PROCEDURE FOR

HALAL CERTIFICATION

(GSO 2055-2:2021)

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to eliminate risk to impartiality which may arise at different levels of certification process.

2. SCOPE

This procedure is applicable to eliminate any risk arising from Verger Group's Certification activities, from its relationship or from the relationship of its personnel.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Document
Information and its support medium

Quality Manual
Document stating the integrated management system of an organization.

Procedure
Specified way to perform an activity or a process.

Record
Document stating results achieved or providing evidence of activities performed.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Compliance Coordinator is responsible for:

- Review application form and coordinate with client on required documentation.

Assistant Technical Manager is responsible for:

- Verification of application details and audit report along with technical compliance of the applicant
- Arranging the competent auditor for concern product category.
- Providing final decision on the acceptance or rejection of issuance of certificate.

Auditor is responsible for:

- Conducting audits as per GSO 2055-2 standard for halal certification or applicable scheme.

Islamic Affairs Expert is responsible for:

- Ensure that the audit conducted for halal certification is carried out as per Islamic rules and regulations

QA Manager/Engineer is responsible for:

- Maintaining up to date all the relevant data related to certification.

5. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

APPLICATION

Initially, a filled application form will be submitted by client to VERGER.

In application form (VG-HF-21), clients must fill out following essential details:

1. Certification scope
2. Organization Details
3. Manufacturing details
4. Product details
5. Outsourced Processes
6. Certification Standards
7. Consultancy Disclosure.

APPLICATION REVIEW

The coordinator will conduct a thorough review of the certification application to ensure:

a) The provided information is comprehensive enough to formulate an effective audit plan.

b) All discrepancies or misunderstandings between the certification body and the applicant organization are resolved.

c) The certification body shall have a process to identify when the client's request for certification includes:

- Type of products
- Availability of supporting documentation
- Certification scheme for which the client is seeking certification.

d) The certification body possesses the necessary competence and resources to conduct the certification activities.

e) Consideration is given to the scope of certification requested, the locations of the applicant's operations, the time required for audits, and other factors that may influence the certification process, such as language barriers, safety conditions, and potential conflicts of interest.

After reviewing a certification application, the Coordinator will decide whether to accept or reject it.

If an application is declined, he must document the reasons and clearly communicate them to the client.

Following the application review, the Assistant Technical Manager will assess and determine the specific competencies required for the audit team responsible for the certification, ensuring that the team is appropriately equipped to make informed certification decisions.

AUDIT PROGRAMME

The Assistant Technical Manager will develop a comprehensive audit program (VG-HF-42) for the entire certification cycle, ensuring it demonstrates the client's management system's compliance with the selected standards or normative documents. This program includes:

- Initial Certification.
- Surveillance Audits.
- Recertification Audit.

The audit schedule begins with the certification decision, with subsequent cycles starting post-recertification decision. The development and any adjustments to the audit program consider factors such as the client's size, the complexity of the management system, products, processes, effectiveness of the management system, and outcomes from previous audits.

Additional considerations for developing or revising the audit program include:

- Client complaints received.
- Types of audits (combined, integrated, joint).
- Changes in certification, legal, or accreditation requirements.
- Organizational performance data.
- Concerns from relevant interested parties

Surveillance audits are mandatory at a frequency of at least once per year, except in the year of recertification, with the first audit not exceeding 12 months from the certification decision.

The frequency may be adjusted based on specific factors like seasonal operations or limited-duration certifications.

If a client is already certified or audited by another body, Verger will collect sufficient evidence (reports, corrective actions) to support compliance and may adjust the existing audit program based on this information. This also involves following up on the implementation of corrective actions related to past nonconformities.

Additionally, when clients operate across different shifts, the audit program and plans will consider the activities occurring during these shifts to ensure comprehensive coverage and assessment.

AUDIT TIME

Form (VG-HF-22 Man day Calculation sheet) is utilized by Assistant Technical Manager and Auditor to accurately estimate the time required to plan and conduct an audit of a client's management system. The determination of audit time considers various factors, including:

Standard Requirements:

The specific demands of the relevant management system standard.

- Complexity: The intricacy of the client's organization and its management system.
- Context: The technological and regulatory environment.
- Outsourcing: Any outsourced activities included in the management system's scope.
- Previous Audits: Outcomes from prior audits.
- Operational Scale: The size and number of operational sites, their geographical distribution, and considerations for multi-site operations.
- Risk Factors: The risks related to the organization's products, processes, or activities.
- Audit Type: Whether the audits are combined, joint, or integrated.

