IFS Broker

IFS Broker version 3.2 Doctrine

VERSION 2

JUNE 2025

ENGLISH

Foreword

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

All changes are described in the content overview on the first pages. If no changes are marked, it means the content was already in the previous doctrine version. 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.

The numbering of the individual topics in the table of content is made up of the standard section and the chapter (e.g. 1-2.2 means part 1 of the Standard, chapter 2.2). The application of newly introduced or adapted rules is always two (2) months after the publication of the relevant version, if not specified otherwise. In case of a new IFS Standard version, the rules apply from the moment the new version is applicable.

Certification bodies shall ensure that relevant certification body personnel are trained internally on the introduced changes according to their function within the certification body before the rules come into force.

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. Sending an email or a presen-tation in an email is not considered as a training.

IFS Broker

CONTENT

IFS Broker

CONTENT

CONTENT

CONTENT

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 - 2.1 THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEAUTURED STANDARDS AND IFS BROKER STANDARD

PART 1 – Audit Protocol

1-2.1 The history of the International Featured Standards and IFS Broker Standard

I) Clarification about the applicability of the IFS Broker 3.2 version

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 - 2.1 THE HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEAUTURED STANDARDS AND IFS BROKER STANDARD

1-2.1 The history of the International Featured Standards and IFS Broker Standard

II) Clarification on 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 2.2 EXTRAORDINARY INFORMATION TO THE CERTIFICATION BODY BY THE CERTIFIED COMPANY

1-2 Introduction

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

During an IFS Broker version 3.2 audit, the site is audited to the requirements of IFS Broker version 3.2.

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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 2.2 EXTRAORDINARY INFORMATION TO THE CERTIFICATION BODY BY THE CERTIFIED COMPANY

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, changes in or¬ganisation and management, office location change)

The following information shall be communicated within three (3) working days.

- Any product recall/withdrawal where the broker company is legally responsible for the 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3 TYPES OF AUDIT

1-3 Types of audit

Clarification on the Remote Auditing Protocol

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

During a remote audit, 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 an 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 during a remote audit (including additional auditor qualification as laid down in chapter 2.1.3 of that document).

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3 TYPES OF AUDIT

1-3.2 Follow-up audit

Situations where it is acceptable to perform a follow-up audit in less than six (6) weeks

The certification body can decide to carry out a follow-up audit earlier than six (6) weeks and as early as two (2) weeks after the last day of the main audit if it is based on a risk assessment and a proper documented justification. This justification shall be available upon request.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3 TYPES OF AUDIT

1-3.4 Extension audit

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).

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.1 COVERAGE OF THIS STANDARD

1-4.1 Coverage of this Standard

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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.2 SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1-4.2 Scope of the audit

I) 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.

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.2 SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1-4.2 Scope of the audit

II) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4.3 BROKER WITH LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES

1-4.3 Broker with logistics activities

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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

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

1-5.2 Certification body selection – contractual agreements

I) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

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

1-5.2 Certification body selection – contractual agreements

II) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

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

1-5.2 Certification body selection – contractual agreements

III) Clarification about the use of a technical expert within an audit team

In exceptional cases, e.g. when a certification body does not have direct access to an IFS Broker Auditor with a qualification in the scope required or cannot sign a short term

contract with another certification body to access their auditors, IFS allows the following exception. Audits may be carried out by a team consisting of:

- an approved IFS Broker Auditor, and
- a technical expert.

This exception is in general only valid in all countries outside of Europe until further notification. It is also valid for HPC/PACsecure in European countries. The technical expert shall meet the following criteria:

- Have a contract with the certification body for which the audit is to be undertaken. The contract shall include clauses to ensure confidentiality and prevent conflicts of interest.
- Meet the criteria for work experience laid down in the IFS Food/HPC/PACsecure Auditor qualification requirements (product and technology scopes for IFS Food version/IFS HPC version/IFS PACsecure).
- Have completed a training course in HACCP or risk assessment, as defined in the IFS Food/HPC/PACsecure Auditor requirements or have demonstrable competence in these areas.
- Have received background training on IFS Broker from the certification body.

