

FSSC Global Markets Program

Annex 3 to Part 4: Nonconformity grading

1. Introduction

In accordance with the definitions in the Program and as defined below, the CAB is required to establish and maintain criteria as a reference to determine the level of nonconformities as follows:

- a) Critical nonconformity;
- b) Major nonconformity;
- c) Minor nonconformity.

2. Critical nonconformity

- 1) When a critical nonconformity is issued the Conformity statement shall be immediately suspended for a maximum period of three (3) months.
- 2) A follow-up assessment shall be conducted by the CAB within the 3-month timeframe to verify the closure of the critical nonconformity.
- 3) The Conformity statement shall be withdrawn when the critical nonconformity is not effectively solved within the three months' time frame.
- 4) In case of a Conformity assessment the critical nonconformity shall be closed within 28 calendar days by implementing a corrective action (CA) that is verified by the (lead) assessor. If the critical nonconformity is not closed within the 28 calendar day time frame, the full Conformity assessment shall be repeated.

3. Major nonconformity

- 1) When a major nonconformity is issued during an assessment, the client must provide the CAB with objective evidence of an investigation into causal factors and the risks they expose and their proposed corrective action plan (CAP). This shall be provided within 14 days after the assessment.
- 2) The major nonconformity shall be closed within a further 14 days by implementing a corrective action (CA).
- 3) The lead assessor shall review the corrective action plan, challenge it if necessary and determine its effectiveness and approve the CAP and CA through recording his/her name and date of review on the CAP.

Note:

- a) The completion of corrective and actions might take more time depending on the potential severity of the major nonconformity and the amount of work necessary to eliminate the causal factors.
- b) In such cases the corrective action plan shall include any temporary measures or controls necessary to mitigate the risk until the permanent corrective action is implemented.

4. Minor nonconformity

- 1) When a minor nonconformity is issued during an assessment, a proposed corrective action plan is required within 3 months after the assessment.
- 2) Corrective actions shall be completed within 12 months after the assessment.
- 3) The lead assessor shall review the design of the corrective action plan, challenge it and approve it when acceptable.
- 4) Implementation of the corrective plan shall be reviewed, at the latest, at the next scheduled on-site assessment. The lead assessor shall review the corrective action plan and determine its effectiveness of implementation through recording assessor name and date of review on the CAP.

5. Unresolved NCs

A new Conformity assessment is required to be undertaken in cases where nonconformities are not resolved and the Conformity statement not issued within 4 months of the Conformity assessment date.