into English language.
- **description of product exclusions, if applicable**
- If the trading company additionally has own logistics or processing activities (see Part 1, chapter 4) and the certification status of these activities.
- level achieved (foundation or higher level)
- including audit score in percentage, if required by the customer or by the audited company
- date of audit (if applicable, last day of audit)
- date of follow-up audit, if relevant
- **next audit time period (renewal audit), specify if unannounced**
- certificate issue date

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// 4.1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

After successful completion of the IFS Broker process, the certification body shall issue a certificate. For the purposes of international recognition, and so as to be understandable, IFS Certificates awarded by the certification body shall include the following information at a minimum:

- the name and address of the certification body, including its logo
- the logo of the accreditation body or its name and registration number; the logo of accreditation body shall be used in conformity with accreditation body's rules
- the name and address of the audited company
- the COID, as defined in the IFS Database
- **GS1 GLN(s), if available**
- if the company is a subsidiary, the name of the company's headquarters
- audit scope (with mandatory minimum description of products which are traded and product scope numbers, as defined in Part 1, ANNEX 5). The audit scope shall always be translated as well into English language.
- **description of product exclusions, if applicable**
- If the trading company additionally has own logistics or processing activities (see Part 1, chapter 4) and the certification status of these activities.
- level achieved (foundation or higher level)
 - including audit score in percentage, if required by the customer or by the audited company
- date of audit (if applicable, last day of audit)
- date of follow-up audit, if relevant
- **next audit time period (renewal audit), specify if unannounced**
- certificate issue date
- certificate expiry date, i.e. twelve (12) months after the date of issue the certificate (the certificate validity date shall remain the same each year as described in the audit protocol, Part 1 and Part 5 (for unannounced option)
- place and date of signature
- name and signature of the certification body's person(s) responsible for the certification decision as described in Part 3 of the standard
- QR code
- IFS Broker Logo

Please note: the software includes a certificate format with the minimum required content, but each IFS ISO/IEC 17065-accredited certification body may use its own layout, providing that it includes these minimum requirements.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 1.5 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS CERTIFICATE (ANNEX 5)

4.1.5.1 Sentence to be written on the announced certificate when the company has not yet decided on an announced or unannounced audit for the following year

What shall be written on the announced certificate in the following case: the CB is about to issue the certificate for the present year's audit, but the company has not decided between an announced or unannounced audit for the following year.

The same sentence used for unannounced certificate templates can be chosen by the CB agreed with the company: "Next audit between XX.XX and XX.XX or unannounced" can be written both on the first page of the audit report and on the certificate.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 1.5 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS CERTIFICATE (ANNEX 5)

4.1.5.2 A) How is the COID managed for companies in some specific cases?

In the case of multi-legal entity sites:

The following shall apply to multiple legal entities at one physical location with the same scope:

- one audit,
- different COIDs,
- duplication of certificate and report.

The COIDs shall be mentioned in the company profile of each audit report and linked in the IFS Database (visible for CBs only).

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 1.5 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS CERTIFICATE (ANNEX 5)

4.1.5.2 B) When shall a new COID be created?

A new COID shall be created if a company **changes its legal entity** and under the prerequisite that the new legal entity **has no contract** with the prior regulating data protection issues.

The certification history is invisible, but the old COID is provided. The access rights to the report, action plan and audit comparison are not transferred. It is recommended that the action plan of the prior audit is checked by the auditor. Especially in case of any product safety and quality management system deviation(s) and/or previous non-conformities.

Under the **prerequisite** that the new legal entity is **not in conflict with data protection rights**, the COID shall not be changed. In this case the certification body shall update the information in the IFS Database.

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// 4.1.5.2 B) When shall a new COID be created?

	New address	New legal entity	
	no new COID	not taking over rights* = new COID not linked	taking over rights* ≠ no new COID
New audit?	Certification body evaluates the situation.	Certification body evaluates the situation.	Certification body evaluates the situation.
Certification history	Remains unchanged	Is invisible, but the old COID is provided in the report.	Remains unchanged
First audit after change	According to the standard	First initial audit	According to standard
Further information	The certification body changes the information in the IFS Database, updates the information in the AXP file and on the certificate (to be sent to CS).	It's recommended that the action plan of the current site is checked by the auditor. Especially in case of any food safety and quality management system deviation(s) and/or previous non-conformities.	The certification body changes the information in the IFS Database, updates the information in the AXP file and on the certificate (to be sent to CS).