Additional Considerations:

- Travel time to and from audit sites is excluded from the audit duration calculation.
- The duration and its rationale will be documented as per the guidelines.
- Time contributed by non-auditor team members (like technical experts, translators, interpreters, observers, and auditors-in-training) is not included in the audit duration. However, employing translators and interpreters may necessitate additional audit time.

STAGE-1 PLAN, COMPETENT PERSON SELECTION

The audit planning process involves defining clear objectives, scope, and criteria by Verger in consultation with the client. The main objectives of the audit include assessing the client's management system for conformity with established criteria, ensuring compliance with relevant legal and contractual requirements, evaluating the effectiveness of the management system in meeting specified objectives, and identifying potential areas for improvement.

The scope of the audit specifies which organizational units, sites, activities, and processes will be examined. In cases where the certification process involves multiple audits (such as in different sites), each individual audit might focus on specific areas, but collectively, they cover the entire scope outlined in the certification agreement.

The audit criteria serve as benchmarks for measuring conformity and include the relevant management system standards and the client's own documented processes and procedures. This structured approach ensures comprehensive and consistent evaluations across all areas covered by the certification

According to the Verger's scope of work for the halal certification (i.e. Category C), the stage 1 audit shall be conducted on-site. It could be at the Verger's premises or at the client's premises depending on the complexity of production.

Due to audit conducted on-site, the duration of the stage 1 audit shall not exceed 30% of the total audit team.

The minimum interval between stage 1 and stage 2 audit shall be depending on the complexity of the organization but it shall not exceed beyond 6 months, however if the internal exceed 6 months, a re-

conduct of stage 1 audit is typically required to ensure the continued relevance and accuracy of the initial findings.

The selection and composition of the audit team are strategically determined by Verger to ensure comprehensive and impartial audits. The process involves choosing suitable team members including an audit team leader, technical experts, and potentially auditors-in-training, based on their competencies and the specific requirements of the audit. Key considerations for forming the team include:

Audit objective and scope: Ensuring the team can meet the specific goals and coverage areas of the audit.

Audit type: Adjusting team composition based on whether the audit is combined, joint or integrated.

Regulatory and contractual needs: Factoring in any specific legal or contractual requirements that might influence the audit.

Language and cultural factors: Considering language abilities and cultural knowledge crucial for effective communication during the audit.

The team leader (Auditor) is expected to have deep knowledge of at least one of the standards being audited and a general awareness of others involved in a combined or integrated audit. Technical person, translators, and interpreters are included as needed and are chosen to support the audit without influencing its outcomes unduly.

Auditors-in-training may also participate under the supervision of a competent evaluator who oversees their work and takes responsibility for their audit contributions. The audit team leader assigns specific roles and responsibilities to each team member, considering their strengths and the audit's needs. Adjustments to these assignments may occur as the audit progresses to align with the evolving context and to ensure the audit objectives are met effectively. Islamic Affairs Expert, technical person, and guides play specific roles during an audit, each contributing uniquely while ensuring they do not disrupt the integrity of the audit process.

Islamic Affairs Expert: A Muslim who has profound and comprehensive knowledge of the requirements of Halal in Islamic Sharia, his efficiency and scientific knowledge are established through academic certificates, courses, research and training courses in this field.

Technical person: The person who assist the audit team with specialized knowledge during the preparation and execution of the audit. They do not perform the functions of auditors but work alongside them, providing necessary technical insights. The inclusion and role of technical person are determined beforehand by the certification body and the client.

Guides: Assigned to support the audit team, guides help with logistical arrangements such as setting up interviews and navigating the audit site. They ensure the audit progresses smoothly by helping with access and clarifications but are also monitored to ensure they do not affect the audit's neutrality. In some cases, the auditee themselves can act as the guide, facilitating direct interactions with the audit team.

These roles are crucial for maintaining the order and efficiency of the audit process, ensuring all involved parties adhere to established protocols and contribute positively to the audit's objectives.

Management needs to rotate the selection of auditors for different factories regularly to prevent any long-term relationships that could compromise impartiality.

