Description of the TÜV NORD CERT
Certification Procedure
BRC – Global Standards

Certification

Contents

Do you have any questions about the certification procedure? We would like to help you.

You can reach us by email at info.tncert@tuev-nord.de or personally from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:00 at 0800 – 2457457.

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The rules and descriptions of service and performance regarding certification according to the BRC Global Standards (hereinafter referred to as BRC) apply alongside our offer. They are valid alongside the general Conditions of Certification.

This performance description covers the following certification systems:

- BRC Food Version 7
- BRC Agents & Broker Version 2
- BRC Packaging Version 5
- BRC Consumer Products Version 4 (General Merchandise / Personal Care & Household)

The standards and other relevant applicable documents, rules and regulations can be found on the BRC website (www.brcparticipate.com)

The auditors are selected by TÜV NORD CERT based on their approval and qualification for the sector in question.

1 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

1.1 Audit preparation

The audit preparation serves to establish if the customer is ready for certification. The audit preparation can be performed by means of a preliminary audit. This is divided into the following stages:

- Review of the documents submitted
  (Manual, procedure and/or HACCP concept if appropriate)
- Performance of a preliminary audit on site

The objective of the preliminary audit is to discover any weaknesses in the documents and in the implementation of the system (in relation to the respective BRC standard). The result of the preliminary audit is explained to the customer, or is documented in a report on request. The scope of the preliminary audit is laid down in cooperation with the customer and is generally conducted by an auditor who does not perform the subsequent certification audit.

1.2 Certification audit

In order to prepare the audit and draw up the audit plan, the client must provide at least the following documents:

- Organisation chart or other documents showing the organisational structure.
- HACCP analysis, but at least the structure of the HACCP analysis and the defined CCPs/CPs
- Overview of the documents or a table of contents of the manual, documented procedures, work instructions.

The auditor can request further documents if necessary.
The detailed document review can take place before the audit itself. However, if there are deviations and nonconformities, these are included and assessed within the audit, i.e. any nonconformities which are identified must be assessed and it is not possible to rework the documents before the certification audit. After this, individual employees are questioned at the workplace and other relevant documents, records, orders, guidelines etc. are examined.

The task of the company during the audit is to demonstrate the application of its documented procedures in practice. For this purpose, all product groups and processes which are to be included

in the scope of the certification must be running at the time of the audit. If this is not the case, additional auditing of these product groups/processes will be necessary at extra cost. Following completion of the audit, the customer is informed of the results of the audit in a final meeting. The auditor can give an estimate regarding the result of the audit in this meeting, but cannot give the final result. The result of the audit is documented in a report, the nonconformities are documented in an action plan.

The audit can always only cover one operating/production site.
Further rules regarding the certification procedure for surveillance audits, re-audits and extension audits, and also announced and unannounced audit options, are described in the respective BRC standards. These are binding and mandatory.

1.3 Recertification

The recertification audit is due on a specific date and depends on the date of the initial (first) certification. The audit can be brought forward by a maximum of 28 days. A postponement of 7 days is possible. If the postponement lasts for more than 7 days, a major non conformity will be raised. This also applies in case of a transfer audit. Where certificates have lapsed for more than 6 months re-entry to the BRC Certification scheme will be considered as a new application and a major non-conformity will not be raised.
The company data is updated before the recertification audit, in order to take changes which have a significant influence on the area of activity or way of working of the customer into consideration.

All the requirements of the BRC standard are completely audited during the surveillance audits, along with the corrective actions from the previous audit. The audit procedure is the same as for the certification audit.

1.4 Issuance, suspension and withdrawal of certificate

1.4.1 Issuance of certificate

The certificate is awarded following positive review of the audit report by the certification body.

The certificate can only be issued if all nonconformities have been closed through provision of corresponding evidence or a re-audit, and if corrective actions which have been verified and accepted by the auditor are provided for all deviations.

The certificate is valid for 1 year or 6 months (depending on the result of the audit), calculated from the day of the first audit plus 6 weeks.

The audit report and the certificate are placed in the BRCDirectory (www.brcdirectory.com) and supplied to the Accreditation Body on request. 300 GBP [1] is charged for registration in the BRC directory for each operating/production site. This fee is paid via TÜV NORD CERT.

[1] This amount is adapted to the current fees of BRC Global Standards and to the current exchange rates.

