Description of the TÜV NORD CERT Certification Procedure for International Featured Standards **(IFS)**

Zertifizierung

Contents

Do you have any questions about this performance description? We will be pleased to help.

Please contact us via mail to info.tncert@tuev-nord.de or by telephone 0800 245 74 57 (Free-phone from within Germany) or +49 511 9986-1222 from abroad.

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The rules and performance description regarding IFS certification form an integral part of the offer. They are supplementary to the General Conditions of Certification.

The IFS series of standards currently comprises:

- IFS Food Version 6.1
- IFS Logistics Version 2.2
- IFS Broker Version 2
- IFS Wholesale / Cash & Carry Version 2
- IFS HPC Version 2

These standards as well as other applicable documents and rules can be found on the IFS website (www.IFS-certification.com)

The auditors are selected by TÜV NORD CERT based on their authorisation for the sector and their qualifications.

1 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

1.1 Audit preparation

Audit preparation serves to determine the certifiability of the client. This audit preparation can take the form of a preliminary audit. The preliminary audit consists of the following two stages:

- Review of the documents submitted by the client
  (Manual/handbook, possibly procedural and/or HACCP concept)
- Performance of a preliminary audit at the client's site

The purpose of the preliminary audit is to uncover weaknesses in the documents and in the implementation of the system (in relation to the scope of the respective IFS). The findings of the preliminary audit are explained to the client or, upon request, documented in a report. The scope of the preliminary audit is laid down in cooperation with the client and is carried out by an auditor who does not then take part in the subsequent certification audit.

1.2 Certification audit

In order that the certification audit can be prepared and planned, the company shall provide at least the following documents:

- Company organisation chart or other documents which show the organisational structure.
- HACCP analysis, however at the least the structure of the HACCP analysis and the defined CCPs/CPs (possible also for IFS HPC)
- Documentation regarding the Risk Management System for IFS HPC and IFS Cash & Carry multi-site certification
- Overview of the documents or a table of contents of the manual/handbook, documented procedures, work instructions.

If considered necessary, the auditor can request further documents.
The detailed document review can be performed before the certification audit but it will not influence the audit time on site. Any deviations or nonconformities will be included in the overall audit evaluation, i.e. any deviations and nonconformities that are identified must be counted as such in the certification

audit; it is not possible to carry out corrections before the audit. After this, individual employees are questioned at their workstations and applicable documents, records, orders, standards, guidelines etc. are viewed.

The task of the company during the audit is to demonstrate the practical application of its documented procedures. For this purpose, all product groups and processes which are to be included in the scope of the certification must be in the course of production or running at the time of the audit. If this is not the case, it will be necessary to undertake an additional audit of these product groups/processes, which will involve additional time and therefore additional costs for the client. Following the end of the audit, the client is informed of the audit findings in a final meeting. The auditor can submit an estimate of the audit result, but cannot state the result in final form. The findings of the audit are documented in a report; the nonconformities are documented in an action plan. An audit is a procedure based on the principle of random sampling. Therefore nonconformities of weaknesses may still exist which were not expressly mentioned by the auditors in the final meeting or in the audit report.

The audit can only ever cover one operating/production site.
Further rules and arrangements regarding the certification procedure for announced or unannounced surveillance audits or follow-up and extension audits are described in the respective IFS standards. These rules and arrangements are mandatory. Notwithstanding this regulation, companies that have decided to carry out unannounced audits will be registered in the IFS database for unannounced audits in the following year upon completion of the current audit. Companies that no longer wish to participate in the unannounced audit procedure must inform the Certification Body at least 16 weeks before the anniversary of the certification audit.

1.3 Issue of the certificate

The certificate is issued when the certification procedure has been subjected to review by the certification body with positive result.

The certificate can only be issued when correction of all major and KO nonconformities has been confirmed in a follow-up or certification audit and when corrective actions that have been verified and accepted by the auditor have been formulated for all deviations.

The certificate is valid for 1 (one) year. The term of validity is calculated from the day of the first audit plus 8 weeks.

The audit report, action plan and the certificate are registered in the IFS audit portal (www.IFS-certification.com). IFS charges 250 € [1] per site for registration in the audit portal. This amount is invoiced by TÜV NORD CERT and then passed on to IFS. Audit report and Certificate are available to the company as downloads from the IFS Portal.

2 AUDITS ANNOUNCED AT SHORT NOTICE

If the client becomes aware that legal action could be taken with regard to the safety or legality of a product, he shall inform the certification body immediately. For its part, the certification body will instigate suitable steps in order to assess the situation and its impact on the certification, and will take appropriate action.