Codes of conduct should be signed by empaneled auditors to ensure they understand the expectation of impartiality and independence during audits

An audit plan is a strategic document formulated before each specific audit to organize and outline the auditing process. This plan is not necessarily created during the development of the broader audit program. The purpose of the audit plan is to establish a clear agreement on how the audit will be conducted, focusing on the timeline and methods.

The audit plan (VG-HF-23) includes:

Audit Objectives: Goals that the audit aims to achieve.

Audit Criteria: Benchmarks against which the audit will measure conformity.

Audit Scope: Defines the areas, processes, and functions to be examined.

Audit dates and sites: Specific when and where the audit activities will occur, including any necessary provisions for remote or temporary locations.

Duration: Outlines how long the audit activities are expected to last.

Roles and Responsibilities: Details the functions of each audit team member and other participants like observers or interpreters.

This plan ensures all parties involved are aligned and understand their roles, facilitating a systematic and efficient audit.

The communication regarding audit activities involves clearly assigning and explaining the responsibilities of the audit team. The team is tasked with thoroughly reviewing and verifying the client's organizational structure, policies, processes, and documentation to ensure they comply with the relevant management system standards. Team must also assess the effectiveness of these processes and report any discrepancies or inconsistencies to the client for corrective action.

Additionally, the audit plan, which outlines the objectives, scope, timeline, and roles for the audit, must be shared with the client well in advance to ensure mutual agreement and preparedness.

Regarding the audit team, the certification body, Verger, is responsible for disclosing the identities and relevant details of the audit team members to the client. This transparency allows the client to raise any concerns about specific team members, enabling the certification body to address such objections appropriately and adjust the team composition if necessary. This process ensures that all parties are informed and agreeable to the audit's conduct, fostering trust and cooperation.

Initial Certification Audit

The initial certification audit is conducted in two stages:

Stage 1: involves preparatory evaluation where the auditor reviews the client's documented management system, checks site-specific conditions, and engages in discussions to gauge the client's readiness for the more detailed Stage 2 audit.

This stage also includes assessing the client's understanding of standard requirements, the scope of the management system, test report of product concerned and internal audit and review processes, client's facilities, processes, control levels, and compliance with statutory requirements is gathered.

The conclusions from stage 1, particularly areas of potential nonconformity, are documented and communicated to the client, but a full formal report is not necessary.

Stage 2: is planned based on the insights and preparatory findings from Stage 1, focusing on more detailed verification of the management system's implementation and effectiveness in meeting the standards and the client's objectives. The transition between stages is seamless, with Stage 1 setting the groundwork for the in-depth evaluations in Stage 2.

Other consideration

The technical expert must ensure access to adequate technical expertise, either externally or from its own staff, to provide guidance on certification-related matters across all technical fields, management system types, and regions it serves. This ensures informed decision-making and adherence to relevant standards throughout the certification process.

Resolve stage 1

Adjustments between the first and second stages of the audit are based on the client's ability to address concerns identified in stage 1. Assistant Technical Manager and Auditor can modify the plans for stage 2 accordingly. there should be substantial changes affecting the management system, Verger might find it necessary to records parts or all of stage 1. Clients are notified that outcomes from stage 1 could potentially lead to the delay or cancellation of stage 2, depending on the issues identified.

Stage 2: Plan, Competent person selection

In Stage 2, Auditor has to check the system's compliance with the relevant standards or documents, evaluating how the system measures and achieves key performance goals, its compliance with legal and contractual obligations, the control over operational processes, the conduct of internal audits and management reviews, and the management's commitment to the organization's policies.

The audit team will review and evaluate all the data and evidence collected during both stages of the audit to discuss and agree upon the findings and conclusions of the audit.

Conducting Audits

Verger have a checklist starting with an opening meeting and ending with a closing meeting. If parts of the audit involve electronic or virtual elements, it should be ensured that those conducting the audit are qualified enough. The evidence collected during such audits must be adequate for making informed decisions about compliance.
"On-site" audits may involve remote access to electronic sites relevant to the management system audit, and electronic methods may also be utilized for the audit process.

Conducting the opening meeting

The opening meeting of an audit, led by the audit team leader, is essential for setting the stage for the audit process. This meeting involves confirming various aspects such as the scope of certification, audit plan, laboratory testing of product, communication methods, logistical arrangements, and safety procedures. Participants will be introduced and their roles clarified. The meeting ensures that the audit team has the necessary resources and facilities and establishes confidentiality and security guidelines. It also sets expectations for the handling of findings, the audit's potential early termination, and the language used during the audit. Additionally, it confirms the handling of any findings from previous audits and outlines the methods for conducting the audit, including sampling techniques. This meeting also provides a chance for the client to clarify any doubts and stay informed about the audit's progress.