The certification body shall also ensure the following requirements are met:

- Maintain evidence of the experience and the qualifications justifying the person's status as a technical expert. This shall be made available to the IFS Offices upon request.
- The role of the technical expert within the audit team shall be clearly defined and the qualified IFS Broker Auditor shall be considered as the team leader. The technical expert must be accompanied during the whole audit by the IFS Broker Lead Auditor.
- The technical expert shall appear on the IFS Broker Audit Report in the audit overview.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 DURATION OF AN AUDIT

1-5.3 Duration of an audit

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. the time for generating an audit report is typically an additional 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 the audit team.

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

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

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

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

1-5.4 Drawing up an audit time schedule

I) Clarification about issuing the action plan and report available upon request

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 the ISO/IEC 17065 norm, the auditor may only issue a provisional assessment of the 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

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

1-5.4 Drawing up an audit time schedule

II) Clarification on the 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 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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.8 SCORING AND CONDITIONS FOR ISSUING AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

1-5.8 Scoring and conditions for issuing audit report and certificate

Situations when an audit is considered cancelled

An audit shall be considered cancelled if the audit is stopped before the IFS Audit Checklist is completed.

In case of cancellation, the following rule shall apply:

- Withdrawal of the current certificate (within two (2) working days)
- No new certificate is issued
- The audit does not count towards the "one (1) in every three (3) audits shall be unannounced" rule
- The audit does not count towards the "maximum three (3) consecutive IFS audits by the same auditor" rule
- A new initial audit may be performed after a minimum of six (6) weeks

The report shall be completed (up until the point the audit took place and was stopped), reviewed and uploaded to the IFS Database. In case of deviation(s) and/or non-conformities scored in the report, it shall be reviewed by the auditor before the next audit, together with the last certification audit report.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

1

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

1-5.8.4 Specific management of the audit process in case of multi-location companies

How is a situation managed where a deviation has been identified during the central managing site audit

- Deviations identified during the head office/central management audit cannot be partly solved in the audit reports of each site. Deviations can be downgraded, for example, to a non-conformity, but neither fixed nor improved to a better scoring
- If a non-conformity has been raised during the audit of the head office/central management, all audited sites are also affected and the certificates of these sites shall be suspended. Only after a positive follow-up audit of the head office/central management, can the suspension of the certificates of these sites be lifted. Depending on the type of non-conformity which has been issued in the head office/central management, a new audit of the sites may also be necessary.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6 AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1-6 Awarding the certificate

Information on the certificate

The percentage of the result shall always be published on the certificate.

Erratum:
~~**Note:** the final audit score, in percentage, can also be published on the certificate, if required by customer and/or audited company.~~

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1 DEADLINES FOR AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1-6.1 Deadlines for awarding certificate

I) 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 the audit shall be used to calculate the time window –8 weeks/+2 weeks.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1 DEADLINES FOR AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1-6.1 Deadlines for awarding certificate

II) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

PART 2 – List of audit requirements

2-4.4 Purchasing

I) What is expected to be provided by the auditee to fulfil the requirement 4.4.4 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

2-4.4 Purchasing

II) Clarification about requirement 4.4.7 - 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.4 PURCHASING

2-4.4 Purchasing

III) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

2

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

2-4.6 Traceability (including GMOs and allergens)

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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 4.8 LOGISTICS ACTIVITIES

2-4.8 Logistics activities

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".

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

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

2-Annex 1 ANNEX1 Glossary/list of definitions

I) 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 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 shall include as a minimum:

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

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

2-Annex 1 ANNEX1 Glossary/list of definitions

II) Definition of Claims

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: Claims shall not be used in the description of the audit scope on the IFS Broker Certificate.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS (FOR ACCREDITATION BODIES)

PART 3 – Requirements for accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors - IFS Accreditation and Certification process

3-1 Requirements for the accreditation bodies

3-1.1 General requirements

Clarification in case of a suspension or withdrawal of a certification body's accreditation

Accreditation bodies shall inform IFS if a certification body has its accreditation suspended or withdrawn in relation to an IFS Standard.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 2 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CERTIFICATION BODIES

3-2 Requirements for the Certification Bodies

Clarification about training requirements for auditors and reviewers

All auditors and reviewers shall be trained on the requirements of IAF MD4 (e.g. IFS Broker Remote e-learning) and ISO / IEC 17065 with ISO / TS 22003.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – CERTIFICATION DECISION

3-2 Requirements for the Certification Bodies

3-2.3 Certification decision

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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS BROKER AUDITORS

3-3.1 Requirements for IFS Broker Auditors

I) 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, the following minimum auditor qualification is required:

- IFS Food approval for at least one food related non-animal product scope (1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10) + IFS Broker Auditor approval.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS BROKER AUDITORS

3-3.1 Requirements for IFS Broker auditors

II) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR IFS BROKER AUDITORS

3-3.1 Requirements for IFS Broker Auditors

III) Requirements for IFS Broker Auditors and IFS Broker Auditor Training

The IFS Broker Auditor qualification always relies on IFS Food or IFS PACsecure or IFS HPC Auditor approval.

