

## **BRCGS**

# ET109: Introduction to BRCGS Ethical Trade & Responsible Sourcing Risk Assessment

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### **Introduction**

Consumers need assurance that people involved in providing the goods they buy are treated fairly. In a digital landscape where everything is visible and information is easily found, news travels fast and consumers can access information about anything in seconds.

The emergence of the “conscientious consumer”, together with mounting pressure on limited resources means that you and your customers - global brands and retailers - are compelled to provide assurance that the goods you supply are produced ethically and sourced responsibly. As a supplier, this can have several implications for your business.

### **The Big Risk**

Whether you are a manufacturer, producer, processor, packer or provide services to one of these facilities, you will have workers onsite. They may be employed, sub-contracted or sourced through labour providers, or maybe a mixture of all three. They may be permanent, temporary, seasonal or fixed term and may live locally or may have left their families and travelled from overseas to work for you. Your suppliers also have workers. Whoever they are, all workers have rights and freedoms that must be respected.

But if they are abused, aside from the obvious harm to the individuals involved, as well as your long-term business success, there is also a significant risk to your reputation. It may not just be your business that will be affected too. Your valued customers' reputations and their brands may be damaged and if your products expose them these risks, you are very likely to lose their trust and ultimately, their business.

### **A Simple Solution**

If you are already a BRCGS customer, you are working with our Product Safety standards, invariably at the request of your customers and so it is not surprising that they now want to protect their brands and reputations when it comes to the treatment of workers in their supply chains. However, even if you've never worked

with a BRCGS Product Safety standard before, it's likely that your customers will still be interested in understanding if there are any ethical trade or responsible sourcing risks in your site or its operations.

So the new BRCGS Risk Assessment enables you to demonstrate to your customers and other key stakeholders that you are a business who takes ethical trade and responsible sourcing seriously. It can be bolted-on to your existing BRCGS or other product safety audits and conducted by the same auditor, saving time, resource and optimizing the efficiency of the existing audit process. Alternatively, it can be a stand-alone exercise. In all cases the purpose is the same.

### **What is the Risk Assessment about?**

The Risk Assessment provides a health check of your ethical trade and responsible sourcing performance by checking 5 "Vital Signs" and evaluating indicators that determine how workers are treated, including

- senior management is committed to the principles
- workers are treated fairly and with respect
- they have a safe and healthy working environment
- their human rights and freedoms are respected
- the business they work for behaves with integrity

### **How long does it take?**

It takes 4 hours to conduct by a BRCGS-trained Product Safety auditor.

### **What are the outputs of the Risk Assessment?**

Once completed, your site receives a star rating and report that you can share with your customers on the BRCGS Directory. It's a simple, low-cost and effective way to monitor and improve the health of your ethical trade and responsible sourcing performance and show your customers that you are a responsible business who believes in looking after your workers.

### **To find out more**

Assuring brand reputation and responsible business management is only a click away by [visiting the BRCGS website](#) or by speaking to your certification body to discuss the Risk Assessment in more detail.