Communication during the audit

During the audit, the audit team leader will monitor the audit's progress, reallocate tasks among team members as necessary, and maintain open communication with the client about the audit's status and any issues that arise.

If evidence suggests that the audit's objectives might not be met or there is a significant and immediate risk, such as a safety concern, the team leader must inform the client and potentially Verger to decide the next steps.

These steps could include adjusting the audit plan, objectives, or scope, or even halting the audit. Any changes or decisions made must be reported back to the Assistant Technical Manager. The team leader should also discuss and report any changes to the audit scope that become evident during the on-site activities.

Obtaining and verifying information

During the audit, the team will gather and confirm information pertinent to the audit's objectives, scope, and criteria.

This includes understanding how different functions, activities, and processes interact. Information will be collected through targeted sampling and then verified to serve as evidence for the audit.

If there is any doubt regarding testing or inspection procedures, the auditor will take random samples from the production line and perform required inspection and tests from an ISO 17025 accredited laboratory.

In determining any sampling requirements, Verger shall have a documented procedures for the selection and control of samples to ensure traceability.

Various methods are used to collect this information, including:

- Conducting interviews with relevant personnel.
- Observing the processes and activities in action.
- Reviewing relevant documentation and records.

Identifying and recording audit findings

During an audit, findings that indicate both compliance and non-compliance need to be identified, categorized, and documented in the audit Report.

Opportunities for improvement may also be documented.

Nonconformities must be specifically linked to a particular requirement, clearly describing the nonconformity and detailing the objective evidence that supports it. These findings are to be discussed with the client to confirm the accuracy of the evidence and the client's understanding of the non-conformities.

Auditors should not suggest causes or solutions for these nonconformities.

In case of any disagreements between the audit team and the client regarding audit evidence or findings, the audit team leader should work to resolve these differences. Any unresolved issues should be properly recorded.

Preparing audit conclusions

Before the closing meeting, lead auditor is required to:

a) Evaluate all audit findings and other relevant data collected during the audit against the established audit objectives and criteria. This includes categorizing nonconformities.
b) Reach a consensus on the audit conclusions, considering the natural limitations and uncertainties of the audit process.
c) Decide on any required follow-up actions.
d) Verify if the current audit program was suitable, and note any changes needed for future audits, such as adjustments to the scope of certification, audit scheduling, frequency of surveillance, or the competencies required for the audit team

Conducting the closing meeting

The closing meeting is led by the lead auditor and attended by the client's management and relevant personnel. Through it auditor communicates the audit's findings and conclusions, including any nonconformities and the recommendation regarding certification.

Key points covered include:

- The audit results are based on a sample,
- introducing an element of uncertainty.
- Explanation of how audit findings will be reported and the timelines for this.
- Outline of the certification body's procedures for addressing nonconformities, including potential impacts on certification.
- Timelines for the client to submit corrective actions.
- Overview of post-audit processes and how complaints and appeals can be handled.

The client can ask questions and discuss any discrepancies in audit findings or conclusions, aiming to resolve these where possible. Unresolved issues will be noted in report and referred back to the Verger for further action.

Audit Report

Audit report VG-HF-26 is provided to the client after each audit, which remains under the ownership of the Verger. The report, overseen by the audit team leader for accuracy and completeness, includes essential information such as the certification body's details, client's information, type of audit, audit criteria, objectives, scope and test report details. For the products in food-chain operations, the audit report shall include references to issues relevant to the food safety management system. It details any deviations from the initial plan, audit findings supported by evidence, significant issues affecting the audit, and any unresolved issues.

The audit report lists audit dates and locations, significant changes in the client's management system since the last audit, and whether the audit was combined, joint, or integrated. It confirms the client's control over certification documents and evaluates the effectiveness of corrective actions for previous nonconformities.

The report concludes with statements on the management system's conformity and effectiveness, an evaluation of the internal audit and management review processes, and the appropriateness of the certification scope. It also confirms that the audit objectives have been met, highlighting that audits are based on a sampling process, which introduces an element of uncertainty.