Since the auditor approval for IFS Broker is looked upon as a standard extension, the approved IFS Food/HPC/ PACsecure Auditor shall fulfil the following requirements:

- The auditor shall participate in the IFS Broker Auditor Training (food or non-food). The one-day training is provided by IFS.
- After having successfully completed the training course, the auditor shall take part in two (2) full IFS Broker Audits with active participation as a trainee under the supervision and responsibility of an approved IFS Broker Auditor. Remote broker audits as well as combined IFS Logistics/Broker Audits are accepted for trainee audits.
- The auditor shall be signed off during their first IFS Broker Audit as lead auditor under the observation of the fully qualified witness auditor.

This audit shall be:

- performed in a company where the audit scope matches the scope the auditor is going to be approved for
- witnessed by an IFS Witness Auditor who is approved for the full scope of the audit
- performed during an on-site IFS Broker Audit

Note: In case of a combined IFS Logistics/Broker sign off witness audit, the lead auditor needs to be either approved for IFS Logistics or be signed off for both Standards.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

3

The report of the sign-off audit shall be documented in the template provided by IFS.

Once the IFS Witness Audit Report of the successfully performed sign-off audit has been approved by IFS, the auditor will be approved for IFS Broker in the IFS Database and a personal IFS Auditor Certificate will be issued for the auditor.

Starting from the day of activation, the auditors are allowed to perform IFS Broker Audits for the product scopes they have been approved for by IFS Offices. The certificate validity starts from the date of activation in the IFS Database and relies on the IFS Food Auditor, IFS PACsecure or IFS HPC Auditor approval.

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 approval**
	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 approval**
	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 approval**
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 approval**
	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) + **IFS Broker Auditor approval**
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 approval**

In case the auditor did not fulfil the requirements for maintenance of IFS Broker qualification, the auditor needs to be re-approved by a successfully passed sign-off witness audit performed during a full IFS Broker Audit.

This clarification applies from the date of publication of this document.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

4

CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 1 AUDIT REPORT : AUDIT OVERVIEW (ANNEX 1)

PART 4 – Reporting, IFS Software and IFS Database

4-1.1 IFS Audit Report: Audit overview (ANNEX 1)

Which information in the report shall be translated into English?

The following information of the report shall be translated into English:

- Company profile (company data + audit data)
- Audit scope
- Partly outsourced processes
- Exclusions
- Overall summary of compulsory information
- Deviations and non-conformities

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

4

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

4-1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

I) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

4

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

4-1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

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

In the case of a multi-legal entity site:

- at one physical location with the same scope:
  - one audit,
  - separate COIDs, duplication of certificate and report.

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

- at one physical location with different scopes:
  - multiple audits,
  - separate COIDs,
  - separate reports and certificates.

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

The audit duration shall be calculated separately for each COID.

All audits shall be performed by one certification body.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

In the case of multi-location sites:

- with the same scope:
  - one audit,
  - separate COIDs,
  - duplication of certificate and report.

The COIDs shall be mentioned in the audit overview of each audit report and linked.

Note: If any certification related activities (e.g. sales to other markets, management of customer contract, specifications, etc.) are conducted at a separate location, each COID must undergo its own individual audit.

- with different scopes:
  - multiple audits,
  - separate COIDs,
  - separate reports and certificates.

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

4

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

4-1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

III) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

	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	It's recommended that the action plan of the current site is checked by the auditor. Especially in case of any product 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

4

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

4-1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

IV) 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.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

4

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

4-1.5 Minimum requirements for IFS Certificate (ANNEX 5)

V) Clarification on the definitions of dates on the certificate

The certificate issue date is the original date on which the certificate was first issued.