[1] This amount is continuously updated to correspond to the current fees of IFS Management

If the certification body gains knowledge of incidents which have an impact on the safety or legality of the product, the certification body is entitled to perform announced or unannounced audits at any time, and, following assessment of the situation and its effects, to withdraw the certificate(s).

In the case of a product recall, the client shall inform the certification body at the latest 3 working days after the recall occurs and will describe the details regarding the incident. For its part, the certification body will take suitable steps in order to assess the situation and its impact on the certification and will take appropriate action. The information regarding the product recall must be sent to the following email address:
TNCert-Food-Recall@tuev-nord.de

3 TAKEOVER OF CERTIFICATIONS FROM OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES

Generally speaking, only certificates from accredited certification bodies can be taken over. Organisations with certificates that were issued by non-accredited certification bodies are treated as new clients.
For implementation of the takeover, the client presents the last audit report, action plan and the certificate to the auditor before the audit. Transfer can only take place within the framework of a surveillance audit. Before the surveillance audit, the client shall ensure that TÜV NORD CERT is selected in the IFS audit portal as the responsible certification body.

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

The rules regarding multisite certification are described in the relevant standard.

Multisite certification where a site sampling procedure is used are only possible for IFS Logistics and IFS Wholesale / Cash & Carry. The rules regarding the sampling procedure as described in the relevant standard apply.

5 MANAGEMENT OF DEVIATIONS AND NONCONFORMITIES

Deviations and nonconformities are documented in an action plan. The client receives the action plan within 14 days of the audit in order to lay down corrective actions.

The client sends the action plan with the corrective actions to the Auditor within 14 days of receipt. If the action plan is not presented within the 14 days or if the corrective actions are not sufficient, the audit is assessed as “not passed”. The final report is only drawn up following positive assessment of the actions by the auditor.

If one or several major or KO nonconformities are assigned in the audit, the certificates must be blocked in the IFS audit portal within 48 hours. All users with access to the IFS audit portal which the client has listed in his favourites are informed by the IFS portal regarding the suspension of the current certificate. The information is sent by email and includes an explanation of the nonconformities that have been identified.

If one major nonconformity/nonconformities is present, a follow-up audit is necessary. The rules regarding the follow-up audit are described in the IFS standards. A follow-up audit must always be carried out on site – i.e. at the client’s premises. The Audit Team Leader makes the decision regarding

the scope of the follow-up audit; however, only the requirements of the standard which are affected by the nonconformity are audited. Follow-up audits are charged for according to the time needed, based on the fee sheet. Daily rates plus travel times and costs stated in the offer will be applied.

In the case of > 1 Major and / or K.O. evaluation or ≤ 75% result, in accordance with IFS rules, a completely new audit must be carried out. If the audit is broken off (aborted), this must be stated in the report. However, continuation of the audit is always recommended.

6 INTEGRITY PROGRAM

The company states to agree with and to be aware of the “Integrity Program" of the owners of the IFS certification system. The Integrity Program aims a number of measures to ensure a maximum quality and reliability of the IFS certification system. The resources which can be used are quality assurance activities, complaints treatment system, audits in the company by the owners of the IFS certification system.
After the auditing of the company by TÜV NORD CERT, IFS Management is entitled to carry out so-called Integrity on-site Checks or Integrity Witness Audits at the company at any time in order to disclose and foreclose misusages and breaches of IFS or can be planned by IFS Quality Assurance on a risk based approach.
In general, IFS Management will perform unannounced Integrity on-site Checks. If IFS Management decides that based on the issue to be investigated (e.g. complaints, special topics to be clarified with the need to have certain company’s representative available) an announced Integrity on-site Check is necessary IFS Management will notify the certified company and in certain circumstances the Certification Body 0 – 48 hours prior to the date of the Integrity on-site Check.
The company is obliged to provide IFS Management and the auditor assigned by IFS Management access to his premises. The company is furthermore obliged to support the auditor in the realisation of the control audit wherever he can.
IFS Integrity Witness Audits are IFS audits, whereby a regular IFS certification audit is attended by a witness auditor employed or commissioned by IFS Management. The aim is to examine the work of the auditor in an audit situation by observing the auditor’s method and assessments of the IFS requirements. Integrity Witness Audits may be based on a complaint received by IFS Quality Assurance for an auditor or internal investigations of IFS Quality Assurance.

More information about the integrity program on www.ifs-certification.com