1.4.2 Certificate suspension and withdrawal

TÜV NORD CERT is the owner of the BRC certificates and can suspend or withdraw them at any time. A certificate can be suspended for a maximum of 6 months. After this, the certificate is either activated or withdrawn, if it has not expired up to that time. The company receives a letter describing the reasons for the suspension and the measures that are necessary, with deadlines, in order to cancel said suspension. During the suspension, the client may not advertise with the BRC certificate. Use of the BRC logo must cease within 48 hours of suspension of the certificate and the status of the operating/production site is changed in the BRC Directory. The operating/production site is no longer included in the public list of certified companies. Information regarding the changed status is sent automatically to the clients of the company for whom the warning function was established. In such circumstances the company shall immediately inform its customers and make them fully aware of the circumstances. Information on the corrective actions to be taken in order to address the non-conformities will also be provided to customers where required.

1.4.3 Audits announced at short notice

If the client becomes aware that a claim could be brought in relation to the safety or legality of a product, he must inform the certification body immediately. From its side, the certification body will instigate suitable steps for assessment of the situation and its impact on the certification and will take suitable action.
If the certification body becomes aware of incidents that could have an impact on the safety or legality of the product, the certification body is entitled to perform announced and also unannounced audits at any time and, depending on its assessment of the situation and its impact, to withdraw the certificates.
In the case of a product recall, the client must inform the certification body within 3 working days after the recall and provide details. From its side, the certification body will take corresponding steps for assessment of the situation and its impact on the certification and take suitable measures. The information regarding the product recall must be sent to the following email address:
TNCert-Food-Recall@tuev-nord.de

2 EXTENSION AUDIT

Rules regarding extension audits are described in the respective standards.

3 TAKEOVER OF CERTIFICATIONS FROM OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES

In general, only certificates from accredited certification bodies can be taken over. Organisations with certificates issued by non-accredited certification bodies must be treated as new clients.
For the purposes of the transfer, the client presents the last audit report, the action plan and the certificate to the auditor before the audit. A transfer can only take place in association with a surveillance audit.

4 CERTIFICATION OF COMPANIES WITH SEVERAL SITES (MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION)

Rules regarding multi-site certifications can be found in the respective standards.

5 MANAGEMENT OF DEVIATIONS AND NONCONFORMITIES

Deviations and nonconformities are documented in an action plan. The client receives the action plan at the latest 24 hours after the audit in order to specify corrective actions.

The client returns the action plan to the auditor within 28 days of receipt describing the corrective actions and providing suitable evidences of implementation. The auditor verifies the corrective actions based on the evidences described or by means of a new visit (re-audit), i.e. a new assessment on site, and notes this in the action plan. If the corrective actions were not verified by the auditor within 28 days or if the corrective actions are insufficient, the audit is assessed as not passed. The final report is only drawn up after a positive evaluation has been made by the auditor.

If a re-audit is carried out, the time is charged for in accordance with the fee schedule. Daily rates quoted in the offer, plus travel times and travel costs are applied.

If the number of nonconformities in the audit is greater than allowed in order to achieve certification, the certificate is immediately withdrawn by the certification company from the BRCDirectory. All users with access to the BRCDirectory which the client has stated in the database to be customers needing to be informed, are automatically informed of the withdrawal of the certificate from the BRCDirectory by email. A complete certification audit has then to be carried out.

In the case of a critical or significant deviation in comparison with the declaration of intent of a fundamental requirement, and also a critical deviation, it is not possible to issue a certificate. In this case, a complete new audit is necessary. If the audit is aborted, this must be documented in the report.

6 OTHER RULES AND REGULATIONS

The client gives his agreement to the following in his company:

- Participation of assessors from the accreditation organisations,
- Audit or visit by BRC in response to complaints or as part of the routine BRC compliance activity announced or unannounced.
- Witness audits by the BRC / certification body or by a specifier where a specifier specific additional audit module is included
- Participation of auditors in training.

Certification status may be affected in the event that access to any parts of the site or process or requests to these points above is unreasonably refused.

Within the framework of the quality assurance measures, the BRC can contact the client directly in order to gain information regarding the certification status of the company, the performance of TÜV NORD CERT or the content of their reports.

BRC offers further audit modules which can be carried out in addition to a BRC audit and which are audited in accordance with the requirements of these modules. The information gained during the audit is handled with equal confidentiality by TÜV NORD CERT.

For the Registration on BRCDirectory for each production site a fee has to be paid to BRC[2]

BRC Food:

- AVM 8 Traded Goods
- AVM 11 Meat Supply Chain Assurance
- AVM 12 AOECS Gluten-Free Foods
- AVM 14 Cult. Excell.: Food Safety Culture
- AVM 15 FSMA
- private AVM ASDA

BRC Packaging:

- AVM 7 Traded goods
- AVM 9 Auditone

The fee will be charged by TÜV NORD CERT.

[2] the fee is listed in the current fees of BRC Global Standards .