The date and place, called "Signature date" is the most recent date the certificate was updated due to a significant change, such as in case of an extension audit or a change in the scope. Corrections, such as typographical errors shall not affect the signature date.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

4

CLARIFICATION ON PART 4 – 3 THE IFS DATABASE (WWW.IFS-CERTIFICATION.COM)

4-3 The IFS DATABASE

Information to be added in the extraordinary notifications form

After receiving the information from the broker company, the certification body shall:

- Fill out the relevant extraordinary information form provided in the IFS Database in English and send it back to IFS Management GmbH within three (3) working days of receiving it from the broker company

The following information shall be added to the description:

- Company (COID)
- COID of the supplier of the broker company if the supplier is IFS certified.
- Product;
- Affected brands and/or private labels;
- Date of recall;
- Involved batches;
- Reason for the recall, incident.

It is the certification body's responsibility to investigate each situation.

After ten (10) working days of the initial receipt of information in the IFS Database, the CB shall complete the notification with:

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

5

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

PART 5 – Audit protocol for unannounced audits

5-1 Audit planning

5-1.1 Timeframe for registration for an unannounced audit

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: [–sixteen (16) weeks before audit due date; + two (2) weeks after audit due date]. The timeframe will be the same for all years.

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.

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 window.

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 database, at latest, two (2) working days after the first audit day. This will ensure that the database users are informed that the audit has taken place and that the certification process is ongoing.

Note: In case the process is not followed accordingly, the certification body shall contact IFS Customer Support. It has to be considered that associated costs may apply.

ALL CLARIFICATIONS >

5

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

5-1.2 Time window for performing the audit

Clarification about the time window performing the audit

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

5

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

5-4 Conditions for issuing audit report and certificate

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

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

ALL CLARIFICATIONS ›

5

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

5-4 Conditions for issuing audit report and certificate

II) 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 ›

Contact details of the IFS Offices

GERMANY
IFS Office Berlin
Am Weidendamm 1A
DE - 10117 Berlin
Phone: +49 (0)30726105374
Email: info@ifs-certification.com

ITALY
IFS Office Milan
Federdistribuzione
Via Albricci 8
IT - 20122 Milan
Phone: +39 0289075150
Email: ifs-milano@ifs-certification.com

POLAND | CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE
IFS Representative CEE &
CEE Market Development Manager Agnieszka Wryk
IFS Representative CEE Marek Marzec
ul. Serwituty 25
PL - 02-233 Warsaw
Phone: +48 451136888
Email: ifs-poland@ifs-certification.com

CZECH REPUBLIC
IFS Representative Miroslav Šuška
Phone: +420 603893590
Email: msuska@qualifood.cz

BRAZIL
IFS Office Brazil
Rua Antônio João 800
BR - 79200-000 Aquidauana / MS Brazil
Phone: +55 67981514560
Email: cnowak@ifs-certification.com

NORTH AMERICA
IFS Representative Pius Gasser
Phone: +1 4165642865
Email: gasser@ifs-certification.com

FRANCE
IFS Office Paris
14 rue de Bassano
FR - 75016 Paris
Phone: +33 140761723
Email: ifs-paris@ifs-certification.com

SPAIN
IFS Representative Beatriz Torres Carrió
Phone: +34 610306047
Email: torres@ifs-certification.com

HUNGARY
IFS Representative László Győrfi
Phone: +36 301901342
Email: gyorfi@ifs-certification.com

TÜRKIYE
IFS Representative Ezgi Dedebas Ugur
Phone: +90 5459637458
Email: ifs-turkiye@ifs-certification.com

ROMANIA
IFS Representative Ionut Nache
Phone: +40 722517971
Email: ionut.nache@inaq.ro

LATIN AMERICA
IFS Office Chile
Av. Apoquindo 4700, Piso 12,
CL - Las Condes, Santiago
Phone: +56 954516766
Email: chile@ifs-certification.com

ASIA
IFS Office Asia
IQC (Shanghai) Co., Ltd.
Man Po International Business Center Rm 205,
No. 660, Xinhua Road, Changning District,
CN - 200052 Shanghai
Phone: +86 18019989451
Email: china@ifs-certification.com
asia@ifs-certification.com

In case of any queries regarding the interpretation of IFS Standards and Programs, please contact standardmanagement@ifs-certification.com

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The owner of the present document is:

IFS Management GmbH
Am Weidendamm 1 A
10117 Berlin
Germany

Managing Director: Stephan Tromp
AG Charlottenburg
HRB 136333 B
VAT-N°: DE278799213

Bank: Berliner Sparkasse
IBAN number: DE96 1005 0000 0190 0297 65
BIC-/Swift-Code: BE LA DE BE

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