Cause analysis of non-conformities

Verger will require the client to investigate the root causes and detail the corrective actions taken or planned to address any identified nonconformities within a specified timeframe.

Timeframe

Audit report shall be subject to acceptance based on below conditions:

Critical NC:

- Observation that would result in a failure of one or more production quality system processes that may have an effect on the production quality or may result in problems achieving management system certification.
- In case of critical NC, a Certificate will not be issued.

Major NC:

- Observation that may result in a failure of one or more production quality systemprocesses that may have an effect on the production quality, and which is less severe thanCritical NC.
- Major non-conformities shall need to be addressed and corrected as early as possible butnot later than 30 days from the date these have been observed by the auditor.
- In case the corrective action is not completed within the stipulated time frame, then the certificate will not be issued.

Minor NC:

- Observation that may not have an effect on the product quality or may not have any impact on achieving management system certification.
- Minor non-conformities shall need to be addressed and corrected as early as possible butnot later than 45 days from the date these have been observed by the auditor.
- In case the corrective action is not completed within the stipulated time frame, certification process will be on hold, or the certification may be liable for suspension partially or completely or withdrawal based on the nature of non-conformity.

EFFECTIVENESS OF CORRECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

The Assistant Technical Manager and team leader will review and evaluate the client's corrective actions and root cause analysis to ensure they are appropriate and confirm the effectiveness of these actions, recording the evidence of resolution.

The client will be notified of the outcomes and informed whether a full audit, limited audit, or future verification of documents is required to confirm the effectiveness of the actions taken.

Certification review and decision

The Assistant Technical Manager is responsible for making certification decisions is separate from audit team.

Actions prior to making a decision

Prior to making certification decisions, Assistant Technical Manager will implement a rigorous review process.

This process ensures that:

- the information from the audit team adequately meets the certification criteria and the

intended scope of certification;
- any major nonconformities have been appropriately addressed, with corrective actions reviewed, accepted, and verified;
- any minor nonconformities have been acknowledged with an approved plan for corrective actions from the client.
- The acceptance of test report and ensures that the testing carried out is on the basis of applicable standards.

Issue of certificate

Information for granting initial certificate

For initial certification, the Operations team requires the following information from the audit team:

- the complete audit report;
- test report
- feedback on nonconformities and any corrective actions taken by the client;
- verification of the initial application information;
- confirmation that the audit goals were met;
- a recommendation on whether to grant certification, noting any conditions or observations.

Additionally:

If major nonconformities are not resolved within six months after stage 2, a repeat of stage 2 is necessary before certification can be granted.

For transferring certifications from one body to another, Verger ensures a process is in place to gather adequate information for a certification decision.

Information for granting recertification

Decisions on recertification by Assistant Technical Manager are based on the outcomes of the recertification audit, along with a review of the system's performance throughout the certification period and any complaints from users of the certification.

Surveillance Audit

Verger will systematically carry out surveillance activities to ensure that the management systems of certified clients continue to meet the requirements of the relevant standards. These activities will include regular on-site audits focusing on key functions and areas within the scope of certification, considering any changes in the client’s operations or management system.

Additional surveillance methods can be - Inquiries about certification-related aspects.

The surveillance audits, although not as comprehensive as full system audits, are integral in verifying that the management system remains effective and compliant between recertification audits.

Each surveillance audit will assess:

- Internal audits and management reviews,
- Actions taken on previously identified nonconformities,
- Complaints handling processes,
- The management system's success in achieving the client's objectives and intended results,
- Progress on activities for continual improvement,
- Continuity of operational control,
- Any changes within the system,
- Proper use of certification marks and references.

Recertification

The recertification audit aims to verify the continued compliance, effectiveness, and relevance of the management system against the certification standard, ensuring it aligns with the scope of certification. It must be conducted before the current certificate expires to allow for timely renewal.

This audit involves reviewing past surveillance reports and evaluating the system's performance throughout the current certification cycle. A stage 1 audit may be necessary if significant changes have occurred in the management system, the organization, or its regulatory environment.

The on-site recertification audit assesses:

- The overall effectiveness of the management system amidst internal and external changes.
- The commitment to maintain and improve the system for better performance.
- The system's success in meeting the organization's objectives and intended results.

For any major nonconformities identified, corrective actions must be implemented and verified before the current certification expires. If these actions are not verified in time, recertification will not be recommended, and the certification will not be extended.