**The Regulation on the protection of undisclosed know-how and undisclosed information is valid in the European Union. In other parts of the world different legislation may apply.*

Note: If a CB creates by mistake a new COID for a company with an already existing COID, they shall contact IFS Customer Support.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 1.5 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS CERTIFICATE (ANNEX 5)

4.1.5.3 Clarification about the headquarter/legal entity information on the certificate

The headquarter/legal entity including its address shall be written on the IFS Certificate and indicated as such in case one of the below is applicable :

- The headquarter/legal entity is responsible for certain central management system elements and is audited for that, being part of the IFS Multi-location Approach.
- The headquarter/legal entity is not responsible for certain central management system elements but according to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm is the legal responsible „client“ for the audit(s) of the processing site(s) and is having a contract with the certification body.

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PART 5 – Audit protocol for unannounced audits

5.1 Audit planning

5.1.1 Timeframe for registration for an unannounced audit

To get registered for an unannounced audit, the company shall notify its certification body at latest **four (4) weeks** before the start of audit time window. This applies both to companies keeping the same certification body and those changing certification body. The registration date shall be stated in the contract between the certification body and the company.

As the date of the audit shall not be made known to the company, the expected date shall not be inserted by the certification body into the diary function of the IFS Database. However, the certification body shall tick the box “Unannounced audit” in the IFS Database. When the audit has been performed, the certification body shall provide the audit dates in the portal, at latest two (2) working days after the first audit day. This will ensure that the portal users are informed that the audit has taken place and that the certification process of this site is on-going.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 5 – 1.1 TIMEFRAME FOR REGISTRATION FOR AN UNANNOUNCED AUDIT

5.1.1.1 Unannounced audit registration

For initial audits (also in case of seasonal activities), the certificate validity is calculated from the last day of the actual audit date within the chosen time frame.

For renewal audits, the time window is calculated as follows: [-16 weeks before audit due date; + two (2) weeks after audit due date]. The timeframe will be the same for all years.

An unannounced audit registration will be deactivated in the IFS Database if nothing has been uploaded within three (3) months of the last possible day of the audit time window, even if a calendar entry has been made. In case of no calendar entry, the registration is directly deactivated after the last possible day of the audit.

In case something is to be uploaded after this day, this can be done by IFS only and would come with associated costs. The certification body shall contact IFS Customer Support in such a case.

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5.1.2 Time window for performing the audit

The time in which the certification body shall perform the unannounced audit is [-16 weeks; + 2 weeks] of the audit due date. In case of audits to be conducted over more than one day, the audit shall be performed on consecutive days.

Example:

Initial IFS Broker Audit (announced): 1 November 2024

Renewal IFS Broker Audit 1 (announced): 25 October 2025 (between 6 September 2025 and 15 November 2025, based on audit due date: 1 November, following IFS Protocol for announced audits)

Renewal IFS Broker Audit 2 (unannounced): between 12 July 2026 and 15 November 2026, based on audit due date 1 November, following IFS Protocol for unannounced audits

Note: if the audit is scheduled by the certification body outside the defined time window, the audit will not be a valid IFS Broker Unannounced Audit and will be processed as an announced audit.

Blackout period

When registering for an unannounced audit with its certification body, the site has the opportunity to identify maximum ten (10) operational days, plus not operating periods, when the office is not available for the audit.

These dates shall be notified to the certification body at the same time as the company is registered for the unannounced audit by its certification body and reasons shall be provided.

Note: the company may only split the ten (10) operational days into a maximum of three (3) periods (e.g. 2nd party supplier audit schedule, holiday times etc.).

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 5 – 1.2 TIME WINDOW FOR PERFORMING THE AUDIT

5.1.2.1 Clarification about the time window performing the audit

For renewal audits, the time window is calculated as follows [-16 weeks before audit due date; + two (2) weeks after audit due date]. The timeframe will be the same for all years.

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5.4 **Conditions for issuing audit report and certificate**

The same requirements as in Part 1, chapter 5.8 apply for issuing the certificate.

The option “Unannounced” shall be clearly stated on the IFS certificate.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 5 – 4 CONDITIONS FOR ISSUING AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

5.4.1 How to handle the follow-up audit in the unannounced certification process?

In cases where a major non-conformity and total score $\geq 75\%$ has been rated during an unannounced audit, the follow-up audit shall be announced.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 5 – 4 CONDITIONS FOR ISSUING AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

5.4.2 **Can a certification body perform an unannounced audit after a failed audit?**

An unannounced audit can follow a failed audit in case the site's customer requires an unannounced audit.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

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