

October 2nd, 2020

Dear Partner,

BRCGS Update: Audit options for sites under restrictions

Thank you for your continued support in 2020, a year that has been incredibly tough for our industry. We appreciate all the work that our partners have achieved in one of the most challenging periods in our recent history.

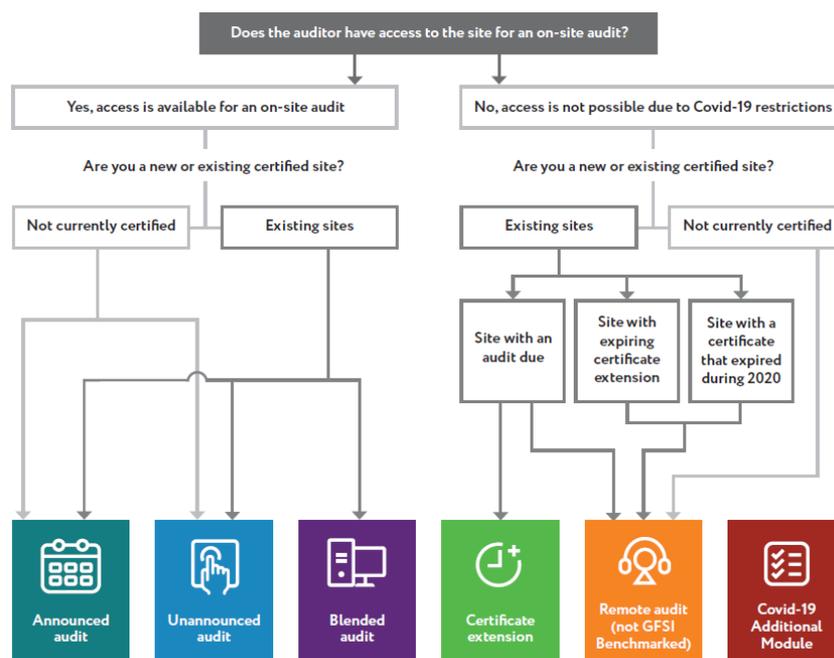
All our businesses have been impacted and BRCGS continues to develop new solutions to provide reassurance that suppliers are still operating to high safety and quality levels. We are still highly committed to protect both the brand and, more importantly, the consumer.

It is vital we come together at this time and be able to keep the supply chain moving whilst maintaining product integrity.

Working closely with GFSI we have developed the simple risk assessment approach to extend a certificate and a blended audit approach using the new GFSI benchmarking requirements on the use of ICT. These are two additional GFSI-benchmarked options that complete our normal announced and unannounced products.

In addition, you may have read about our Covid-19 additional module and we now have a fully accredited remote option. Although both are not GFSI benchmarked, remote assessments are a beneficial tool for periodic review, until such time as a full on-site audit is possible.

We have recently published the range of audit options available to maintain customer confidence in the form of a decision tree. See below:



Just to reinforce the type of audit applicable to a site, we have also established an order of preference with our International Advisory Boards, ranked from 1 to 3, in that order.

1. Announced, Unannounced, Blended Audit – For sites that are available for an onsite audit. Blended is applicable for existing sites only. **GFSI benchmarked**
2. Certificate Extension (existing sites only) – For sites where access is not possible due to Covid-19 restrictions and an audit is due. **GFSI benchmarked**
3. Remote audit – For sites with an expiring certificate extension or expired during 2020. This would be determined by the customer/brand and there may be an expectation that a full onsite audit would be carried out during the following 12 months. **Fully accredited**

I stress that we must push for Option1 in all cases and then review the choices as indicated.

After discussing all options with our International Advisory Boards and other brands who use BRCGS, there was an acceptance that in cases where a site cannot have a physical audit (as proven by the delivery partner) and their extended certificate is about to expire, then a remote audit will be accepted. We recommend that an auditor with prior knowledge of the site would be best placed to conduct such an audit.

Please find a list of just some of the brands that support this initiative and, in principle, will accept a BRCGS remote audit for sites still compromised.



BRCGS have created and communicated a series of supporting collateral to help our partners and there are several key reference documents to support you to gear up to deliver these audit solutions. All can be found on the myBRCGS portal.

BRCGS072 Certificate extension for audits impacted by Covid-19

BRCGS075 Certificate extension report template

BRCGS078 Position statement on onsite audits post Covid-19 lockdown. Special allowances for CBs/protocol amendments during pandemic

BRCGS080 Blended audit. Remote audit using ICT blended audits

BRCGS086 Remote certification during pandemic restrictions. Fully remote audit option for use during pandemic when onsite audits are not possible

FAM811 Covid-19 additional module for assessment of Covid-19 related amendments

FAM812 Covid-19 additional module assessment report template

Covid-19 Resource Hub Various articles and supporting documents to support sites through Covid-19 found at www.brcgs.com/resources/covid-19-response

In addition, we have changed several of our protocols to increase auditor capacity. They include new witness audit requirements, virtual auditor training, a change in the consecutive audit rule and the minimum number of audits per auditor, together with an auditor loan scheme.

Please discuss with the BRCGS team how you want to adopt remote audits or manage sites coming out of their extension period. It is critical we all maintain product integrity and safety standards through the continuity of certification.

Once again, thank you for your continued support of BRCGS. If you have any questions, or wish to meet me and my team, then please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mark Proctor
CEO
BRCGS