Global Standard Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing, Issue 2.1
ET210: Audit Duration Calculator

Document Scope: This document is applicable to audits against the Ethical Trade and Responsible Sourcing Standard.

Change log:

Version no.	Date	Description
1	22/12/2020	First Issue.
2	17/06/2023	Update with the Issue 2.1 of ETRS Standard

1. Background

This document provides a guideline for the audit duration for the blended audit process (Desktop off-site audit and On-site unannounced audit) against the BRCGS Standard for Ethical Trading and Responsible Sourcing, Issue 2.1.

The onsite audit process always has 3 main components and we except sufficient time to be spend in these activities in order to confirm the requirements are met.

- Documentation review of the site's effectiveness of the implementation of its ETRS policies, processes and procedures, how it is monitored by senior management and communicated, including staff training
- Site inspection that reviews key ethical trade aspects of the Standard, including the operational management of labour standards, health and safety, worker welfare and human rights, to gather information for further investigation. The time required is based on the size of the site and includes worker accommodation and rest facilities, as well as all temporary and permanent facilities and all staff,
- Worker interviews and human resources record reviews which are determined by the number of workers onsite and the languages spoken.

There may be other factors that may influence the calculation of audit duration (which are identified in Appendix I) but are considered to be less significant. These factors should not influence the audit duration by more than 30% from the total audit duration calculated.

The time taken to write the audit report and for the review of any corrective actions provided following the audit is NOT included within the audit duration calculator.

2. Calculation of audit duration

The audit duration calculator is based on:

- Total number of workers across all shifts including peak seasonal workers (for example, temporary), vulnerable and migrant workers and sub-contracted workers sourced through third party labour providers

- Size of the manufacturing site (in square metres) - including onsite storage facilities. The conversion from square feet to metres is 10.76 (e.g. 86,000 square feet equals 8,000 square metres).

- Language and the need for interpreters to be used for worker interviews

  You can find the interview programme that appears in the Standard in Appendix 2 of this document, which is based on number of workers on a site.

2.1 Calculation for the Blended Audit Process

Desktop off-site audit announced
In Issue 2.1, The Desktop off-site remote audit is announced and designed to be a "readiness audit", where the audit team assess if a site has the necessary policies, processes and procedures to constitute an ethical trade and responsible sourcing management system.

The certification body will review the information submitted by a site on its application form, together with its self-assessment questionnaire with

accompanying documentation.

The Desktop off-site audit should take no longer than 8 hours (1 day) and not less than 4 hours to complete. Any deviation from one day should be explained in the Desktop off-site audit report.

On-site unannounced audit

In Issue 2.1, the on-site audit is unannounced, taking place in a 28-day audit window. The site is notified of its audit window but will not know the actual date when the audit team will arrive onsite. The on-site audit will include a documentation review of the effectiveness of the site's policies, processes and procedures audited during the desktop audit, a site tour of all facilities where staff work and worker interviews, which are calculated as follows:

| Nº workers | Size of manufacturing site | | | |
	<10k sq. m	10k-25k sq. m	>25k sq. m	>50k sq. m
1 - 100	8	8	9	9
101 - 500	12	12	13	13
501 - 1000	14	14	15	15
1001 - 2000	18	18	19	19
>2000	20	20	21	21

Additional time allocation for sites where worker interviews are conducted through an interpreter:

Nº worker	Additional time (in hours)
1 – 100	2.5
101 – 500	6
501 – 1000	8.5
1001 – 2000	12.5
>2000	14

Any deviation from the calculated audit duration needs to be justified in both audit reports of the blended audit process that are uploaded to the BRCGS Directory.

To maintain certification against ETRS requirements, the site should proceed with the Blended audit process every year.

3. Recording audit duration

A typical audit day should be 8 hours (not including lunch breaks) and should not exceed 10 hours, except where there are exceptional circumstances. Onsite audit duration should be stated in total person hours (using whole numbers e.g. 17 not 16.5), giving the time at the site where the BRCGS audit is conducted.

The start and finish times each day should be clearly stated on the BRCGS audit reports and for onsite audits should reflect the actual times at the site. The auditor should agree the start and finish times with the authorised site representative. The site should sign a record of the start and finish times for each day of the audit and a copy must be retained by the certification body.

Allowance should be made (to deduct time) where audit teams are used and all auditors are present. For example, at the opening and closing meetings. Those personnel not 'auditing independently' should not be included within the total time calculation such as witness or trainee auditors.

The audit duration should not include any calculation for the writing of the BRCGS audit report which is completed away from site. It is additional and typically takes between 4 – 8 hours to finalise.

Appendix 1: Influencing factors

Other factors influencing the duration of the audit may include:

- inclusion of worker accommodation
- need to assess off-site facilities
- a lack of or significant variance on the information provided by the site prior to the audit. For example on the application form, self-assessment questionnaire or documentation requested
- the number of non-conformities recorded in the previous audit – clause 2.5.2 requires the site to complete root cause analysis and preventive recurrence of non-conformities identified at the previous audit. Therefore, many non-conformities at the last audit are likely to require increased time for the auditor to assess.
- difficulties experienced during the audit requiring further investigation
  - quality of site preparation, such as the availability of documentation or workers for interview. First audit (i.e. the site's first ever audit) – it is likely that the auditor will require additional time, for example, during opening and closing meetings.
  - communication difficulties, e.g. language
  - additional storage facilities, locations or head office assessments included within the audit process
  - a separate audit of the central system (head office audit) completed before the manufacturing site audit may reduce the duration calculated for the manufacturing site audit to take account of systems already audited at the central (head) office. However the duration of the head office audit shall be included in the declared audit duration.

Appendix 2: Worker Interviews and Sample Size

Individual worker interviews typically take between 10-15 minutes, with groups taking longer. Both individual and group interviews should include a representative sample of people, departments and worker shift patterns onsite and should include permanent, temporary, vulnerable workers, agency, subcontracted or migrant workers. The audit team should use their discretion and consider industry sector, location and site knowledge when determining the number of workers to interview.

The following table appears in the audit protocol of the Standard (Part III), setting out the expected sample size of individual and group worker interviews which should include all shift patterns, as well as a sample size for the review of files, including time and wage records.

Table 1: Calculation of the total number of worker interviews required

No of workers excluding management	Minimum number of individual interviews (to include all shift patterns)	Minimum number of group interviews (to include all shift patterns)	Total number of workers interviewed	Worker files / time & wage records checked per month
1-100	6 or all workers if less than 5	**1 group of 4**	**10**	**10**
101-500	6	**4 groups of 5**	**26**	**26**
501-1,000	12	**6 groups of 5**	**42**	**42**
1,001-2,000	20	**8 groups of 4**	**52**	**52**
2,000+	22	**8 groups of 5**	**62**	**62**

If a site has more than 2,000 workers, the number of interviews is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances of the facility. The suggested 62 workers are a minimum and it should increase as worker numbers increase.

In addition, for sites with non-employee workers (for example, any worker onsite who is not directly employed by the site, such as agency workers or sub-contractors), the following table appears in Part III of the Standard to provide an illustration of the minimum number who should be interviewed.

Table 2: Calculation of the number of non-employed worker interviews required

Non-employee worker number	Non-employee worker interview sample
1	1
2	2
3-7	3
8-48	4
49-54	5
55-64	6
Increases of 10 workers	Increase by 1 additional non-employee worker
245+	Maximum 25

The workers that participate in the individual or group interviews should be included in the samples of personnel/worker files and records that are checked. Enough additional worker files and records should be sampled to ensure that all types of workers are reviewed.

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