

Subject: Surveillance frequency, additional audits and non-conformities

11.3 Surveillance frequency, additional audits and non-conformities

11.3.1 The CAB shall determine the surveillance frequency for certificate holders after each certification, surveillance and re-certification audit according to the following criteria:

- a. A frequency of 18 months for single or multi-site CoC certificate holders that meet at least 1 of the following criteria:
 - i. 100% of the seafood handled at all sites is certified seafood.
 - ii. Conduct only “trading” activities directly as defined in Table 4, and do not use any non-certified contract processors or packers to handle certified product (contract transport and storage is permitted).
 - iii. Only handle certified product in sealed boxes or containers and do not repack, process or alter sealed boxes in any way.

Guidance 11.3.1.a.iii

This includes any business-to-business packed product, such as sealed boxes, pallets, sealed bags, etc. Pallet-level containers may be broken down provided that individual sealed boxes or containers are not altered. Organisations that meet this criteria could include distributors, wholesalers or storage facilities.

- b. A frequency of 12 months for all other certificate holders.

Guidance 11.3.1.b

All CoC Group and CFO certificate holders require annual surveillance audits.

- i. For clients that are eligible for 18-month audit frequency, but the CAB judges an annual audit frequency is still necessary, the CAB shall record their rationale in the CoC audit checklist.
 - A. This should be based on factors not identified in 11.3.1 which increase the client's risk profile in addition.
- c. For CoC Group and CFO clients with multiple sites, the central office and a sample of sites shall be audited as per Sections 10.5 and 7.2 respectively.
- d. The surveillance audit's timing may be advanced or delayed by up to 90 days before or after the due date as necessary to coordinate a suitable date.
 - i. The due date is determined by the certification date.

Guidance 11.3.1.d

The due date will remain the same for the length of a certificate holder's continuous participation in the MSC program and this could be multiple certificate cycles.

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- 11.3.2 The CAB shall carry out unannounced, on-site surveillance audits at a minimum of 1 or 1%, whichever is greater, of all their clients each year.
- 11.3.2.1 The CAB shall prioritise clients that have been identified as high risk for product substitution by the MSC, the MSC's accreditation body, or through receipt of a complaint.
- 11.3.2.2 If the CAB has not had any clients identified as high risk due to information received by the MSC or the MSC's accreditation body, or a complaint, then the CAB may use their own risk assessment to select clients, or choose randomly.
- 11.3.2.3 At least on an annual basis, the CAB shall calculate the number of unannounced audits.
- a. This number is calculated as 1% of the current number of clients (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 1 if the CAB has fewer than 10 clients.
- 11.3.2.4 The CAB may inform the client of a 6-month surveillance window in which the audit can occur but shall provide no notice of the actual date.
- a. Where a client carries out only seasonal production, the audit window should be reduced as appropriate to reflect this.

Guidance 11.3.2.4

Unannounced audits are intended to provide a more accurate picture of a client's day-to-day conformity with the CoC Standard, as the client will not have any time to prepare specifically for the audit.

For unannounced audits, entry must be granted to the auditor within 30 minutes of their arrival. Entry cannot be refused on the basis of a responsible person not being available, or another audit being conducted on the same day. Time limits for document provision can still be set.

- 11.3.3 Surveillance audits can be remote for certificate holders that meet all the following criteria:
- a. Conduct only "trading" activities as defined in Table 4.
- i. With the exception of activities carried out by subcontractors, which are assessed under Section 8.4.

Guidance 11.3.3.a.i

Eligibility is not limited by the activities of subcontractors, as subcontractor auditing is covered in Section 8.4. The CAB may refer to guidance in ISO 19011 to determine whether a remote audit is feasible in each case, considering, for example: ability to interview; access relevant records; and other risk factors they are aware and/or evaluated in the application.

- b. Are located in a country with a Transparency International CPI score of 41 or above (cpi.transparency.org).

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11.3.4 If the criteria in 11.3.3.a–b are met by the client but the CAB proposes to audit on-site, the CAB shall document their rationale in the CoC audit checklist.

11.3.4.1 This should be based on factors not identified in 11.3.3 which increase the client's risk profile.

11.3.5 The CAB shall have a documented procedure to determine when it should do any of the following:

a. Conduct expedited audits, and/or

Guidance 11.3.4.a

For expedited audits, entry cannot be refused on the basis of a responsible person not being available, and time limits for document provision can still be set.

An "expedited audit" is an irregularly timed audit.

b. Request and examine documentation related to a client's operations.

11.3.6 The CAB's procedure in 11.3.5 shall take account of information received including:

a. Complaints.

b. Notification of changes in personnel, site or management system procedures.

c. Information from the MSC, the MSC's accreditation body and/or MSCI.

11.3.7 The MSC can require a CAB to conduct an expedited audit when information has been received indicating a potential risk to the Chain of Custody, but where responsibility is not clear. In this case:

a. The MSC will provide the CAB with a written request to conduct the audit which will include any relevant information or evidence.

b. The MSC and the CAB shall agree on the full cost of the audit in writing in advance of the audit.

c. The MSC will reimburse the CAB for the full cost of the audit.

d. The MSC can require that these audits be attended by the MSC's accreditation body or a representative of the MSC.

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The MSC will require unannounced audits in cases where there is a risk of a breach in the Chain of Custody but there is inadequate information to raise a complaint or request for action against a specific CoC certificate holder.

This is particularly relevant where a product authentication test indicates substitution or mislabelling but does not confirm at which step in the supply chain the problem occurred. In these cases, unannounced audits at various steps in the supply chain may be warranted in order to determine the source of the issue.



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- 11.3.8 The MSC can send a request for action to a CAB when evidence has been received indicating a non-conformity of a client of the CAB.
- 11.3.8.1 In the case of evidence being received as per 11.3.7, the CAB shall risk-assess the evidence and respond to the MSC within 5 days detailing the action to be taken.
- 11.3.9 Where the CAB receives information outside of an initial, surveillance, or re-certification audit that they judge to be credible evidence of a client's non-conformity with the CoC Standard, the CAB shall raise a non-conformity and classify it as per 9.2–4.

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This may be the result of the MSC or its designated agents raising a request for action as per 11.3.8.