If the certification expires, it can be restored within six months if pending recertification activities are completed; otherwise, a stage 2 audit will be necessary. The new certificate's issue date will be on or after the recertification decision, and the expiry will align with the previous cycle.

The certified organization should submit a recertification or renewal application six months prior to the expiry date of current halal certificate. If the certified organization failed to renew their certificates will not be allowed to use the halal mark at the premises or on the manufactured products.

Change of scope

Special Audits and Scope Modifications: A Assistant Technical Manager will review applications for expanding existing certifications to determine necessary audit activities. These may coincide with regular surveillance audits.

Unscheduled Audits: Audits may occur without prior notice to investigate complaints, address changes, or follow up on suspensions. The conditions for such audits are predefined and clients are made aware

beforehand. Special care is taken in assigning auditors due to the absence of a client's opportunity to object.

Changes in Certification Status: Verger has clear procedures for suspending, withdrawing, or reducing the scope of certification based on specific criteria, such as:

- Persistent or severe non-compliance with certification requirements,
- Refusal by the client to permit regular audits,
- Client's request for suspension.

Suspension temporarily invalidates the certification, which can be reinstated once issues are resolved within a set timeframe, failing which may lead to withdrawal or scope reduction. Suspensions generally do not exceed six months.

Scope reduction is implemented for parts of the certification that consistently fail to meet standards, aligning with the requirements of the governing certification standard.

Exchange of information

Verger will maintain open communication with its clients regarding all aspects of the certification process. This includes:

Certification procedure:

- Providing detailed information on the application process, initial and surveillance audits, and the criteria for granting, renewing, or withdrawing certification.
- Standards and Requirements: Outlining the normative requirements necessary for certification.

Fees:

- Informing clients about the costs associated with the application, initial certification, and ongoing certification activities.

Client responsibilities:

- Clarifying expectations for clients, such as adherence to certification requirements, facilitating audits, and accommodating observers when necessary.
- Rights and Duties: Describing the rights and obligations of certified clients, particularly concerning the use of certification in communications.

Complaints and Appeals:

- Providing information on the processes for addressing complaints and handling appeals.

Notices of changes:

- Verger will promptly notify clients of any changes to certification requirements.
- Clients are required to immediately inform Verger of any significant changes that might affect the integrity of the certified management system, such as changes in legal status, key personnel, operational scope, or significant process adjustments.
- Verger will take appropriate actions based on the nature of these changes to ensure ongoing compliance with certification standards

Multisite Sampling

When providing certification for multiple management system standards, the Assistant Technical Manager must ensure thorough on-site audits to establish trust in the certification process. Verger ensures that each site of a multi-site establishment shall be assessed and certified separately. This includes developing a detailed sampling program for clients with activities spread across various locations.

The program will guide the audit of these multi-site management systems, and the reasons for the chosen sampling approach must be documented for each client. Sampling may not be suitable for all certification schemes.

The objective is to conduct comprehensive audits that provide a reliable basis for certification, ensuring that all necessary standards are met across different operational sites and management systems.

Certification and use of mark

Verger establishes and ensures that the certification marks are used correctly, are traceable back to Verger, and are clear about the certification's scope and the issuing body. Specifically, the marks should not suggest product conformity and are not to be used on products, product packaging, or laboratory documents.

Certified clients are permitted to mention their management system certification on removable product packaging or accompanying information, but must avoid implying that the product itself is certified. Such statements should include the client's identification, the type of management system, and the standard applied.

Additionally, Verger mandates through enforceable agreements that certified clients:

- Accurately represent their certification in all forms of communication.
- Avoid misleading statements or uses of the certification.
- Cease using certification-related marketing upon certification withdrawal.
- Adjust marketing materials if the certification scope is reduced.
- Ensure certification references do not suggest product or process certification.
- Avoid using certification in a way that could harm the reputation of the certification body or the certification system itself.

Verger is responsible for addressing any incorrect or misleading use of certification references, which can include corrective actions, suspension or withdrawal of certification, public notification, and potentially legal proceedings.

Records and documents

The Halal Department issues certification documents to certified clients. These documents must include following specific details to maintain clarity and traceability.

