

FSSC Global Markets Program

Part 3: Requirements for Conformity Assessment Process

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1 Purpose

This document states the audit process requirements relevant to an organization applying for or maintaining Conformity status to be included in the FSSC Global Markets Register of Conforming Organizations.

2 Application process

2.1 Conformity Assessment Body selection

In order to receive a valid Conformity Statement, the applicant organization shall select a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) that is licensed by the Foundation.

The list containing FSSC Global Markets licensed CABs is available on www.fssc22000.com.

2.2 Self-assessment

It is required that the applicant organization conducts a self-assessment against the current version of the Program. The Program documents include a self-evaluation tool available on www.fssc22000.com that may be used for a preliminary self-assessment.

Once the self-assessment has been completed, and observed gaps are addressed, the applicant organization can contact their selected CAB in order to receive an application form and agree on an FSSC Global Markets Program audit contract.

2.3 Application form

The CAB will require completion of an official application form, signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

It is the responsibility of the applicant organization to ensure that adequate and accurate information is shared with the CAB about the details of the applicant organization.

The details shall include at least the following:

- a) The proposed audit scope;
- b) The number of workers in management and production;
- c) Details of shifts;
- d) Number of production lines;
- e) Number of HACCP studies;
- f) Details of other certified management systems (for example ISO 9001);
- g) When applicable: information regarding head office and (central) functions controlled by the head office;
- h) When applicable: details related to a request for a transfer audit from the CAB currently awarding the FSSC Global Markets conformity statement.

2.4 Audit contract

An audit contract shall exist between the organization and the CAB, detailing the scope of the audit process including reporting requirements.

2.5 Annual fee

- 1) The CAB shall charge organizations conforming with the Program requirements an annual fee payable to the Foundation.
- 2) The Foundation shall decide annually on the fee amount.

3 Conformity process

3.1 Preparation

For the initial audit, the applicant organization shall agree mutually convenient date(s) with due consideration given to the preparatory work by the applicant organization required to meet the requirements of the Program.

The applicant organization must prepare carefully for the audit, to have appropriate documentation for the auditor to assess and to have appropriate staff available at all times during the on-site audit.

3.2 Audit process

The audit is always carried out at the production site of the applicant organization. The audit will review if the FSSC Global Markets program Foundation Level or Intermediate Level requirements are fulfilled.

The activities subject to the proposed conformity scopes shall be assessed during the audit.

3.2.1 Foundation Level Conformity statement

The CAB will issue the Conformity statement within 30 calendar days from the date of the Conformity decision. The Conformity statement expires 1 year after the date of the initial Conformity decision.

However, whilst the Conformity statement is issued to the applicant organization, it remains the property of the CAB under the conditions outlined in the contract. The Foundation Level Conformity statement shall contain the exact wording as used in the Conformity statement template (appendix 6 and 7)

3.2.2 Re-audit

When the organization decides to remain at Foundation Level, the annual re-audit must be planned and conducted in due time to enable timely renewal of the Conformity statement before the expiry date.

The purpose of this audit is to confirm the continuing conformity of the food safety system as a whole with all Program requirements.

The audit also includes a review of the food safety system over the period since the previous audit.

The CAB decides on renewal of the Conformity status on the basis of the re-audit which must meet the same requirements as an initial audit.

3.2.3 Intermediate Level Conformity statement

When the organization decides to progress towards FSSC 22000 certification via an Intermediate Level audit, it will inform the CAB before the re-audit. The Intermediate Level audit shall take place before the expiry date of the Basic Level Conformity statement. The CAB will review if the organization meets the Intermediate Level requirements that are additional to the Foundation Level requirements.

When the organization meets the Intermediate Level requirements, the CAB will issue an Intermediate Level Conformity statement within 30 calendar days from the date of the Conformity decision. The Conformity statement expires 1 year after the date of the initial Conformity decision. However, whilst the Conformity statement is issued to the applicant organization, it remains the property of the CAB under the conditions outlined in the contract. The Conformity statement shall contain the exact wording as used in the Intermediate Level Conformity statement template (appendix 7)

After achieving the Intermediate Level conformance level the organization can opt for FSSC 22000 certification. The FSSC 22000 certification process is not covered by this Program but outlined in the FSSC 22000 scheme documents (see www.fssc22000.com).

