

BRCGS Agents and Brokers Issue 2

AB212: Audit Duration Calculator

Document Scope:

This document outlines the factors to be used in the calculation of audit duration for companies using the BRCGS Standard for Agents & Brokers Issue 2.

It replaces AB106 the previous audit duration calculator. It is applicable for all audits from 1st October 2019 onwards.

Change log:

Version no.	Date	Description
1	03/09/2019	New document for Issue 2 – replacing AB106. Additional clarity on minimum audit duration and recording duration for additional offices. Product types added for consumer products. New logos added as part of BRCGS rebranding.

1. Introduction

BRCGS have developed this audit duration calculator to provide a transparent and consistent approach to establishing audit duration.

2. Calculation of the audit duration

The Standard (section 6.2 of the audit protocol) states that the minimum audit duration is at least one-man day (i.e. 8 hours) at the company's office facility. Therefore, no audit shall be less than 8 hours without justification. Where justification exists, and the certification body/auditor applies the permitted 30% variation (see below) this will still result in minimum duration of 5.6 hours, which as explained in section 3 (below) is recorded on the audit report as 6 hours.

Calculation of the audit duration is also based on the:

- Number of supplying sites – counted as the number of individual sites supplying products for the agent or broker
- Number of product types traded – for the purposes of the audit duration calculation the list of product types is given in appendix 2 of this document. (This is based on the product categories used within the Standards for Food Safety, Packaging and Consumer Products).
- Number of office locations – the initial calculation assumes that the company is based at a single office. Where the company has additional offices locations included within the scope of the audit additional time will be required (refer to section 2.1)
- Number of additional services included within scope of the assessment – agents and brokers often offer services to customers, which fall within scope of the Standard, for example, arranging product storage, arranging distribution or delivery of product from the manufacturer and/or to the customer, new product development, import or export.

The other factors identified in the Standard (see appendix 1) may influence the calculation but are considered to be less significant. These other factors shall not influence the audit duration by more than 30% from the total calculated audit duration.

Table of audit duration:

	Audit duration based on agent/broker offering 0 – 3 additional services ⁽¹⁾ (in hours)		
	Number of Product Types Traded		
Number of Suppliers	1 - 8	9 - 17	18 - 26
1 - 10	8	8	10
11 - 20	8	10	12
20+	10	12	16

(1) For each additional service offered (i.e. above the 3 services incorporated in the table above) an additional 1 hour should be added.

2.1 Additional office locations

To ensure that a justified and full audit is completed for each office location even when the individual office is not physically visited by the auditor, sufficient time must be spent auditing records, documents, procedures, etc relating specifically to each office. This will require additional time to be added to the duration calculated above:

Each additional office	Minimum 2 - 3 hours
	Further time may be added if required, for example, if the auditor needs to check additional records to confirm operation of the quality systems or to investigate a potential non-conformity

Each additional office requires time to:

- Access to sufficient records and procedures to demonstrate the operation of the systems, and accuracy and completeness of relevant record keeping at the specific office
- Complete at least one vertical audit of a product handled or managed through the specific office location
- Interview relevant staff - the purpose of this interview is to question staff on specifics relating directly to documents, processes or activities already assessed and to obtain clarity on any points raised while auditing the systems (i.e. it is identical to the type of interview that would be completed during a physical audit). It is not intended that the whole audit will be completed during this interview as a substantive amount of the procedures, records and operations will have already been reviewed prior to the interview.

The start and finish times and audit duration are stated on the audit report (refer to section 3) these shall reflect the time at the company to complete the entire audit (i.e. it is not necessary to calculate the percentage of time spent auditing each individual office or to record these separately).

3. Total time calculation

A typical day shall be 8 hours (not including lunch breaks) and shall not exceed 10 hours.

On-site audit duration should be recorded in total man hours (using whole number of hours not parts of hours e.g. record 9 hours not 8.5 hours) giving the time conducting the audit.

The start and finish times each day shall be clearly stated on the audit report and reflect the actual times at the site. These should be agreed as correct between the auditor and the site i.e. the site should sign a record of the start and finish times, for each day of the audit, a copy of which is retained by the certification body. (This may be combined with other audit documentation, for example, by adding the information to the non-conformity record sheet).

Allowance should be made (to deduct time) where audit teams are used and both auditors are present e.g. at the opening and closing meetings. Those personnel not 'auditing independently' should not be included within the total time calculation e.g.:

- Witness auditor
- Trainee auditor
- Technical expert

Where a combination of audits has been undertaken e.g. BRCGS and ISO22000, then a calculation for the total time taken for the BRCGS audit only should be stated. BRCGS expect that additional time is allocated over and above the minimum time for the audit whenever a combination audit is undertaken.

The total hours shall not include any calculation for writing of the final audit report away from site. This is additional time and is typically 4 – 8 man hours.

Appendix 1 – Other factors influencing duration of audit

The other factors identified in the Standard (protocol section 6.2) which may influence the calculation are:

- Number of employees – where the site has a small number of employees such that a single manager operates the complete process, less time is likely to be required than a larger company where an increase in time may be required to allow for discussions with additional employees
- Communication difficulties e.g. language, failure of links to other offices
- The number of non-conformities recorded in the previous audit
- Difficulties experienced during the audit, requiring further investigation
- The quality of the company's preparation e.g. documentation, hazard and risk analysis, quality management systems
- In the event that there is a significant delay in the audit, for example, if in a small company the site representative is needed to compile documents for the vertical audit and the audit cannot continue until this activity is complete, then additional time must be added to ensure that the amount of time actually spent auditing meets the value calculated.

These factors shall not influence the audit duration by more than 30% from the total calculated time.

Appendix 2 – Product Types

The number of different product types has an affect on the audit duration (refer to section 2). For the purposes of audit duration, the different product types are listed below, by Standard. Examples of the products in each category can be found in the specific Standards (i.e. within the Food Safety, Packaging and Consumer Product Standards).

Product Types		
Food Product Types	Packaging Product Types	Consumer Product Types
Raw red meat	Glass	Textiles and textile products
Raw poultry	Paper	Leather and leather products
Raw prepared products (meat and vegetarian)	Metal	Wood
Raw fish products and preparations	Rigid plastics	Paper and paper mix products
Fruit, vegetables and nuts	Flexible plastics	Printing and recording media
Prepared fruit, vegetables and nuts	Other packaging products	Coke, charcoal and refined petroleum products
Dairy and liquid egg	Packaging and printing chemicals	Chemicals and chemical products
Cooked meat/fish products		Gardening products
Raw cured and/or fermented meat and fish		Plastic and rubber products
Ready meals and sandwiches, ready-to-eat desserts		Glass, ceramic and non-metallic mineral products
Low/high acid in cans/glass		Building goods
Beverages		Metal products excluding machinery
Alcoholic drinks and fermented/ brewed products		Machinery and equipment
Bakery		Computers and electronic communications
Dried foods and ingredients		Electrical equipment
Confectionery		Transport equipment, cycles and boats
Cereals and snacks		Furniture
Oils and fats		Games and toys
		Jewellery
		Medical devices
		Party and leisure