They will identify:

- The name and geographical location(s) of the certified client, including all sites within a multi-site certification or the location of the headquarters.
- The effective date of certification, which includes the dates for granting, expanding, reducing, or renewing the scope of certification. These dates will not precede the certification decision date. If the certification lapses, Verger may keep the original certification date on the certificate, provided that the current and previous certification cycle dates are clearly indicated, along with the date of the recertification audit.
- The expiry date or the date by which recertification is due, aligned with the recertification cycle.
- A unique identification code for each certificate.
- The specific management system standard or other normative document used for the audit, including its revision status.
- A detailed scope of certification that clearly defines the type of activities, products, and services at each site, ensuring there is no ambiguity.
- The name and address of Verger and its certification mark. Other marks, like the accreditation symbol or the client's logo, can be included as long as they do not cause confusion.
- Any additional information required by the standard or normative document used for certification.
- A method to distinguish revised certification documents from previous versions to avoid the use of obsolete documents.

Records of all certification activities will be kept securely.

These records include:

- Application details and reports from initial, surveillance, and recertification audits.
- The certification agreement between Verger and the client.
- Justifications for the sampling methodologies used, particularly in multi-site audits or when auditing specific management systems.
- Test report from accredited laboratory.
- Rationale behind the determination of auditor time.
- Documentation verifying the implementation of corrective actions.
- Records of any complaints and appeals, along with the corrective actions taken in response.
- Minutes and decisions of committees, if applicable.
- Records supporting the certification decisions made.

- Issued certification documents and the defined scope concerning products, processes, or services.
- Additional records that support the credibility of the certification, such as proofs of auditor and technical person competence in case technical person is involved.
- Audit programs.

The Quality Department ensures the confidentiality and security of these records during storage, transport, or transfer. There are documented policies and procedures (VG-HP-05 Control Of documents and records) on how long records are retained, typically covering the duration of the current certification cycle plus an additional full cycle.

5. Calculation of Minimum Audit Time

The minimum audit time includes only the duration required for stage 1 and stage 2 audits, excluding preparation and writing of audit report. If another relevant management system is certified by Verger itself, no additional time is needed. For joint audit involving a Food safety management system, the audit time can be reduced if it is justified and documented.

The established minimum audit time applies to Food System Management System with a single HACCP study, which covers hazard analysis for groups of products sharing similar hazards, production, and storage technologies.

For product safety management system audits involving only one DSM HACCP critical analysis point plan, the minimum onsite surveillance audit time should be at least half a day.

The minimum on site surveillance audit time for product should be, with a minimum of half audit day.

The no. of employees in clients organization are the no. of full time employees FTEs. When an enterprise operates workers in shifts, the products and / or operations are Similar, FTE is calculated based on employees in the main shift (including workers) seasonal workers) as well as office workers.

In case of multi-site sampling of some categories of products, it will be taken into consideration while calculating audit time.

If the scope of a single client facility covers more than one category, the audit time account is the highest recommended basic check. Additional time is needed for each risk analysis point and critical control point,(ie. a minimum of 0.5 day audit for each risk analysis point and critical control point).

The minimum audit time for a single site, Ts, expressed in days, is calculated as follows:

$T_S = (T_D+T_H+T_{MS}+T_{FTE})$

Where,

T_D: is the basic on-site audit time, in days;

T_H: is the number of audit days for additional HACCP studies;

T_{MS}: is the number of audit days for absence of relevant management system;

T_{FTE}: is the number of audit days per number of employees.

The audit time for each site in addition to the main site, is calculated according to table B.1 with a minimum of 1 audit day per site

When properly documented and justified, a reduction can be made for a less complex organization measured by number of employees, size of the organization and/or product volume or within categories having a (Ts) time of less than 1.5 audit days.

6. REFERENCES

- GSO 2055-2:2021
- ISO/ IEC 17065:2012
- ISO/ IEC 17021-1:2015

7. RECORDS

- ANNEX Agreement VG-HF-21
- Application Form VG-HF-21
- Man day Calculation Sheet VG-HF-22
- Auditor Selection matrix VG-HF-24
- Auditor Log VG-HF-41
- Audit Programme VG-HF-42
- Audit Plan VG-HF-23
- Audit Report Stage -I VG-HF-25
- Annexure 1_Corrective Action VG-HF-26
- Audit Report Stage-II VG-HF-26
- Halal Certificate VG-HF-40

CHANGE HISTORY

ISSUE	CHAPTER	PAGE	CHANGE INTRODUCTION	REV NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE
01	/	/	First version	00	08/07/2024