

## NSF CERTIFICATION UK SERVICE PROTOCOL

### For Certification against the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety, Issue 6, July 2011

#### **1. Application.**

All applicants to the NSF Certification UK scheme for this BRC Standard are required to complete the NSF Certification UK BRC Scheme application form for each audit. The application form also asks for an undertaking that the applicant will abide by the NSF Certification UK scheme rules "Certification Scheme Regulations Governing Accredited Certificates which must be adhered to. These can be found via the NSF Certification UK website link:

[http://www.nsf-foodeurope.com/service.asp?service\\_id=certification&subservice\\_id=46](http://www.nsf-foodeurope.com/service.asp?service_id=certification&subservice_id=46)

#### **2. Arranging Assessments Visits**

Assessments are conducted at a mutually convenient date. The audit frequencies and the method of demonstrating correction of non conformities are based on the number and type of non conformities found at the audit. Documentary evidence can be accepted where up to 20 minor or 1 major and up to 10 minor non conformities are found, for higher numbers a revisit, an Enrolment Scheme score or a full re-audit after a period for improvement is required. Audit frequencies are either 6 or 12 months in line with performance. An assessment is typically 2 days but certain factors can necessitate an increase or decrease in the duration of the evaluation. The time required will be assessed based on the information provided in the application form using the BRC audit duration calculation and discussion in line with guidance contained in the BRC Standard. 50% of all audit duration is spent in production areas.

#### **3. Certification Charges and Invoicing**

Assessment charges are calculated after consideration of the size, type and location of the operation. A typical assessment takes 2 days to complete, with a further day for report writing. Travel to and from assessments will be charged at the current mileage rates and will be declared on any quotes. Overnight expenses are charged at cost. All assessment charges are agreed with the client and confirmed in writing. Normally the client is invoiced after completion of the assessment. In addition to the costs for the assessment the BRC make a charge of £125 + VAT for each assessment. This charge will be shown separately on your invoice and is paid directly and in full to the BRC by NSF Certification UK.

#### **4. Cancellation of Assessment Visits**

In the event a client wishes to cancel or postpone an assessment visit, written notification must be sent to NSF Certification UK at least ten working days prior to the date the assessment visit is due. In the event that an assessment visit is cancelled or postponed NSF Certification UK reserves the right to charge the client a cancellation fee as follows:

- ◆ Cancellation/postponement within 10 working days of the assessment date – 50%, within 5 working days 75 % and if on the day of assessment – 100% of the full charge

#### **5. Scope of assessments.**

The scope of the assessment will be defined with the client prior to undertaking the assessment and reconfirmed at the opening meeting. Parts of a site or operation may be excluded from the scope; such exclusions will be clearly defined in the report and certificate. Where a company has several manufacturing sites all of which are operating to a centralised system managed at Head Office, a separate uncertified audit of the HO function may be undertaken. Separate manufacturing units which are part of the same manufacturing process may be audited as part of a single audit and included in the scope and certificate.

## **6. Preparation for the assessment.**

Prior to each assessment the operation should be reviewed in relation to the requirements of the Standard with a view to making any necessary amendments or improvements to the operation and systems. It is the supplier's responsibility to ensure that they are using the most up to date issue of the BRC Standard. It is important that the activities to be certified are in operation at the time of the assessment and this will be discussed when arranging the assessment. If particular operations such as loading occur at night or early in the morning it may be necessary for the assessment to occur at this time.

## **7. Assessment Process**

Assessments will usually be conducted in English or local language, where an auditor is available with the appropriate competency and language. Assessments consist of six elements:

- Opening meeting; inspection of the operations – typically 8 hours; document review including HACCP and hazard and risk analysis and quality management systems; close out of audit trails, verification and further documentation checks; final evaluation of findings by the evaluator in preparation for the closing meeting; closing meeting.

It is expected that at the opening and closing meetings those attending on behalf of the company will be senior managers who have the appropriate authority to ensure that corrective action can be progressed, if non conformances have been identified. The assessor will prepare a copy of the assessment summary and non-conformances, which are left with the company's technical representative on the day or in exceptional circumstances provided within 1 day of the assessment. The decision to award certification has to be taken independently of the auditor following a review of the assessment report and any follow up visit or documentary corrective action evidence and root cause analysis provided. This is undertaken independently by NSF Certification UK Managers.

## **8. Assessment Reports**

After each assessment a full written report is prepared in accordance with the required format dictated by the BRC.

## **9. Corrective Action assessment.**

In order for a certificate to be issued it is necessary for all non conformances to be closed and the appropriate documentary evidence provided to NSF Certification UK to enable this to be verified **within 28 days** of the assessment. Reports, corrective actions and root cause analysis are included in the decision to award a certificate.

## **10. Distribution of Assessment Reports**

The report is despatched to the client usually within 42 days of the assessment date. The person paying for the assessment is regarded as the customer. As such, it is this party that receives the assessment report. Reports are also uploaded to the BRC database and will only be made available to BRC members when permitted by the owner of the report. NSF Certification UK will also retain a copy of the report and the information on which a certification decision is based for a period of 5 years.

## **11. Certificates**

Certificates will be issued to clients who meet the requirements of the standard and in accordance with the requirements of the BRC Certification protocol. The certificate remains the property of NSF Certification UK and is issued subject to the client complying with the Rules Governing Certification.

## **12. Maintaining Certification.**

It is the client's responsibility to maintain certification, except in the case of unannounced audits. The issue of the certificate provides an assurance to customers that NSF Certification UK has assessed the certified site and is satisfied that the requirements of the Standard have been met through the assessment and any corrective actions and that processes are in place to ensure that the Standard is maintained for at least the duration of the certificate. It is important therefore for the integrity of the Standard that in the event that there are substantial changes to the premises or products, these must be notified in writing to NSF Certification UK.

### **13. Complaints and Appeals**

NSF Certification UK operates a documented complaints and appeals procedure as part of the quality system. Complaints and appeals must be made in writing by named person(s) and addressed to the Quality Manager, NSF Certification UK Ltd, Long Hanborough, Oxon, OX29 8SJ.