3.2.4 Logo use

The use of the FSSC Global Markets logo represents achievement of Conformity with the FSSC Global Markets Program requirements.

To maintain its integrity, use of the logo and protection of its copyright is controlled by the Foundation, as follows:

- a) FSSC Global Market conforming organizations are entitled to use the FSSC Global Markets logo;
- b) The FSSC Global Markets logo may be used on the organization’s printed matter, website and other promotional material subject to the following design specifications:

Colour	PMS	CMYK	RGB	#
Green	348 U	82/24/76/8,	33/132/85	17543b
Grey	60% black	0/0/0/60	135/135/135	87888a

- c) Use of the logo in black and white is permitted when all other text and images are in black and white;
- d) In order to avoid any suggestion that the CAB has stated conformance or approved any product, process or service supplied by the conforming organization the FSSC Global Markets logo is not allowed to be used on:
 - 1. A product;
 - 2. Its labelling;
 - 3. Its packaging;
 - 4. In any other manner that implies FSSC Global Markets approves a product, process or service.
- e) For example, mentioning possession of a FSSC Global Markets Conformity statement or making any reference such as for example “Produced in a FSSC Global Markets conforming company” on a product label, packaging, etc. is not allowed.

Please note that the CAB will audit the use of the FSSC Global Markets logo by conforming organizations during every initial and re-audit. Any nonconformity associated with the use of the logo will require the organization to take remedial action to restore conformity with the criteria described here.

4 Significant changes

Once the Conformity statement has been granted, any significant changes that affect the fulfilment of the requirements of the Program must be communicated to the CAB within three working days as stipulated in the audit contract.

4.1 Notification

- a) The organization shall report significant changes to the CAB as stipulated in the audit contract.
- b) Significant changes that could require extension or changes to the Conformity scope and/or other details on the Conformity statement, reflected in the FSSC Global Markets Register of Conforming Organizations, include:
 - i) Legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership;
 - ii) Organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff);
 - iii) Organization name, contact address and site details;
 - iv) Scope of operations and product categories covered by the conforming food safety system;
 - v) Food safety system and/or processes;
 - vi) Any other change that renders the information on the Conformity statement inaccurate.
- c) The organization shall seek the advice of the CAB in cases where there is doubt over the significance of a change.

4.2 CAB review

The CAB reviews the reported changes, decides upon the significance and consequences for conformity with the Program requirements, and comes to a conclusion whether or not additional verification activities are necessary.

The CAB decides also whether or not changes to the Conformity scope shall be granted.

If granted, the current Conformity statement will be superseded by a new Conformity statement using the same expiry date as detailed in the original Conformity statement.

The organization's entry in the FSSC Global Markets Register of Conforming Organizations will be updated accordingly.

5 Serious events

The organization shall inform the CAB about serious events that impact the integrity of the audit and the organization's entry in the FSSC Global Markets Register of Conforming organizations.

5.1 Reporting

- a) The organization shall report serious events to the CAB within three working days of occurrence.
- b) Serious events include:
 - i) Legal proceedings with respect to product safety or legality;
 - ii) Product withdrawal or recall related to food safety or legality;

- iii) Major threats to business continuity such as earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, force majeure, etc.

5.1.1 CAB review

The CAB in turn will take appropriate steps to assess the situation and will take any appropriate action including additional verification activities

These activities may have implications for the status of the conforming organization.

5.2 Public recalls

An organization is always responsible for failures of its food safety system.

5.2.1 Immediate action

Immediately there is evidence that the organization's food safety system has failed to detect and control compromised product:

- a) This product shall be recalled from the market by the organization, and
- b) The organization shall inform the CAB immediately.

5.2.2 Consequences

The CAB shall assess the organization's corrective actions following the recall and determine any consequences or any actions necessary to maintain the Conformity statement.

5.2.3 Reporting

The Foundation shall be informed by the CAB as soon as possible in case of recalls that seriously affect the integrity of the Program and be kept updated of progress at regular intervals.

6 Transition period

In the event of new Program documents, the Board shall give an appropriate transition period for conforming organizations to adapt to the implementation of the new requirements, unless legal regulations stipulate a different transition period.